REATH RECIPES

SIDES

PHIL'S ROASTED YUKON GOLD POTATOES

Note: Phil has the magic touch with these potatoes and makes them for us whenever we serve a meat dish as an alternative to regular baked potatoes. You can also substitute butter, duck fat or even goose fat for the olive oil. If you have leftover potatoes, sauté them with a bit of onion for breakfast potatoes or cube them in small pieces and add them to your salads.

Yukon Gold Potatoes

Olive oil

Kosher salt

Fresh rosemary

White truffle oil (optional)

Preheat your oven to 400°. Scrub the potatoes and cut them into quarters or halves depending on the size of the potato. Put them in a roasting pan or gratin pan that is big enough to hold them in one layer. Liberally drizzle the potatoes with olive oil and stir to coat. Salt them and add fresh rosemary leaves to taste. A teaspoon or two of white truffle oil is also luscious to add.

Roast the potatoes for about 45 minutes or until golden brown and crispy outside, stirring once to make sure they are evenly browned.

WESTON'S CHEESE STUFFED BAKED POTATOES

Note: A favorite that you can get creative with depending on the ingredients you choose to add. Sometimes we add chives or even salsa. This recipe was how we made them for Weston, and he approved.

6 extra large potatoes for baking

½ stick of butter

¾ cup or more sour cream

1 cup or more grated SHARP Cheddarjack cheese or shredded cheddarjack with jalapeños if you are in a Mexican mood

Paprika

This is one of those recipes that involve tasting as you go along. Poke your potatoes with a fork. Cover the outside of the skin with a thin film of vegetable oil to help the skin stay firm once it is cooked. Cook your potatoes at 400° for an hour until tender. Keep the oven on.

Get out a large mixing bowl and put the butter in the bowl. Then, with an oven mitt, take a potato out of the oven and with a sharp knife cute a large oval in the top of the potato. Remove the oval and with a large spoon, carefully scrape the inside of the potato into the bowl. Try not to tear the potato while you do this because you want to use it to hold the stuffing. Also scrape the potato off the oval piece. You can throw the oval skin away or eat it if you are hungry.

Repeat this process with the rest of the potatoes. Add butter, sour cream, cheese, and lots of salt and pepper. Blend the potatoes with a hand mixer. Once they are very well blended, taste, and you probably will want to add more cheese. Once the flavor is how you like it, put the filling back into potato jackets. They will be overflowing. It is better for the texture to be thick so they stay together rather than melt over the jackets, but don't worry if this happens because they still taste great. Put some grated cheese on top and sprinkle with paprika.

Bake at 400° for about 20 minutes until hot and browned. Be careful when you eat them because they will be very hot.

TWICE-BAKED YUKON GOLDS WITH BALSAMIC VINEGAR

Note: This is an intriguing variation on Weston's Cheese Stuffed Baked Potatoes which have become a family classic. Using Yukon Gold potatoes makes them cute and a smaller serving plus the balsamic/Parmesan combination goes very well with Italian dinners. If you can't find large Yukons, use regular russets, but don't scrimp on the balsamic or the cheese. Those are the secret ingredients!

8 large Yukon Gold potatoes, washed

3 T. butter

2 cups sour cream

1 cup thinly sliced chives or green onions

1 cup freshly grated Reggiano-Parmesan plus some for sprinkling on top

4 tsp. good quality balsamic vinegar

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°. Bake the potatoes for about 45 minutes until tender when poked with a fork. Get out a large mixing bowl and put the butter in the bowl. While the potatoes are still hot, hold each one with an oven mitt and with a sharp knife, cut a large oval in the top of the potato. Remove the oval with a spoon and carefully scrape the insides of the potato into the bowl. Try not to tear the potato while you do this because you want to use it to hold the stuffing. Also scrape the potato off the oval piece. You can throw the oval skin away or eat it if you are hungry. Repeat this process with the rest of the potatoes.

With a fork, mash the potatoes with the butter until melted and well-mixed. Then add most of the sour cream, chives, ¾ cup of the cheese and the vinegar. Mix well and season to taste with salt and pepper. You'll want the mixture to be a bit thicker but if it is too thick add a bit more sour cream or cheese to taste.

Once the flavor is how you like it, put the filling back into the potato jackets, mounding them nicely. You can do this part ahead of time.

When ready to serve, sprinkle the remaining Parmesan cheese on each potato and bake for about 20-30 minutes until hot and browned. Be careful when you eat them because they will be very hot.

MASHED POTATO PANCAKES WITH JARLSBERG CHEESE

Note: We are including this recipe because it is the perfect side dish for one of our all-time favorite recipes—Hanger Steak with Watercress Sauce (page 71).

2 ½ lbs. russet potatoes (6 to 8) well scrubbed

1 or 2 scallions, white and green parts, chopped

¾ cup grated Jarlsberg or Emmentaler cheese

2 T. sour cream

½ tsp. salt

½ tsp. fresh black pepper

Pinch of ground cayenne pepper

1 T. butter

Oil or butter for frying

Preheat the oven to 375°. Prick the potatoes with a fork and bake for 1 hour, until fork tender. If you want to peel the potatoes, do it carefully while they are still hot. Using an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on low speed, or by hand with a potato masher, mash the potatoes until they are well broken up. Add the scallions, cheese, sour cream, salt, black and cayenne peppers, and 1 T. butter and mix on medium speed or by hand until thoroughly combined. Allow mixture to cool.

To make the pancakes, out ½-cup portions and, with wet hands, shape them into patties about ¾- to 1-inch thick and 3 to 3½ inch in diameter. Heat a griddle or large sauté pan over medium-high heat and spread with oil. (A nonstick pan is great, if you have one.) Cook until golden brown, turn and cook until the second side is nicely browned. This will take 10 to 15 minutes in all, depending on how thick you've made the patties and how hot your pan is. Opt for longer and slower cooking in order to heat them through, as it guarantees a nice crisp outside crust.

PARMESAN POTATOES

Note: These potatoes go perfectly with outdoor grilling from BBQ to burgers and are a nice (and more fun) alternative to baked potatoes.

¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1 tsp. Greek seasoning

½ tsp. Kosher salt

4 baking potatoes, not peeled, cut into slices

¼ cup melted butter

½ lb. bacon, crisp cooked and crumbled

Freshly ground pepper

Combine the cheese, Greek seasoning, salt and pepper in a shallow bowl. Dip the potato slices into the mixture, coating both sides. Place in 9 X13-inch baking dish sprayed with cooking spray. Sprinkle with the remaining cheese mixture and drizzle with melted butter. Bake at 425° for thirty minutes. Sprinkle with the bacon and bake for five minutes longer. Serve with ketchup and sour cream on the side.

HASH BROWN CASSEROLE

Note: An easy and tasty side dish that works well for barbecues and entertaining.

1 32-oz. bag frozen shredded hash browns, defrosted

1 cup thinly sliced green onions

1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese

2 T. melted butter

16 oz. sour cream

1 can cream of mushroom soup

Salt and pepper

Paprika to sprinkle on top

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine all of the ingredients except the paprika in a large bowl. Spoon into a greased 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with the paprika. Bake at 350° for an hour or until golden brown and bubbly. Serves 5 with leftovers.

MASHED POTATO CASSEROLE WITH SMOKED GOUDA AND BACON

Note: It tastes as good as it sounds.

6 slices thick-cut applewood smoked bacon or highest quality you can find

3 large green onions, white and pale green parts, finely chopped

3 pounds Yukon Gold or russet potatoes, your choice, peeled and cut into 1½-inch cubes

¾ cup sour cream or créme fraîche

⅓ cup whole milk

½ stick butter

2 cups coarsely grated smoked Gouda cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 375°. Butter a 9" x 13" baking dish. Cook bacon until golden brown and crispy. Drain on a paper towel and chop. Put in a bowl and add green onions. Toss to combine.

Place potatoes into a pot and add enough cold water to cover. Sprinkle with salt. Bring to a boil and simmer until the potatoes are tender. 15 to 20 minutes. Drain well.

Return potatoes to the pot. Cook over low heat, stirring often until potatoes are dry and light film forms on the bottom of the pot, about two minutes. Add next 3 ingredients. Using a potato masher, mash until smooth. Stir in 1½ cups smoked Gouda and most of the bacon mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Spread potato mixture in the baking dish. Sprinkle with the remaining Gouda cheese and the leftover bacon mixture. You can make this ahead up until this point. Bake for 30 minutes until cheese is melted and brown and the potatoes are hot.

CAMEMBERT MASHED POTATOES

Note: What a luxurious treat. This little trick with the frozen Camembert or brie is one we learned from a chef in Vermont. Keep an extra small wheel of cheese in the freezer and pull it out to grate on salads, soups and, of course, these potatoes. Once it is grated, it warms and softens so no one will be able to figure out how you did it.

1 (8 oz.) round Camembert cheese, substitute brie If you like

Kosher salt and fresh white pepper

3 lbs. Yukon gold potatoes, peeled if you like, and cubed

Fresh chives, if you have them

½ cup milk

Extra round Camembert cheese, frozen

Carefully remove the rind from the cheese trying not to waste too much of the good stuff. Cut into wedges and let sit until it gets to room temperature.

Place potatoes in a large pot, cover with water and bring to a boil. Simmer about twelve minutes until tender. Drain in a colander and return the potatoes to the same pan. Keep the heat at simmer and stir the potatoes for a minute letting the water to evaporate. Turn off the heat.

Add the cheese, milk, chives and salt and pepper to taste. Mash with a potato masher until smooth. Garnish with grated frozen Camembert on top.

GRILLED-CORN MASHED POTATOES

Note: We are always looking for something new to do with potatoes. This is a great summertime accompaniment for steaks or chicken. When we first read the recipe we thought potatoes and corn? It could be really good or really bad. Trust us, it's really good!

3 ears sweet corn, shucked

1½ T. olive oil

Kosher salt

Freshly ground pepper

2 lbs. Yukon Gold Potatoes, peeled or unpeeled your choice

½ stick butter

6 T. heavy cream

Wood chips, soaked for an hour in water, then drained

Preheat the grill to high and add the wood chips. When you see smoke, brush the corn with olive oil and season. Grill the corn until golden brown on all sides, turning with tongs. Put the grilled corn on a cutting board and let it cool slightly. Cut the kernels off with a chef's knife. Don't throw away the cobs. Set aside the kernels.

Cut the potatoes into 1-inch pieces and put in a large saucepan. Add the corncobs to the potatoes and cover with water. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and let the potatoes simmer until very tender, about 12 minutes. Drain the potatoes and toss the corncobs. Return the potatoes to the pan and cook over medium heat for a minute to get rid of excess water. Using a potato masher, mash the potatoes adding enough butter and cream so that they become soft and fluffy. Do not pureé them or use a hand mixer because they become gummy. Stir in the corn kernels and season with salt and pepper to taste.

CREAMY MASHED YUKON GOLD POTATOES

Note: Peeling the potatoes for this recipe gives these potatoes a more refined elegant texture and pine nuts make them extra good.

2 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks

2 cloves garlic peeled

3 T. butter, softened

1 cup milk, hot but not boiling

Freshly ground white or black pepper

Kosher salt

½ cup toasted pine nuts

Put the potatoes and garlic into a large saucepan and cover with cold water by at least an inch. Add ½ teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. Lower the heat to maintain a steady simmer and cover the pot partially. Cook until the potatoes are quite tender when tested with a metal skewer, about 20 minutes.

Drain the potatoes and garlic, reserve some of the cooking water, and put them back into the sauce pan. Dry the potatoes over medium heat, stirring until the potatoes look floury and leave a light film on the bottom of the pan. Remove from heat and mash in the butter, then the hot milk by ¼-cup increments. If the potatoes are still too thick you can mash in a bit of the reserved cooking water until they reach the consistency you like. Add pine nuts and salt and pepper. Stir and serve right away.

MASHED PURPLE PERUVIAN POTATOES WITH SWEET LIME BUTTER

Note: This is a flavorful potato to serve with your Peruvian feast, either the Supper Club Anticuchos on page 84, or the Peruvian Chicken on page 116. When you roast purple potatoes they keep most of their lovely lavender color. You can also make the potatoes with Yukon Golds but they won't be as striking.

2 lbs. large purple potatoes, scrubbed

6 T. butter softened

2 T. lime zest

1 T. sugar

¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

3 T. fresh lime juice

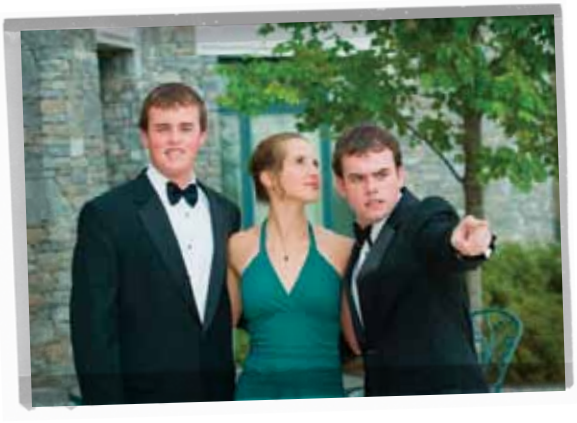
½ cup chicken stock, warmed

½ cup sour cream

½ tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 450°. Pierce potatoes with a fork and bake 50 minutes until very tender. Meanwhile, combine butter, lime zest, sugar, pepper and lime juice in a bowl. Blend until smooth and set aside.

Remove potatoes from the oven and cut in half. Carefully scoop out hot flesh from skins. Discard the skins. In a large bowl mash the potatoes with warmed chicken stock, sour cream, salt and pepper. Place in a serving bowl and top with the lime butter. Serves 6



RICE PILAF SALAD WITH ORANGE VINAIGRETTE

Note: This is a perfect summer side dish that can be made well in advance and served at room temperature. The trick to making it is to chop the vegetables while the rice is cooking and add them to the rice while is rice is still hot so that the heat slightly cooks the veggies. Feel free to vary the vegetables that you use to make the flavor slightly different or use up leftovers in your fridge.

2 boxes Near East Rice Pilaf Mix, original recipe

1 red bell pepper, very finely diced

2 carrots, peeled and very finely diced

4 green onions, very finely diced including lots of the green parts

2 celery stalks, very finely diced (you can chop the celery leaves and add them too)

¼ cup minced Italian parsley

For the Orange Vinaigrette:

½ cup olive oil

¼ cup white balsamic vinegar (sub champagne vinegar or white wine vinegar if you don't have white balsamic)

1 T. grated orange rind

⅓ cup fresh orange juice

2 garlic cloves

Make the vinaigrette by adding all the ingredients to a blender and blend until smooth. Set aside.

Prepare the rice according to package directions. While the rice is cooking, chop the vegetables and put them in a large serving bowl. Add the rice to the bowl with the veggies straight from the pot while it is still hot. Mix well. Toss with the orange vinaigrette. Season liberally with Kosher salt and freshly ground black or white pepper. Cover and keep in the fridge until an hour before serving. It tastes best at room temperature.

BAKED RICE WITH CHILES, CORN AND SOUR CREAM

Note: This Mexican rice casserole is a great substitute for the red Spanish rice usually served AND it's a great use for leftover rice in the fridge. If you are in a hurry, you can substitute a small can of diced green chiles, drained and rinsed, for the fresh poblanos. It's definitely a crowd pleaser.

2 Poblano chiles, fresh

2 cups water

1 T. butter

Salt

1 cup long grain rice

1 T. vegetable oil

¼ cup plus 2 T. chopped onion

1 garlic clove, chopped

¾ cup corn, fresh, frozen or canned

½ cup sour cream

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

2¼ cups grated white sharp Cheddar cheese

Char-grill the chiles over gas flame or broiler until blackened on all sides. Wrap in plastic and cool ten minutes. Peel, seed and chop chiles.

Bring two cups water, butter, salt in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add rice and cover. Reduce heat to low and simmer until liquid is absorbed and rice is tender. Transfer to a large bowl. Cool rice, stirring occasionally with a fork. Preheat oven to 325°.

Meanwhile, heat oil over medium heat. Add ¼ cup onion and garlic. Sauté until translucent. Add chopped chiles and sauté one minute. Add chile mixture and corn to the rice in the bowl. Whisk sour cream, cilantro and the rest of the chopped onion in a small bowl. Add sour cream and cheese to rice. Stir.

Transfer rice mixture to a greased casserole dish and bake until sides are light brown and the mixture is heated through, about a half-hour. Serve.

ASPARAGUS RISOTTO WITH MINT

Note: This is a wonderful side dish in the spring to serve with chicken or steak. The risotto gets extra flavor by simmering the tough ends of the asparagus and some fresh mint sprigs in the chicken stock. Serve right away so the asparagus in the risotto stays green and doesn't overcook.

6-8 cups chicken stock

1 bunch asparagus, Ends trimmed and saved,

4 mint sprigs, plus 2 T. chopped mint leaves

2 tsp. fennel seeds

2 T. extra-virgin olive oil

½ onion, diced

1 celery rib, diced

1½ cup arborio rice for risotto

½ cup dry white wine

2 T. butter, softened

¼ cup freshly grated Reggiano Parmesan cheese

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

Slice the asparagus into bite-sized diagonal pieces. In a medium saucepan, add chicken stock, mint sprigs and asparagus ends. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer. In a small sauté pan, toast the fennel until fragrant, don't burn. Grind and set aside.

In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil. Add onion and celery. Cook over medium heat until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the rice and ground fennel. Stir well and cook for another 2 minutes until rice starts to pop a little. Add wine and cook until absorbed, stirring frequently. Add strained asparagus-mint stock 1 cup at a time, stirring until the stock is completely absorbed. Continue adding stock until the rice is tender and stock is absorbed, about 20 minutes. Add sliced asparagus and cook until the asparagus is crisp-tender. Add butter, cheese and freshly chopped mint. Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

RISOTTO OF WOODLAND MUSHROOMS AND ROASTED CELERY ROOT

Note: The secret is the richness the roasted celery root adds. It is perfect to serve with beef on a cold winter day.

Risotto:

1 celery root (celeriac), diced

2 T. butter

salt & pepper

6-8 cups chicken stock

1 shallot, finely chopped

5¼ oz. mixed woodland mushrooms, including golden chanterelles, yellow foot, shamiji

1 tsp. olive oil

3½ oz. onions, finely chopped

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

1 sprig of thyme

2 cups carnaroli risotto rice

½ cup white wine

2 tsp. mixed chopped herbs, including chervil, parsley, chives, and tarragon

¼ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano, grated

Squeeze of fresh lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 350°. Sauté the celery root in 1 tablespoon of the butter. Season with salt and pepper. Place into the oven and cook until soft, approximately 30 minutes. Using a hand blender, puree the celery root until smooth, then reserve.

Bring the chicken stock to a simmer in a separate pan. In a small skillet, sauté the chopped shallot and mushrooms in the olive oil. Season to taste. Remove from the pan and put to one side until finishing the risotto.

In a large saucepan, sauté the onions and garlic in the remaining 2 tablespoons butter with the thyme until soft. Add the rice, increase the heat and toast for 2-3 minutes. Add the white wine and half of the stock, continually stirring the risotto mix until the rice starts to absorb the liquid. Add the remaining liquid in small amounts—it will take
approx. 18-20 minutes to cook. Once the rice is cooked, add the shallot/mushrooms, pureed celery root, cheese and chopped herbs. Season to taste with salt, pepper and a good squeeze of fresh lemon. Serve.

DAVID'S LEMON RISOTTO CAPRI STYLE

Note: We had the most marvelous lemon risotto in Capri, probably the lemon capital of the world. Since we've been back, David has been trying to duplicate the recipe. Well, here it is. Too much lemon juice makes it tart. The fabulous lemon flavor actually comes from the zest.

3 cups low-salt chicken broth, or homemade stock

Zest of one lemon, minced

2 T. lemon juice, no more

3 cups water

large shallots

2 celery stalks

3 T. butter

1 T. olive oil

⅓ cup white wine

2 cups Arborio or canaroli rice for risotto

2 T. fresh rosemary, finely chopped

4 T. freshly grated Reggiano-Parmesan cheese

4 T. heavy cream

Salt and freshly ground white pepper

Mix the chicken broth and water together in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil first, then turn down to a simmer. Finely chop the shallots and celery. Heat the oil and butter together and sauté the shallots and celery over medium-high heat until softened, about five minutes. Mix in the rice, stirring constantly until the rice begins to make a popping sound, about 3 minutes. Add the wine and stir until evaporated.

Add the hot broth mixture to the rice ½ cup at a time. Stir frequently until the liquid is evaporated. Keep adding broth by ½ cups until the rice is almost cooked the way you like it. Add the lemon zest and rosemary to the rice.

In a small bowl, mix the lemon juice, Parmesan, cream and pepper. When the risotto is fully cooked, take it off the heat and add the lemony mixture and salt to taste. Serve at once and pass more Parmesan at the table if you like.

CHEDDAR CHEESE RISOTTO

Note: This is true comfort food. Although Italians would frown on this Americanized version of risotto, it works.

1 T butter

1 T. vegetable oil

2 small leeks, washed well and finely sliced

2 cups arborio rice for risotto

½ cup white wine

½ tsp. Dijon mustard

6 cups **hot** vegetable or chicken stock, more if needed

2 cups grated extra-sharp Cheddar cheese

2 T. chopped fresh chives

Melt the butter and oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Cook the leeks until softened, not browned. Add the risotto rice and stir continuously until the rice is starting to turn golden, about two minutes. Add the white wine and mustard and stir until absorbed. Start ladling in the simmering stock about ½ cup at a time. Stir constantly and let the rice completely absorb the stock before adding more. Continue this process until the rice is al dente, about 20 minutes. Add the cheese, stirring it into the rice as it melts. Take off the heat. Sprinkle with the chives and serve.

RISOTTO CAKES

Note: This recipe works great with risotto that does not have big chunks of meat or vegetables because it holds together better. If they fall apart, don't despair. They may not look as pretty, but they still taste great!

Leftover risotto, chilled

Nonstick sauté pan or griddle

Cooking spray

Make small hamburger sized patties out of leftover risotto. Be sure to work the risotto well and press it together firmly to help it hold together while you are cooking. Spray your pan with the cooking spray and turn the burner to low heat. When the pan is hot, add the risotto cakes and cook patiently until golden brown and crispy on one side, about 15 minutes. Carefully flip and cook until the other side is equally browned. Remove from skillet and serve immediately.

RUSTIC TOMATO PIE

Note: Another winner from Jenny. She brought this to a birthday party recently and it was everyone's favorite. It's wonderful with ripe summer Grainger County tomatoes.

1 Pillsbury Pie Crust

2 T. pesto

2-3 ripe tomatoes, sliced (about ½ inch)

4-5 slices fresh mozzarella

3 T. shredded Parmesan cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

1 T. olive oil

2 T. chopped fresh basil

Cook piecrust at 375° for 15 minutes in pie dish with holes poked on bottom with a fork (or use pie weights). Take piecrust out of oven. Spread pesto over the bottom of the crust. Layer tomato slices in a circle around pie Add fresh mozzarella and parmesan cheese. Add salt and pepper and olive oil evenly over pie. Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes until slightly browning on top. When out of the oven, sprinkle basil over pie and serve.

FALL FENNEL GRATIN WITH TOMATO

Note: This a savory Italian side dish that goes well with beef. Fennel is one of those vegetables that people love but hardly anyone makes.

2 large bulbs fennel

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 ripe tomato, seeded and diced

Kosher salt and fresh ground white or black pepper

¾ cup warm chicken broth

2 T. heavy cream

⅓ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350°. Trim off the fennel stalks. Cut bulbs in half lengthwise and then slice very thickly. In a gratin dish, combine the fennel, garlic and tomato. Season with salt and pepper. Pour the warm broth over the vegetables and bake for one hour or until fennel is very tender. Stir every twenty minutes or so. Remove dish from the oven and turn your broiler on. Move oven rack to the highest level under the broiler. Drizzle fennel with cream and top with the Parmesan cheese. Broil until the top is golden and bubbly. Serve.

ORANGE AND WHITE VEGETABLE PURÉE

Note: Serve this dish side by side, touching with your meat of choice on top. Spoon an equal amount on the plate so it is pretty when it comes to the table but the flavors meld together beautifully. If you are making a gourmet dinner that happens to be on a UT football night, this is the side dish to serve. We also make it on holidays.

For the Orange (Carrot Purée):

1 lb. peeled carrots, halved lengthwise and cut into ½" pieces

2 small garlic cloves

2/3 cup chicken broth

½ tsp. salt

4 T. heavy cream

2 tsp. unsalted butter

Simmer carrots, garlic, broth and salt until carrots are very tender, about 12 to 14 minutes. Purée mixture with cream and butter in a food processor until velvety smooth.

For the White (Celery Root Purée):

1 lb. celery root, peeled with a sharp knife and cut into ½-inch pieces

2 garlic cloves, peeled

1 cup chicken broth

½ tsp. salt

6 T. heavy cream

2 tsp. butter

Simmer celery root, garlic, broth and salt until celery root is very tender, about 12 to 14 minutes. Purée mixture in a food processor until velvety smooth.

Purées can be made a day ahead and chilled. Reheat in an ovenproof dish covered with foil at 425° for about 10 minutes.

SOUTHWESTERN CHEESE GRITS

Note: The stoneground grits are the key. We use Anson Mills brand, which have a lot of texture to them. You may prefer a different brand but make sure they are slow cooking. You can get very creative and use different cheese with your grits. This is our favorite combination.

1 cup stone ground grits (Don't substitute quick grits. They won't work in the recipe.)

32-oz chicken broth

1 cup or more shredded cheddarjack with jalapeño peppers

¼ cup ripe Roma tomatoes, chopped

Chopped fresh cilantro

(Substitute some prepared salsa for the tomatoes and cilantro if you like)

Bring the chicken broth to a boil, turn broth to medium low and slowly stir in the grits. Cook until grits thicken, about 20 minutes. Add the cheese, tomatoes and cilantro or salsa. Stirring and tasting until you like it. They can be runny so we serve them as a side dish in a small custard cup.

JAY'S MOTHER'S JALAPEÑO CORNBREAD

Note: As Jay explains, "She opened the oven door and a prayer was answered. Wafting through the kitchen to fulfill a child's request of God. The coming certainty of my mother's jalapeño cornbread."
Thank you Jay for sharing this recipe and family history.

1 cup yellow cornmeal (I said yellow and I meant it)

½ tsp. salt

½ tsp. baking soda

⅓ cup vegetable oil

canned diced jalapeños (about a cup)

2 eggs, slightly beaten

1 cup canned creamed corn

⅔ cup buttermilk

1 cup cheese grated (extra sharp Cheddar, from my mouth to God's ear)

Combine cornmeal, salt and soda. Stir in oil: add eggs. Stir in corn and buttermilk. Add peppers. Pour ½ batter in greased iron skillet. Sprinkle with cheese. Top with other half of batter. Bake at 275° for 50-55 minutes. The truly gifted will sample doneness with a toothpick. If nothing sticks, then it's ready. Others will just poke and prod. Marvelous the next day in a damp paper towel and microwaved for about 8 seconds.

SOUTHWESTERN BAKED BLACK BEANS

Note: Looking for a Southwestern twist on baked beans? Wanna jazz up your next barbecue? Check this recipe out.

2 T. bacon grease or canola oil

1 small onion, diced

1 small yellow pepper, diced

1 clove garlic, minced

2 (15-oz.) cans black beans, drained and rinsed in a colander

1 cup your favorite barbecue sauce

¼ tsp. liquid smoke

1 T. canned chipolte chile, in Adobo sauce, minced

Preheat oven to 350°. In a heavy ovenproof saucepan or Dutch oven, heat the bacon grease or oil. Sauté onion, yellow pepper and garlic until tender. Mix in all remaining ingredients. Bake for 30 minutes until hot and bubbly.

GREEN CHILE HOMINY CASSEROLE

Note: If you want a side dish for southwestern food or steak but are sick of rice and potatoes, give this a try. It is easy to make ahead of time and it freezes well too. It is an unexpected crowd-pleaser and we guarantee that somebody will ask you for the recipe.

10 slices bacon, fried crisp and chopped. Reserve the drippings.

1 cup chopped onions

4 15-oz cans hominy, reserve ½ cup of the liquid. Drain the rest and rinse in a colander.

½ cup hominy liquid

1 T. juice from pickled jalapeño jar

2 cups sharp grated Cheddar cheese

1 small can diced green chiles

1-2 pickled jalapeños, chopped

Sauté the onions in a little of the bacon drippings until translucent. Set aside. Heat the hominy in a separate pan, stirring often. Add the hominy liquid, jalapeño juice and 1 cup of the Cheddar cheese. When the cheese melts, add the onion and half of the green chiles, jalapeños and bacon.

Pour into a 9X13 greased casserole dish and top with the remaining cheese, bacon and peppers. Bake at 325° until heated through and bubbly, about a half hour, (longer if refrigerated). Serves 6 to 8

SPRING VEGETABLE PASTA COOKED RISOTTO STYLE

Note: We were fascinated when we first saw this recipe. The idea of a creamy pasta without cream or excess butter seemed almost too good to be true. We knew it would either be really, really good or a total flop. Well, we tried it and haven't been this excited about a recipe in a long time.

3 leeks, sliced lengthwise and washed

1 lb. asparagus, toughed ends snapped off and reserved for stock, the rest cut into bite-sized pieces

2 cups frozen peas

4 garlic cloves, minced

5 cups vegetable or chicken stock

2 T. fresh mint leaves, minced

2 T. fresh chives, minced

½ tsp. grated lemon zest plus 2T. fresh lemon juice

6 T. extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt

¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

1 cup dry white wine

1 lb. high-quality dried penne, ziti, bowties or campanelle pasta

½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, plus some for the table

First make the flavored broth.

Take the washed leeks and slice the white and light green parts into ½-inch slices. Set these aside. Roughly chop the dark green parts. Place dark green leek trimmings, asparagus stalks, 1 cup of the frozen peas, half of the minced garlic and the vegetable or chicken stock in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat and lower heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes. While the broth is simmering, combine the fresh mint, chives and lemon zest in a small bowl and set aside.

Strain the broth through a fine-mesh strainer, pressing on the solids to extract as much liquid as possible. You should have 5 cups, if not, add more stock or water until you do. Discard solids and return the broth to the saucepan, cover and keep warm over low heat.

Heat 2 T. olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add sliced leeks and salt. Cook, stirring frequently until the leeks are golden, about 5 minutes. Don't burn them. Add asparagus pieces and cook until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Add the rest of the garlic, the red pepper flakes and the remaining cup of peas and cook for one more minute. Transfer veggies to a bowl and set aside.

Heat remaining 4 T. olive oil in the now empty Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add the pasta and stir continuously until just turning golden, about 5 minutes. Add white wine and cook, stirring constantly until the wine is absorbed.

When the wine is fully absorbed, add the 5 cups of hot vegetable broth. Increase heat to medium high and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring frequently, until most of the liquid is absorbed and the pasta is al dente, 8 to 10 minutes.

Remove pot from heat and stir in lemon juice, Parmesan cheese, the herb mixture and the vegetables. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately with extra Parmesan on the table.

ORZO WITH FETA AND CHERRY TOMATOES

Note: Orzo pasta is a refreshing and delicious alternative to rice as a side dish for lamb, kebabs or just about any summer dish you like. These Greek flavors really make it a stand-out dish.

1 lb. orzo pasta

1 pint cherry tomatoes

3 T. olive oil

½ lb. feta cheese

2/3 cup pine nuts

3 T. red wine vinegar

2 garlic cloves

1 cup packed Italian parsley leaves

Put a large pot on the stove to boil for orzo. Mince garlic and coarsely chop parsley. Quarter the tomatoes and coarsely crumble the feta. In a large bowl whisk together garlic, parsley, red wine vinegar and olive oil. Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste. Add tomatoes and feta. Gently toss to combine. Cook and drain orzo, stirring until almost all of the water is removed. Add to tomato mixture, tossing until just combined. Top with pine nuts and serve.

LINGUINI WITH TOMATOES, BASIL AND BRIE

Note: This recipe is from our friend Barbara and she used to cook it for us during the summer in Colorado. We get hungry just thinking of it. You must have fresh basil, good brie and the ripest of tomatoes for this!

5 or 6 fresh, ripe tomatoes, cut into small bite sized chunks

1 lb. ripe brie cheese, rind removed

5 cloves minced garlic

¾ cup chopped fresh basil

3 T. good quality olive oil

Freshly ground black pepper

1 lb. dried linguine pasta

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Two hours before dinner, make the sauce. Tear the brie into bite-sized irregular pieces. Put brie and all of the rest of the ingredients in a large bowl and stir (except Parmesan cheese and pasta). Let sit covered at room temperature at least 2 hours. When you get home, all you have to do is cook the linguine, and add it to the tomato/brie mixture while very hot. Toss and serve. Pass the Parmesan cheese.

JENNY'S BAKED MACARONI AND CHEESE

Note: This mac and cheese is what we ate as kids (before they invented the kind in the box) and is so worth the calories. Jenny brought this to our supper club for children, but the adults were the ones eating it!

For the Optional Bread Crumb Topping:

2 T. butter

1 cup fresh bread crumbs from French or Italian bread

1 oz. sharp Cheddar cheese, grated

If you like your macaroni and cheese with topping, heat butter in a large skillet over medium heat until foam subsides. Add bread crumbs. Cook, stirring, until the crumbs just begin to color. Season with salt and cool. When cool, stir in the cheese.

For the Creamy Macaroni and Cheese:

1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk

¼ tsp. hot red pepper sauce

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

½ lb. Creamette Jumbo Elbow Macaroni

4 T. butter

1½ cup sharp Wisconsin Cheddar, grated

1½ cup Velveeta or American cheese, grated

Mix 1 cup only of the evaporated milk, pepper sauce, salt, and pepper. Set aside. If you are going to do the topping, preheat your oven to broil and adjust the oven rack so it is about 6 inches from the broiler. Meanwhile cook the macaroni until almost tender, but still a bit firm to the bite. Drain and return to the pan over low heat. Add butter and toss to melt. Pour the milk mixture over the noodles along with three-quarters of the cheese. Stir until thoroughly combined and cheese starts to melt. Gradually add remaining milk and cheese, stirring constantly until the mixture is hot and creamy, about 5 minutes. If you don't want the bread crumbs, serve now.

If you like the topping, pour mixture into a 9-inch square baking dish. Spread crumbs evenly over the top. Broil until the crumbs turn deep brown. Let stand 5 minutes and serve.

SPAGHETTI WITH GREEN TOMATOES

Note: Southerners are famous for eating green tomatoes in the summertime. We've all heard of the dish "fried green tomatoes". This pasta sauce is made with raw green tomatoes and is different from anything we've ever tasted. It is absolutely refreshing with underlying mint flavors and perfect for a hot summer night. It would be sublime as a side dish for lamb T-bones.

¼ cup fresh mint leaves

¼ cup fresh basil leaves

¼ cup Italian parsley

¼ cup arugula

4 green tomatoes (not tomatillos)

1 clove garlic, chopped

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 lb. spaghetti

¼ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Bring the water for the pasta to a boil. Meanwhile, in a food processor, combine the mint, basil, parsley, arugula, green tomatoes, garlic and olive oil and pulse to form a chunky puree. Season aggressively with salt and freshly ground black pepper and set aside. Cook the pasta until it's done al dente. Drain the pasta and return to the pot. Turn the heat to simmer. Stir in the sauce and Parmesan cheese and mix until well blended. Serve immediately with extra cheese passed at the table.

DECONSTRUCTED PESTO PASTA

Note: Wow. We love this deconstructed pesto even better than regular pesto. It is so light and flavorful at the same time. YUM!

6 T. extra-virgin olive oil

½ cup pine nuts, toasted

8 cloves garlic, very thinly sliced

1 cup freshly grated Parmesan

1 lb. dried pasta like fusilli, ziti or penne

2 cups (about 2 ½ oz.) fresh basil cut into very thinly sliced ¼-inch strips

Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

1 vine-ripe tomato, optional

Start cooking the pasta. While the pasta cooks, gently heat the olive oil and sliced garlic over low heat, stirring frequently until the garlic starts to turn golden. Do not burn the garlic. Remove from heat and stir in ¾ tsp. Kosher salt and some freshly ground black pepper. When the pasta is done, scoop out ½ cup of the cooking liquid and reserve.

Drain the pasta and return it to the pot and turn the heat to its lowest setting. Pour the garlic and olive oil over the hot pasta and toss. Pour the reserved water into the skillet, swirl it around and then pour it over the pasta. Add the pine nuts, cheese and basil and toss again until thoroughly mixed.

Optional: If you have tomatoes from the garden, try this- chop one large tomato, add one tablespoon of olive oil, heat in the microwave for one minute and add it to the pasta along with the basil and cheese. Serve immediately with extra cheese on the table.

FRESH WHOLE CRANBERRY RELISH

Note: Much better than the stuff in the can. You can make it ahead of time and spread the leftovers on your turkey sandwiches.

4 cups fresh cranberries, rinsed (about 1 lb.)

2 cups sugar

½ cup cranberry juice

½ cup fresh orange juice

1 T. finely grated orange zest

Combine all ingredients in a heavy saucepan and stir well. Place the pan over medium heat and cook until the berries pop open, about 15 minutes. Skim the foam off the surface with a metal spoon and let the relish cool to room temperature. It will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 months.

AUNT KAREN'S OVERNIGHT FRENCH TOAST

Note: This is another recipe from Lindsey's Aunt Karen. It is perfect for a crowd because you make them the night before and then just pop them in the oven in the morning. Thanks, Karen!

2 T. butter
8 slices raisin bread, each 1 in. thick
4 eggs
4 egg whites
1½ cup milk
Powdered sugar
¼ cup sugar
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
2 T. maple syrup
1 tsp. vanilla extract
½ tsp. salt

Butter a large shallow baking pan. Arrange the bread slices in a single layer. In a large bowl, beat all remaining ingredients except the powdered sugar. Pour over bread and turn slices to coat. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. The next morning, bake 20 minutes in a 400° oven. Turn bread over and bake until golden, about 4 minutes longer. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve immediately.