

Recipes included at this site do not appear in
A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

March 2017

DOWNSIZING, PART 2: Entrées

**Bolognese Riced Potato Casserole
with Fresh *Mozzarella***

Eggplant *Parmigiana*

Individual Ramekins of Corn Pudding

Scalloped Potatoes

As I mentioned last month in part 1 of this exploration of downsizing, just halving a recipe is not always possible or advisable. Sometimes the liquid portion of the dish, when you halve, just does not support the needs of the dish during the baking period. Often the herbs and spices need to be adjusted to taste. Two other considerations are baking time and temperature. You will have to experiment with your oven, making notes on the recipe. I have notes on recipe cards relating to every oven in every kitchen in which I have worked. You should see the cards for cookies . . .!!

The following four recipes should get you started on vegetarian entrées that do not encourage overeating and do not contribute to the “little dish clutter,” as we call it, that can often fill a refrigerator shelf with leftovers. The first step is to start collecting the smaller baking dish and skillets you will need. I shared a list of small baking dishes in last month’s column and I have bolded and enlarged suggestions in each recipe. If you find something else that will work for you, use it; the search is half the adventure.

**BOLOGNESE RICED POTATO CASSEROLE
WITH FRESH MOZZARELLA**

Pasticcio di Patate al Mozzarella

TPT - 1 hour

This, a casserole version of mashed potatoes as they are often prepared in Bologna, is a perfect foil for grilled vegetables. It is comfort food at its very best. If I did not make Ray's much loved Baccala senza Baccala on Christmas Eve, Pasticcio di Patate al Mozzarella would be the potato dish that accompanied our Eggplant Parmigiano and oven-baked finocchio. I bake in a small soufflé dish so that there is no need to rearrange the over-filled refrigerator to add leftovers.

1 pound all-purpose waxy potatoes—peeled and chopped

2 quarts boiling water

3 tablespoons skimmed milk

2 teaspoons butter

**2 teaspoons pecorino Romano or Parmesan cheese,
As preferred**

1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh basil

1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley

1/4 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest

Pinch freshly grated nutmeg

**2 1/2 tablespoons diced (about 3/4 ounce) fresh
Mozzarella cheese***

2 tablespoons whole-wheat breadcrumbs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare a **5-inch soufflé dish** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat, cook chopped potatoes in *boiling* water until tender—about 25 minutes. Drain thoroughly.

While the potatoes are cooking, heat milk to just below the boiling point.

Put butter into a large mixing bowl. Using a RICER, rice potatoes over the butter. Using a fork, *gently* stir hot milk into the potatoes *without losing the lightness of the riced potatoes*. Add grated cheese, chopped basil and parsley, grated lemon zest, grated nutmeg, and diced *fresh mozzarella* cheese. Again, stir *gently*. Turn potato mixture into prepared *soufflé* dish, spreading it evenly across the dish.

Sprinkle breadcrumbs over the top.**

Bake in preheated 350 degree F. oven for about 20 minutes.

Serve at once.



Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: *Fresh *mozzarella*, usually in small salad-sized balls, is generally available in the deli departments of grocery stores, if you are not fortunate enough to have an Italian grocery or deli nearby. Although I have found it available only as a whole milk cheese, it has such a fresh taste and is such a pleasant change from the low-moisture versions, which have their place but not in this dish, you will travel an hour for the pleasure.

**If cooled at this point, this casserole can be securely wrapped in aluminum foil and frozen. Since this recipe can be doubled, I often make two 5-inch casseroles and freeze one for a future meal.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 4.9 g.; FAT = 3.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 18.8 g.;
CALORIES = 125; CALORIES FROM FAT = 27%

EGGPLANT PARMIGIANA

Melanzanes Parmigiana

TPT - 3 hours and 30 minutes;
1 hour = eggplant draining period;
30 minutes = breaded eggplant setting period

Restaurants just do not make their “parmigiana” like you can make it at home. Even in Italy, we did not find restaurants that made “parmigiana” this good!! It would not be Christmas Eve for Ray without this dish but Christmas Eve Day is way too busy a day to devote three hours to making eggplant parmigiana. Instead, I can just pull a casserole for two out of the freezer, a casserole I froze in the fall using this recipe.

**2 small eggplants—washed, trimmed, and each sliced
into eight 1/4-inch crosswise slices**

Coarse or kosher salt

**3/4 cup fine, dry, whole wheat breadcrumbs
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
6 tablespoons fat-free pasteurized eggs**

1 tablespoon safflower or sunflower oil

**6 ounces part-skimmed milk, low-moisture mozzarella cheese
—thinly sliced**

1/2 teaspoon dried basil—crushed

**1 tablespoon grated Parmesan or pecorino Romano cheese,
as preferred**

**1 cup TOMATO MUSHROOM SAUCE (*Salsa di Pomodori
con Funghi*) or FRESH MARINARA SAUCE (*Salsa
Marinara*) or other tomato sauce of choice***

Salt eggplant slices generously and place them in a sieve or colander set in the sink. Place a plate on top and a weight—a large can or a tea kettle filled with water—on top of the plate. Allow to stand for 1 hour.

Combine breadcrumbs and black pepper in a shallow pie plate. Pour pasteurized eggs into a second pie plate.

Rinse eggplant slices well in cold water and pat dry. Dip each slice in seasoned breadcrumbs; then dip each in beaten egg; and then again in breadcrumbs. Arrange breaded eggplant slices on a large platter and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow breading to set.

Place a 17 x 15 x 1-inch non-stick-coated jelly roll pan in the oven to heat. Preheat oven to 385 degrees F.

Remove the preheated baking sheet from oven. Pour 1 tablespoons of oil on the pan; brush to edges. Arrange eggplant slices on the baking sheet. Bake in preheated 385 degree oven for 10 minutes. Rotate baking sheet. Continue baking for an additional 10 minutes. Remove baking sheet from oven. Turn each eggplant slice. Return to oven for about 10 minutes

more, or until each slice is crisp and well-browned. Drain eggplant slices *thoroughly* on several thicknesses of paper toweling.

Reduce oven to 350 degrees F.

In the bottom of **four 6 x 4-inch oblong baking dishes** pour about 1/4 inch of sauce. Place 2 well-drained eggplant slices over sauce. Add a layer of *mozzarella* cheese slices. Add more sauce and then a sprinkling of both crushed basil and grated cheese. Repeat layer ending with a layer of *mozzarella* cheese and a sprinkling crushed basil and grated cheese.

Bake in preheated 350 degree F. oven for 20 minutes. Remove three of the casseroles from the oven. Set aside and allow to cool completely, after which you can double-wrap them with aluminum foil, label, and freeze for future use.**

Continue baking the remaining casserole for 10 minutes more.

Serve hot.



Yields four oblong casseroles
each adequate for 2 servings

Notes: *My tomato mushroom sauce and my *marinara* sauce can be found on pp. 686 and 682, respectively, of volume II of *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*.

When required, this recipe can be baked in a single 2-quart *soufflé* dish or other oven-to-table casserole.

1/8 SERVING (i. e., two servings from each of the four casseroles) –
PROTEIN = 7.9 g.; FAT = 9.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 7.7 g.;
CALORIES = 141; CALORIES FROM FAT = 61%



INDIVIDUAL RAMEKINS OF CORN PUDDING

TPT - 32 minutes

These little casseroles can be prepared ahead of time, refrigerated, and baked at dinnertime making them an excellent choice for a busy day or for a party menu. They remind me of a Colonial spoon pudding I have made for years.

2 teaspoons stone-ground yellow corn flour*
1 teaspoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon baking powder

2 1/2 tablespoons *light* dairy sour cream
3 tablespoons skimmed milk
2 1/2 tablespoons *fat-free* pasteurized eggs

1 teaspoon butter—*melted*

1/3 cup fresh *or defrosted, frozen* corn kernels
1 tablespoon *finely* chopped onion
2 1/2 tablespoons shredded *sharp* Cheddar cheese
2 tablespoons *finely* diced tomato—for garnish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare **two 6-ounce ramekins or two onion soup crocks** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

In a small dish, combine corn meal, sugar, and baking powder. Stir together. Set aside.

In a mixing bowl, combine sour cream, milk, pasteurized eggs, and *melted* butter. Using a wire whisk, combine thoroughly.

Add corn meal–sugar–baking powder mixture. Stir to combine thoroughly.

Add corn, *finely* chopped onion, and shredded Cheddar cheese. Divide between prepared ramekins or soup crocks.



Bake in preheated 350 degree F. oven for 20-22 minutes, or until firm.

Garnish each with a tablespoonful of diced tomato.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 individual servings

Notes: **Masa harina* is a corn meal that is milled to a fine texture, perfect for making *tortillas*. It is generally available in the international aisle of most well-stocked grocery stores.

This recipe can be doubled or tripled, when required.

1/2 SERVING (i. e., per ramekin) –
PROTEIN = 7.7 g.; FAT = 6.2 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 20.2 g.;
CALORIES = 118; CALORIES FROM FAT = 47%



SCALLOPED POTATOES

TPT - 1 hour and 23 minutes

Scalloped potatoes appeared regularly on our table as I grew up and they are still a special favorite of mine and of those who gather at our table. Over the years I have added my own touches to this recipe by reducing the butter, adding a bit of grated cheese instead of salting as Mom did, and by adjusting the thin white sauce, which she always used, with the additions of whole wheat flour and skimmed milk. Hearty meals, where this might be just one of several vegetable offerings, are no more. We eat light meals today and serve this as a main course casserole for two.

**2 medium all-purpose potatoes (not Idaho)—
peeled and sliced into 1/8-inch slices**
**1 1/2 teaspoons grated pecorino Romano or
Parmesan cheese, as preferred**

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
1 1/2 teaspoons butter
1 tablespoon whole wheat flour
1 cup skimmed milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare a **5-inch soufflé dish** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

Arrange a layer of potato slices in prepared baking dish. Sprinkle lightly with grated cheese and black pepper. Repeat layers of potato slices and seasoning until all potato slices have been used. Set aside.

In a saucepan set over *LOW* heat, melt butter. Remove from heat and, using a wire whisk, make a *roux* by beating in flour. Return to heat and cook, stirring constantly, cook for 2 minutes, *being careful not to burn or overbrown the roux*. Remove from heat and gradually beat in milk. Return saucepan to heat and cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Remove from heat. Pour over layered potatoes in baking dish. The potatoes should be covered. If necessary, add more milk.

Bake in preheated 350 degree F. oven for 40-50 minutes, or until potatoes are tender and sauce is thickened.

Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: For variety, *finely* chopped onion may be layered with the potatoes.

This recipe may be doubled using a 2-quart *soufflé* dish or other oven-to-table casserole, when required. You will need to allow about an hour for baking when doubling.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.2; FAT = 1.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 14.4 g.;
CALORIES = 88; CALORIES FROM FAT = 18%



*Downsizing can help to keep the refrigerator and the freezer manageable
but there is always the problem of leftover perishable vegetables.
Next month I'll share with you some of my solutions to that problem.*

Do stop by.

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

© 2016