

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

April 2019

DIFFERENT VEGETABLE SIDES

Coconut Chick Pea Curry

French Celery in Cream Sauce

Garlicky Garden Peas

Pan-Grilled Red Onions with Buttered Crumbs

**Pan-Roasted Sweetpotato with Dried Cherries
and Pecans**

**Slow Cooker Root Vegetable *Ragoût*
with Corn and Chestnuts**

Oh, let's see; which green vegetable shall we have for dinner? That usually means green beans, peas, lima beans, zucchini, asparagus, spinach, or broccoli. Stir-fried greens or artichoke hearts, sautéed or grilled Brussels sprouts, steamed bok choy, butter-baked kohlrabi, celery, or chayote, braised fennel, or sautéed snowpeas don't usually make the options list. However, not all families venture much beyond the basic. Our six-year-old daughter was invited to a schoolmate's house for a pizza supper. The grandmother, who lived with them and did the cooking, asked her what vegetable she would like with her pizza. When Katy asked for broccoli, the grandmother said, "Oh no, the only vegetables we eat are peas, corn, or frozen potatoes."

Do you have a family member who finds an offering of green peas just plain boring? Or, do you just want an alternative way to serve these sweet little orbs? Resistance to peas can often be traced back to a childhood of canned peas. The added salt and sugar, and the pale gray-green color of the canned peas of my childhood could easily have ruined appreciation of this vegetable for a lifetime.

My image of celery was similarly myopic. Growing up during World War II and the post-war years of the 1950s exposed me to the ubiquitous relish dish. Crisp celery and radish roses with scallions and carrot sticks in lovely heirloom cut-glass dishes were served in homes and restaurants. When, in my twenties, I first cooked celery, and radishes too, it was a case of being considerably reticent to "dip a toe into the lake." Celery in a *bouquet garni*, celery in stuffing, celery in *chili*, celery in Calabrese *pasta* sauces, yes, I could handle those but celery all by itself . . . The French prepare celery in cream sauce and once tried, so will you. P. S. . . . roasted radishes are delicious!



I have included some recipes this month that we enjoy. Each choice can take the mundane out of vegetable sides and ignite your imagination as you browse the produce department. Exploring vegetable recipes can bring variety to your menus and infinitely increase the enjoyment of a plant-based eating plan.

COCONUT CHICK PEA CURRY

TPT - 19 minutes

Curry powders can be so insipid that you can't even begin to guess as to the spices that went into the mixture. My mom had a can marked curry powder in the cupboard for years and years. I was turned off by "curry anything" for years and years. A freshly prepared "curry mixture" is quite a different experience. My recipe for homemade curry powder can be found in volume II of "A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul" on p. 320. Also in volume II, on pp. 245-46, you can find a recipe for South African curry powder. Both work well in this dish; it just depends on the spicing mixture that pleases your family. . . . a little more of this, a little less of that . . . go for it and create your own blend. We try to get beans into our weekly menu planning; this is a very good way to do it.

2 teaspoons safflower or sunflower oil

1/3 cup finely chopped onion

1 teaspoon curry powder

1 teaspoon crushed dried curry leaf, if available*

2/3 cup light, sulfite-free coconut milk

**1 1/2 cups canned chick peas—drained, well-rinsed,
and seed coats removed**

1 tablespoon Thai sweet chili sauce, or more to taste

In a skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, heat oil. Add *finely* chopped onion and cook, stirring frequently, until onion is soft and translucent, *being careful not to allow onion to brown*.

Add curry powder and crushed curry leaf. Stir-fry for a minute or two.

Add coconut milk and chick peas. Cook, stirring frequently, for about 10 minutes. Turn into a heated serving bowl.

Serve at once.

Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: *Curry leaf (*Murraya kenigii*) is an interesting culinary herb that should not be confused with curry plant (*Helichrysum angustifolium*) which is non-culinary. It is a small evergreen tree native to India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka which can grow to 20 feet tall in the tropics. Since it is only hardy to zone 9, it must be grown as an annual in the northern United States and since it does not grow well from seeds, its availability, dried, from mail order spice firms is a significant advantage if you want to experiment with it.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.5 g.; FAT = 4.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 13.8 g.;
CALORIES = 68; CALORIES FROM FAT = 61%

FRENCH CELERY IN CREAM SAUCE

Celeris a la Bechamel

TPT - 30 minutes

The restaurant of the Buçaco royal hunting lodge / hotel in Portugal, in which we spent several nights in 1977, had an almost exclusively French menu then, about which we were warned by Antonio, the very entrepreneurial young concierge. “Do you like French cooking? Do you eat all those cream sauces?” It was rather a mundane menu with each menu offering including at least two or more elements in or dressed with, you guessed it, a cream sauce. During the intervening years, the more interesting nuances of French cuisine have brought Americans back to French cuisine sans some of those rich cream sauces. The subtle flavoring of this dish, when combined with the right entrée such as a rice dish or as a sauce over a lentil loaf, can be rather a pleasant change, “if you eat cream sauces.” I love this as a side dish with steamed barley.

1 cup water

**4 stalks celery—trimmed, fibers removed, and
finely chopped**

6 tablespoons whole milk*

1 1/2 teaspoons butter

**1 tablespoon whole wheat flour or unbleached
white flour, if preferred**

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Pinch teaspoon ground mace, or to taste**

4 drops pure vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

In a saucepan with cover, bring water to the boil. Add *finely* chopped celery and cook, covered, until *barely tender*—about 15 minutes. Drain, reserving cooking liquid from celery for sauce.

Combine celery water with whole milk to yield 1 cupful of liquid. 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, stirring constantly, cook for 2 minutes, *being careful not to burn or overbrown the roux*. Remove from heat and gradually beat in the 1 cupful liquid composed of mixture of milk and celery cooking water. Return to saucepan to heat and cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Add black pepper, ground mace, to taste, and vanilla extract. Set aside.

Just before serving, put celery in a saucepan. Stir lemon juice into white sauce and pour over celery. Heat gently, over *LOW* heat, stirring constantly, until just heated through. Turn into a heated serving bowl.

Serve at once.



Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: *Light cream or half and half can be substituted.

**Nutmeg may be substituted for mace if the latter is unavailable.

This recipe is easily doubled, when required.

1/6 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.9 g.; FAT = 2.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 5.9 g.;
CALORIES = 58; CALORIES FROM FAT = 45%

GARLICKY GARDEN PEAS

TPT - 19 minutes;
10 minutes = cooking period for peas

I love fresh or frozen garden peas. If not overcooked, which is often their fate, they are one of the most deliciously sweet, fresh vegetables you can serve. A handful of uncooked peas tossed into a salad will acquaint you with the taste I am talking about. During the winters of my youth, the gruesome salted and sugared canned peas that appeared on our table in the winter made me long for spring in my grandfather's garden. In the spring and summer Mother never had to admonish us to eat our peas. That bag of frozen peas sitting in your freezer is a gift of science and technology and need not be bypassed as boring. This method of preparing peas is a WOW! Even people who routinely roll peas around on their plate, usually scoop these up with enthusiasm. Peas always taste fresh and never overcooked using this method.



3 cups boiling water
1 1/3 cups frozen green peas

2 teaspoons garlic oil
Pinch sugar
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a mixing bowl, combine *boiling* water and *frozen* peas. Allow peas to remain in the water for 10 minutes.

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat garlic oil.

Drain peas. Add to hot garlic oil. Add sugar and season with black pepper. Stir well to coat peas with both the oil and the pepper. Turn into a heated serving bowl.

Serve at once.

Yields 4 servings

Note: This recipe can be halved or doubled, when required.



1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.7 g.; FAT = 1.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 4.2 g.;
CALORIES = 58; CALORIES FROM FAT = 23%

PAN-GRILLED RED ONIONS WITH BUTTERED CRUMBS

TPT - 43 minutes;
10 minutes = grill-pan reheating period

The smell of onions cooking seems to evoke a “something smells good” comment whether they are frying, caramelizing, just sautéing with other vegetables, or grilling. These simple pan-grilled slices deliver just a bit of the caramelizing flavor with the first bite and then a wonderful crunch of buttered crumbs. The finish is the touch of rosemary and grated cheese. It is, to my mind, a very different vegetable side, surely a lot different than those creamed onions that my family served every Christmas.

1/2 cup breadcrumbs
1 1/2 tablespoons butter
2 teaspoons grated *pecorino Romano* cheese

4 thick, large Italian red onion slices
1/2 teaspoon *high heat* safflower *or* sunflower oil
1/2 teaspoon sugar

Pinch rosemary powder

In a small skillet set over *LOW* heat, combine breadcrumbs, butter, and grated cheese. Cook, stirring frequently, until breadcrumbs have absorbed butter and are beginning to brown. Remove from heat and set aside until required.

Set a grill pan over *MEDIUM* heat. Allow to preheat for about 10 minutes.

Brush the onion slices with oil and sprinkle with sugar. Pan-grill on both sides until marked. Transfer to a heated serving plate. Sprinkle rosemary powder over each onion slice. Sprinkle each onion with a portion of the buttered breadcrumbs.

Serve at once.



Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Note: This recipe can be halved or doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.1 g.; FAT = 5.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 17.3 g.;
CALORIES = 124; CALORIES FROM FAT = 37%

PAN-ROASTED SWEETPOTATO WITH DRIED CHERRIES AND PECANS

TPT - 23 minutes

My mother-in-law frequently sautéed in a combination of olive oil and butter. Certain dishes just take naturally to this mixture and the aroma of these sweetpotatoes cooking take me back to her kitchen, although she more likely would have been making veal scaloppini. The nutrition sweetpotatoes provide and the lusciousness of the texture make this lovely tuber a popular vegetable. This recipe will give you another, quite different, way to enjoy a sweetpotato. The bacon, cherries, and pecans beautifully compliment the caramelized sweetpotato chunks. Omit the sour cream garnish and replace the honey with agave nectar if a vegan side dish is preferred.

1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon *tamari* soy sauce
Pinch ground turmeric
Dash or two ground red pepper (cayenne)
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Salt, to taste



2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons butter
1 small sweetpotato—peeled and chopped into medium-sized chunks

1 slice soy bacon—diced
2 tablespoons additive-free dried cherries
2 tablespoons additive-free pecan halves

Light dairy sour cream, for garnish

In a small bowl, combine honey, water, soy sauce, ground turmeric, ground red pepper (cayenne), black pepper, and salt. Set aside until required.

In a large skillet set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat oil and butter. Add sweetpotato chunks. Stir-fry until sweetpotatoes begin to brown.

Add diced bacon, dried cherries, and pecans. Continue stirring until bacon and pecans begin to color.

Add honey–soy sauce mixture. Stir to coat ingredients in skillet. Continue cooking until there is a caramelized surface on the sweetpotatoes. Turn into a heated serving bowl.

Serve with sour cream, if desired.



Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 2.2 g.; FAT = 7.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 15.9 g.;
CALORIES = 138; CALORIES FROM FAT = 52%

SLOW COOKER ROOT VEGETABLE *LAGOÛT* WITH CORN AND CHESTNUTS

TPT - [slow cooker @ HIGH = 3 hours and 12 minutes]

The rich stock, wine, and tomatoes combine with the aroma of the oil and butter combination and the sweet spices to create a sauce of which any root vegetable can be proud. Corn brightens up this slow cooker stew with yellow bits of sweetness. On a cold winter day, when we are both busy at our desks, this dish, simmering in the kitchen, can drive us quite mad with hunger as it fills the house with an aroma that is not to be denied. I usually add a tossed green salad with a creamy cheese dressing and fresh baked buttermilk biscuits. This is one of those dishes that tastes even better the next day. We do not halve this but instead plan to include it in our menus for two days.

1 1/2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
1 1/2 teaspoons butter
1 medium onion—chopped
2 garlic cloves—sliced



1/2 cup rich vegetarian stock, of choice
1/2 cup red wine
1 cup canned, *diced* tomatoes
2 medium carrots—scraped or peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 medium French turnip—peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 small potato—peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1/2 cup frozen corn kernels
1/4 cup dried chestnuts—any lingering seed coat removed and well-brushed
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
Pinch ground cloves
One-half cinnamon stick
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon chopped sun-dried, sulfite-free tomatoes



Preheat slow cooker to HIGH.

Add olive oil, butter, chopped onion, and sliced garlic. Allow to cook, stirring often, for about 10 minutes.

Add vegetable stock, red wine, *diced* tomatoes, chopped carrots, turnip, and potato, corn, dried chestnuts, salt, ground allspice, ground cloves, cinnamon stick, and black pepper. Cover and allow to cook for 2 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally. Turn into a heated serving bowl. Remove cinnamon stick before serving.

Add sun-dried tomatoes. Continue to cook for 30 minutes more.

Refrigerate leftovers.

Yields 6 servings

1/6 SERVING – PROTEIN = 2.8 g.; FAT = 2.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 19.4 g.;
 CALORIES = 108; CALORIES FROM FAT = 22%

*Unlike others around the globe,
 the consumption of sandwiches by Americans and British at lunch time
 seems to be a clearly entrenched habit.
 Americans do, however, tend to favor hot sandwiches; we like our cheese melted.
 Frankly, I just never got into that cheese and pickle sandwich
 that seems to be such a British passion.
 Every British sandwich shop has a version.
 Drop by next month and we can share some new ideas for the sandwich.*

Judy

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

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