

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

## November 2017

### SKILLET MEALS

**Fried Penne with Porcini Mushrooms**

**German Lentil Stew with Kale and Sausages**

**Noodles with Squash and Blue-Veined Cheese**

**Romanian-Style Shepherds' Skillet**

When we think of one-dish meals, we tend to think about casseroles or stews but skillet meals can present the same convenience. Think of a stir-fry; it is all in the preparation. As I researched the cuisines that contributed to *A Worldwide Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*, I found cooks all over the world who also found convenience in a skillet meal, each with the unmistakable nuances that made each dish their own and each so willing to share.

Skillet meals, I think, must be comfort food. We have been greeted often over the years at European inns, bistros, and bed and breakfasts with homey meals served directly from a skillet. There is something disarmingly intimate, informal, and comforting when carried out onto your patio and enjoyed in the awakening spring garden or even served in a formal setting. Set the skillet on a silver trivet or on a decorative breadboard in your dining room and see for yourself how a simple meal is transformed. A U. S. pizza chain began serving a pan pizza but it does not seem to have influenced other restaurants to explore the concept.

Two of the skillet meals that I am sharing this month include soy meat analogue products which add another level of convenience and provide complete proteins; two of the recipes trade on the comfort factor, one with macaroni and the other with noodles.

### **FRIED PENNE WITH PORCINI MUSHROOMS**

#### *Penne in Padella con Porcini*

TPT - 1 hour and 5 minutes;  
30 minutes = dried mushroom reconstitution period

*For some reason fried penne has become one of those ethnic comfort foods, offered in diners and small family-run restaurants as almost an "Italian macaroni and cheese" but often sticky and nondescript. Porcini mushrooms add a dimension to this simple Northern Italian dish that upgrades it considerably, in our opinion, and pan-toasting the pasta gives it a subtle, interesting flavor.*



**1/4 ounce dried porcini mushroom pieces—well-brushed and rinsed**  
**Warm water, to cover**

**4 ounces high protein or whole wheat penne macaroni**



**1 teaspoon *extra virgin* olive oil**  
**1 teaspoon butter**  
**1 large scallion—*thinly* sliced**

**3/4 cup light vegetarian stock\***  
**1/4 cup *reserved* mushroom—soaking liquid**

**1 tablespoon light cream *or* half and half**  
**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**  
**Several dashes ground red pepper (cayenne), or to taste**

**1/3 cup shredded *part-skimmed* milk, *low-moisture* mozzarella cheese—preferably fresh *mozzarella*, if available**

Place dried *porcini* mushroom pieces into a small bowl or measuring cup. Cover with *warm* water and allow to reconstitute for about 30 minutes. Drain, *reserving liquid*. Chop roughly into small pieces.

Put dry *penne* macaroni into a *large, non-stick-coated* skillet, with cover, set over *MEDIUM* heat. *Toast* the macaroni for about 5-7 minutes, stirring constantly. *Do not allow the macaroni to brown*. Remove from heat and set aside briefly.

In a skillet set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat olive oil and butter. Add *thinly* sliced scallions and reconstituted mushrooms. Sauté only until scallion slices begin to soften. Remove from heat and set aside briefly.

Return skillet with *toasted pasta* to *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat. Add stock and mushroom liquid. Allow to come to the boil. *Reduce heat to LOW-MEDIUM*, cover tightly, and allow to cook for about 15 minutes. Stir occasionally to be sure that the *penne* do not stick to the bottom of the skillet. Remove cover and cook, stirring constantly, until liquid is almost totally evaporated.

Add sautéed scallions, mushroom pieces, the olive oil and butter remaining in the skillet in which they were sautéed, and the cream. Stir to combine well and cook only until heated through. Season with black pepper and red pepper (cayenne).

Serve directly from the skillet or turn out onto a heated serving platter. Sprinkle shredded *mozzarella* cheese over. *Serve at once*.

Yields 4 servings  
adequate for 2 people

Notes: \*If the stock you choose contains tomato, the final dish may be unpleasantly discolored.

This may be doubled, when required. If doubled, be sure that your skillet is large enough for the quantity of macaroni that you will be handling.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 6.2 g.; FAT = 4.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 21.3 g.;  
CALORIES = 146; CALORIES FROM FAT = 28%

## GERMAN LENTIL STEW WITH KALE AND SAUSAGES

*Linsengemuse mit Braunkohl und Wurst*

TPT - 1 hour and 24 minutes

*We were expecting an ice storm with up to one-half inch of ice forecasted when I evolved this recipe. Somehow the comfort of a soup seemed appropriate on this January day. I had a gorgeous bunch of deep green, organic curly kale in the refrigerator and my initial instinct was to make a traditional German lentil, kale, and sausage soup. Instead, it became a skillet dinner based on the traditional soup and Pinkel mit Braunkohl, a skillet dish popular in Bremen and much of the area known as Schleswig-Holstein. It is so popular that social clubs tour the country inns in January to compare the preparation of this specialty. The sausages in this winter dish contain groats, either oat or buckwheat, and oat groats or oatmeal are also added to the skillet dinner. However, I greatly prefer to add lentils and to cook the lentils and onions in red wine. The tastes are intensified and help the lentils to stand up to the kale, which can be strong if not picked after it has been hit by frost. Fresh thyme and fresh sage, harvested close to the stems beneath the snow cover, give it character and stand up to all the strong competitors. I accompanied it that evening with a hot salad of oven-roasted potatoes and whole mushrooms.*

**1/2 cup dried green or brown lentils**

**1 1/2 cups boiling water**

**1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil**

**1/2 teaspoon garlic oil**

**1 small onion—thinly sliced**

**1 garlic clove—very finely chopped**

**Pinch of crushed dry red pepper**

**1 cup water**

**1/2 cup red wine**

**1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard with wine**

**5 cups chopped kale leaf pieces—stems removed  
and very well-washed**

**1 teaspoon chopped fresh sage**

**1/2 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme**

**Pinch salt**

**6 frozen soy sausages**

**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

Pick over lentils and discard any of poor quality. Rinse thoroughly. Drain. Pour into a mixing bowl and add the *boiling* water. Set aside briefly.

In a large skillet set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat olive oil and garlic oil. Add *thinly* sliced onion and sauté until onion begins to soften.

Add *very finely* chopped garlic and crushed dry red pepper. Continue cooking until onion is soft and translucent, *being careful to allow neither the onion nor the garlic to brown.*

Drain lentils and add to skillet mixture. Allow to come to the boil. *Reduce heat to LOW-MEDIUM* and simmer, *partially covered*, for 40 minutes. Stir occasionally. If more liquid is required, add either water or wine, as preferred.

Add kale pieces, chopped sage and thyme, and salt. Cook, covered, for about 15 minutes more, or until kale is wilted and lentils are thoroughly cooked. Stir occasionally.

In a small skillet coated with non-stick lecithin spray coating, heat soy sausages over *LOW* heat, turning frequently, until heated through. Add to kale–lentil mixture. Season with black pepper. Cook for several minutes. Serve directly from the skillet or turn into heated serving bowl.

Serve into heated soup plates.

Yields 4 servings  
adequate for 2 people

Note: This recipe can be halved, when required.



1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 16.6 g.; FAT = 4.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 33.2 g.;  
CALORIES = 235; CALORIES FROM FAT = 18%

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## NOODLES WITH SQUASH AND BLUE-VEINED CHEESE

TPT - 32 minutes

*As the fall presents its colors and plenty, a few squashes always stand at the ready as they did for my mother and grandmother. I grew up in a family where a yellow vegetable, a green vegetable, and a starch were served at almost every meal, even through “the war years.” Our upstate New York harvest filled the root cellar of my grandparents, the fruit cellar of my parents, and now my baker’s rack always has a squash or two to inspire and to anticipate. When we were first married and lived in an apartment, unable to store the squashes I bought from local farms, I generally mashed them and froze the purée. Once we were living in a house my husband was introduced to the many ways I had learned to use winter squashes, vegetables his mother did not use. This is a dead simple way to enjoy the sweet, delicious nutrition of butternut squash.*



**1 quart boiling water**

**1 cup diced butternut squash**

**2 quarts boiling water**

**3/4 cup wide egg noodles or pappardelle pasta**

**1 teaspoon butter**

**1/2 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil**

**Pinch teaspoon paprika\***

**1/4 cup crumbled Gorgonzola cheese\*\***

**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

**1 tablespoon pine nuts (pignoli)**



In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, combine the 1 quart *boiling* water and diced butternut squash. Cook for 5 minutes. Drain. Set aside until required.

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, combine the 2 quarts *boiling* water and egg noodles. Cook according to package directions. Drain thoroughly.

In a large non-stick-coated skillet set over *LOW* heat, combine butter and olive oil. When butter has melted, add drained butternut squash, drained noodles, and paprika. Cook, stirring frequently, until heated through.

Add crumbled *Gorgonzola* cheese and black pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until cheese *just begins* to melt. Serve directly from the skillet or turn into a heated serving bowl.

*Serve at once.*

Yields 4 servings  
adequate for 2 people

Note: \*If you want to make your own paprika, my recipe can be found on p. 186 of volume I of *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*.

\*\*An assertive English Stilton or a Danish blue cheese can be substituted.

This recipe is easily doubled, when required.



1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 6.7 g.; FAT = 5.7 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 18.4 g.;  
CALORIES = 161; CALORIES FROM FAT = 32%

## ROMANIAN-STYLE SHEPHERDS' SKILLET

### *Tokana*

TPT - 44 minutes

*Serving directly from the skillet with a wooden spoon will help you relate to the history of this dish. At the end of the day, shepherds, who have traveled far from home and kitchen, settle into a kettle or skillet dinner prepared over an open fire. This vegetarian dish is sincere homage to those hearty under-the-stars cooks.*

**1 1/2 teaspoons butter**  
**1 teaspoon olive oil**  
**1/2 cup *finely* chopped onion**  
**1 garlic clove—*very finely* chopped**

**3/4 cup canned, *diced* tomatoes with liquid**  
**1 medium potato—chopped**  
**1 small carrot—scraped or pared and diced**  
**1 bay leaf—halved**

**3/4 cup *frozen* ground soymeat**  
**1 1/2 teaspoons raspberry vinegar**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

**1/4 cup *low-fat* dairy sour cream**

In a skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, heat oil and butter. Add *finely* chopped onion and *very finely* chopped garlic. Sauté until onion is soft and translucent, *being careful to allow neither the onion nor the garlic to brown*.

Add *diced* tomatoes, chopped potato, diced carrot, and the broken bay leaf. Stir to mix. Cover and allow to simmer for 15 minutes. Stir occasionally and add a bit of tomato liquid or water, if necessary.

Add ground soymeat, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Stir to break up frozen ground soymeat. Cover again and allow to cook about 10 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Stir, as necessary.

Add sour cream. Cook, stirring, until sour cream is dispersed and mixture has heated through. Remove and discard bay leaf.

*Serve at once*, directly from the skillet, if desired, or turn into a heated serving bowl, if preferred.

Yields 4 servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.



1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 5.0 g.; FAT = 4.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 12.4 g.;  
CALORIES = 109; CALORIES FROM FAT = 36%

*Winter is upon us here at the edge of the Appalachians  
and root vegetables will again be important elements in our winter meals.  
Stop by and I will share some carrot recipes that will brighten your winter table  
for the holidays and beyond.*

*Judy*

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

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