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A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

August 2020

OVERNIGHT GUESTS OR A SPECIAL WEEKEND BREAKFAST:

Apple Cheddar Breakfast Pastry

Corn Fritters

French Peach Custard Dessert

Fried Egg and Tomatoes on Grilled Bread

Golden Wheat Dessert

Malaysian Banana Pancakes

Overnight Oat and Berry Pudding

Shirred Eggs *Mozzarella*

Turkish Farina – Almond Dessert

Breakfasts of eggs in the multitude of guises into which they can come to the table and cereals seem rather routine for special occasions but time, your time, is probably the all-important consideration. When I was young, my mother chose to get up a couple of hours early to prepare for those special breakfasts; her small refrigerator freezer was not the dependable assistant that our big freezers have become. I like to cook/bake and freeze weeks ahead, anything that will help me execute those breakfasts. I make *blintzes*, *crêpes*, my homemade granola, and pancake mix; I bake coffeecakes and breads; I might even make waffles and a *quiche* crust to freeze, just in case; I buy and freeze *pita* bread, puff pastry, and berries.

My file of dairy desserts/breakfasts is a major source of possibilities when I sit down to plan menus for these occasions. With a little reduction in the sugar level, *clafoutis*, puddings, fruit desserts, cheesecakes, and strudels are all desserts than can do double duty and can be prepared, at least in part, well in advance.



Different breads can add to the variety of something as mundane as baked French toast or a cheese *strata*. Fresh *pita* loaves can be filled with cheese, wrapped in foil, refrigerated for a couple of days ahead of time, and then popped into a warm oven to be ready just as everybody has showered and dressed. Breakfast sandwiches are a great thought. Your creativity can go well beyond an “egg McMuffin” or a fried egg *panini*. Have you ever served grilled cheese sandwiches for breakfast?

A large, complex fruit compote can be on hand for a couple of breakfast sessions or your guests can be invited to the table by large, perfect oranges, pears, or persimmons, or bowls of mixed berries sitting at each place. A bowl of applesauce, generously sprinkled with cinnamon- or cardamom-sugar and topped with a dollop of whipped cream, prepared the night before, can say “celebration” or fried cinnamon apples slices accompanying scrambled eggs can say “special.” Juice mixtures or mocktails can liven up the scene and are an easy “prepare ahead” item.



The Turkish farina-almond dessert and the golden wheat dessert, delicious plays on breakfast porridge, can easily be made the day before. Fruits, served as part of your main course, solve menu plans rather efficiently requiring only a

champagne flute of juice or a mocktail. Apples flesh out a cheese pastry in our apple Cheddar breakfast pastry; peaches turn a simple custard into a *clafouti*; and pancakes made with bananas and coconut milk become a conversation starter.

One of the most productive sources for inspiration might be the various and sundry books and articles published in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s to aid homemakers in planning the then-popular "meal" for friends and family called brunch. We are not so formal now so the brunch structure may seem somewhat archaic to you but there are ideas in those old publications.

Drop-in travelers can't expect this adventure but if you can plan ahead, breakfast can be a special meal and a return to brunch for holiday mornings is an option worth revisiting.

APPLE – CHEDDAR BREAKFAST PASTRY

TPT - 52 minutes

I can apples in a light syrup each fall and this is a wonderful way to serve them for a special breakfast. It's savory; it's sweet; it's very satisfying. If you do not can apples, sauté apple slices in advance and then follow the directions below.

1 1/2 cups canned or stewed apples—well-drained

1/4 sheet frozen puff pastry—brought to room temperature

1 1/2 ounces extra sharp Cheddar cheese—shredded



Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Prepare a cookie sheet by lining with culinary parchment.

Divide apple slices between two *au gratin* dishes. Set on a warming tray set at MEDIUM or in a WARM oven until required.

Cut the puff pastry sheet into two even strips. Cut a strip in half. Place the half strips on top of each other. Using a rolling pin, roll the strips together to fit the *au gratin* dish. Place the pastry on the parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake in preheated 375-degree F. oven for 15 minutes, or until puffed and brown. Remove from oven. *Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees F.*

Place a baked pastry in each of the apple-filled *au gratin* dishes. Sprinkle shredded cheese over each serving. Place *au gratin* dishes in 300-degree F. oven until cheese melts.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 individual servings

Note: This recipe is easily adjusted to the number of servings required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 8.6 g.; FAT = 18.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 39.9 g.;
CALORIES = 407; CALORIES FROM FAT = 41%



CORN FRITTERS

TPT - about 50 minutes

A creamier version of corn fritters commonly known as “corn oysters,” usually fried in shallow depth oil and served as a vegetable accompaniment without maple syrup, has long been prepared in American homes. These were known during the Civil War as “Artificial or Mock Oysters” or sometimes as “War Oysters.” Other old cookbooks refer to this variation as “Poor Man’s Oysters.” Corn oysters tend to be higher in fat due to the slower, lower temperature shallow oil frying method. Deep-fried corn fritters are a regional specialty that Northerners and Canadians share, served in pools of warm, pure maple syrup. The corn fritters served in the South today are still usually shallow, pan-fried, the term corn oysters being less used.

1/3 cup unbleached white flour
1/3 cup whole wheat flour
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon fat-free pasteurized eggs*
1/3 cup skimmed milk
**3/4 cup whole kernel corn—well-drained if canned
or frozen**

Vegetable oil for deep-frying

**Home-grown, spray-free apricot, melon, or orange
daylilies, for garnish, if available**

Maple butter or pure maple syrup

Into a mixing bowl, sift flours, baking powder, and black pepper.

In a second bowl, combine pasteurized eggs and milk. Using a wire whisk, combine well. Add to sifted dry ingredients. Blend well. Stir in corn.

Preheat oil for deep-frying to 365 degrees F.

Using two tablespoons, drop tablespoonfuls of batter into hot oil—3 or 4 at a time. *Do not crowd!* Deep-fry for about 3 minutes, turning once, until beautifully *browned and crisped*. Remove to paper toweling to drain as thoroughly as possible. Transfer to a heated serving platter and keep warm on a warming tray until all are prepared.**

Serve on a heated platter, garnished with daylilies. Pass warm maple butter or warm maple syrup.

Yields about 12 fritters



Notes: *Because raw eggs present the danger of *Salmonella* poisoning, commercially-available pasteurized eggs are recommended for use in preparing this dish.

**Be sure that oil temperature has returned to 365 degrees F. before each batch is fried.

This recipe may be doubled, when required.

Cooled leftovers can be frozen in a tightly sealed plastic bag for a quick weekday breakfast or lunch offering. Spread on a cookie sheet and reheat in the oven.

1/12 SERVING (i. e., per fritter exclusive of maple butter) –
PROTEIN = 1.7 g.; FAT = 1.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 9.1 g.;
CALORIES = 54; CALORIES FROM FAT = 25%

FRENCH PEACH CUSTARD DESSERT

Clafouti aux Peches

TPT - 1 hour and 30 minutes;
30 minutes = minimum cooling period

The first clafouti I every made was the cherry clafouti in the 1961 “Mastering the Art of French Cooking” by Julia Child, Louisette Bertholle, and Simone Beck. When that beautiful custard flan came out of the oven, I was beyond proud. Since we always canned peaches, I set about creating a peach version in which I reduced the saturated fats by eliminating cream and by using fat-free pasteurized eggs. I am not a big fan of special occasion desserts. Life is to live and desserts can be a joyous and nutritious part of any day. Served with a brioche, scones, or a coffeecake, this dessert can make breakfast an occasion too.



1 cup well-drained canned peach slices—preferably home-canned in light syrup

1 1/2 teaspoons sugar

1/2 cup plus 2 1/2 tablespoons two-percent milk

3 tablespoons fat-free pasteurized eggs

1 1/2 tablespoons oat flour*

1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 tablespoon sugar

3/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare an **8-inch quiche dish** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

In prepared baking dish, arrange well-drained peach slices. Sprinkle the 1 1/2 teaspoonfuls sugar over. Set aside.

In the container of the electric blender or food processor fitted with plastic mixing knife, combine milk, pasteurized eggs, oat flour, and cinnamon. Blend at *HIGH* speed for 2 minutes. Add the remaining 1 tablespoonful sugar and vanilla extract. Continue to blend for 10 seconds more. Pour batter over peaches.

Bake in preheated 325-degree F. oven for about 38-40 minutes, or until *puffed and lightly browned*. When done, a knife inserted in the center will come out clean.

Cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes to allow custard to set.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: *Oat flour is available at natural food stores but can be easily made by processing quick-cooking rolled oats (*not instant*) in the electric blender or food processor, fitted with steel knife, until a fine flour is formed. Sift once. Store in tightly covered container. 1/4 cupful of rolled oats yields about 3 tablespoonfuls of oat flour.



Fresh peach slices may be used in this recipe but they must be *very ripe* and *very sweet*.

This recipe can be doubled.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.2 g.; FAT = 1.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 22.9 g.;
CALORIES = 110; CALORIES FROM FAT = 9%

FRIED EGG AND TOMATOES ON GRILLED BREAD

TPT - 22 minutes

When we took a flat in London in July and I had to cook for three generations, finding fresh produce was a challenge. The market down the High Street at the Metro entrance was usually out of everything by mid-morning. Tomatoes that were available were always hot-house tomatoes with literally no flavor so I succumbed to the British breakfast style of frying tomatoes; butter did disguise their tastelessness. Today we have the availability of Campari tomatoes all year long. Those wonderful little tomatoes are the perfect size for this presentation and they are so much more flavorful than are most grocery store-tomatoes.

4 slices Italian bread

2 teaspoons butter

2 Campari tomatoes—sliced to yield 4 slices

2 eggs

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Butter both sides of each slice of bread. Place on bottom plate of **panini press**. Close grill. Set temperature at 325 degrees. Grill bread until lightly marked.

Place two tomatoes slices on two of the grilled bread slices. Close grill for just a minute or two. Turn off **panini press**.



At the same time, using **two single-egg skillets**, fry eggs.

Transfer grilled bread with tomatoes to heated plates. Slide a fried egg onto each bread-tomato base.

Grind black pepper over egg.

Place one of the remaining grilled bread slices on each plate.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 servings

Note: This recipe can not be doubled unless your **panini press** can accommodate eight slices of bread.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 14.1 g.; FAT = 14.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 48.5 g.
CALORIES = 380; CALORIES FROM FAT = 34%

GOLDEN WHEAT DESSERT

TPT - 1 hour;
30 minutes = cooling period

When plated, this dessert looks like a rich torte. When tasted, you will note surprises all around, but not disappointment. We are very satisfied on a warm summer evening when a salad or a spicy stir-fry is followed by this dessert. It is also a terrific breakfast treat so we always make the full recipe, molding in a loaf pan for dessert or in small bowls for a “breakfast in the forest” picnic.

2 tablespoons soft, trans-fat-free butter spread
1/2 cup dry, enriched quick-cooking farina or
Cream of Wheat—not instant

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons skimmed milk
3 tablespoons fat-free sweetened condensed milk
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon additive-free, finely ground hazelnuts
or walnuts or diced dried fruit, as preferred*



Prepare a **non-stick-coated 9 x 5 x 3-inch loaf pan** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

In a large non-stick-coated skillet set over *MEDIUM-LOW* heat, melt butter. Add farina and cook, stirring frequently, for about 12 minutes.

While farina is cooking, in a saucepan set over *MEDIUM-LOW* heat, combine milk and sweetened condensed milk. Heat until *hot*, but *not boiling*.

Gradually while stirring constantly with a wire whisk, add hot farina to milk mixture. Cook, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, for about 10 minutes, or until thickened. *Press out any lumps with the back of the spoon.*

Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla extract. Spread the mixture evenly in the prepared baking pan.

Sprinkle cinnamon lightly over the surface. Sprinkle ground nuts or dried fruits over cinnamon-coated surface.

Refrigerate for about 30 minutes, or until cool enough to cut and remove servings. Cut into four servings and, using a spatula, carefully transfer to dessert plates.

Serve at room temperature.

Yields 4 servings

Note: *If you wish, the nutmeal used for garnishing can be *lightly* toasted to enhance the flavor.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 7.3 g.; FAT = 4.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 31.2 g.;
CALORIES = 199; CALORIES FROM FAT = 19%

MALAYSIAN BANANA PANCAKES

Pisang Crêpes

TPT - 23 minutes

A pancake mix makes this Malaysian specialty a quick and easy dessert that seems very posh and a wonderful way of using up ripe bananas. Bananas are said to have originated in Southeast Asia and it is, therefore, not surprising that a huge variety of bananas can be found in Malaysia so do not feel that you just have to use the mundane, often tasteless, Cavendish bananas that we have become accustomed to in our grocery stores. If baby or lady bananas (mysore), which give a hint of pineapple to these crêpes, are not available, regular bananas, well-ripened, will do.

1/4 cup fat-free pasteurized eggs (the equivalent of 1 egg)

1/2 cup commercially-available pancake mix

1/3 cup low fat, sulfite-free coconut milk

3 tablespoons skimmed milk

2 small, ripe baby bananas—peeled and mashed

1 tablespoon clarified butter

Lime wedges, to garnish

In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs with a fork or whisk until homogeneous.

Add pancake mix, coconut milk, and skimmed milk. Using a fork, beat until smooth and all large lumps of pancake mix have been integrated.

Add mashed bananas. Stir to distribute bananas evenly in the batter.

Place a platter on a warming tray set at MEDIUM.

Brush some of butter over the surface of hot griddle or in a large non-stick-coated skillet set over *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat. When hot, add about 3 tablespoonfuls of batter for each pancake being prepared. (You should be able to prepare two at a time.) When *lightly browned* on one side, and allow remaining side to *lightly brown*. Fold in half or into a triangle. Transfer onto a heated platter set on a warming tray. Prepare all *crêpes* in the same manner, brushing pan *lightly* with butter, *if necessary*.

Serve with wedges of lime, butter, and, maybe, a sprinkling of sugar.

Yields 10 pancakes
adequate 2 people

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required. Cold, leftover pancakes can be refrigerated. They are delicious as a quick “out-the-door” breakfast or afternoon snack.

1/10 SERVING (i. e., per pancake exclusive of extra butter and sugar) –
PROTEIN = 1.4 g.; FAT = 1.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 7.3 g.;
CALORIES = 44; CALORIES FROM FAT = 31%



OVERNIGHT OAT AND BERRY PUDDING

TPT - 8 hours and 51 minutes;
8 hours = oatmeal soaking period

Shortly after we arrived at a bed and breakfast in Ireland, our hostess knocked on our door to discuss the use of the hot water for bathing, for which there was an extra charge, and breakfast. If we wanted oatmeal, she had to know right then and there because she would cook it overnight on the back of her wood stove. It was the best oatmeal I had had in years. Not having a big old wood stove, I could never duplicate the richness of that Irish oatmeal but cold-soaking the oatmeal overnight might . . . It did! During our busy, working years I used the overnight soaking procedure to speed up our mornings. Today I often prepare this recipe as a comforting supper in the winter.



1 1/2 cups two-percent milk
3/4 cup old-fashioned oats

2 teaspoons butter

1/2 cup fresh blueberries

or

6 tablespoons mixed berry purée*

2 teaspoons light brown sugar

In a saucepan, combine milk and oatmeal. Cover. Refrigerate overnight.

Next morning, place saucepan over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat. Cook, stirring frequently, until heated through and thickened to your liking.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200 degrees F. Prepare **two 5 x 2-inch soufflé dishes** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating. Place in oven to heat.

When oatmeal is ready, remove from heat. Add butter and allow it to melt. Stir *melted* butter into oatmeal.

Remove soufflé dishes from oven. Spoon 1/4 cupful fresh blueberries or three tablespoonfuls of mixed berry purée into each of the heated ramekins. Divide the oatmeal between the two ramekins. Return to oven until ready to serve.

Garnish each serving with a teaspoonful of brown sugar.

Serve with brown sugar and milk or cream for those who wish to add either or both.

Yields about 2 servings

Notes: *A supply of berry purée in the freezer is useful for these creative moments. If you want to save this recipe until next month, I will include a recipe for berry sorbet in the column “Berries – Familiar and Unfamiliar.”



This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 11.3 g; FAT = 7.2 g; CARBOHYDRATE = 42.5 g.
CALORIES = 279; CALORIES FROM FAT = 23%

SHIRRED EGGS MOZZARELLA *Uova con Mozzarella al Forno*

TPT - 28 minutes

Shirring eggs is an old term for a method of cooking or baking eggs in individual ramekins. It is a term which applies only to eggs. Cooks of most nationalities have some form of such baked or shirred eggs as part of their repertoire. These are simple, delicious, and special. Our daughter always loved these when she was little, although she preferred a chopped parsley garnish rather than cilantro. I usually accompany this dish with chunks of warm French bread. It's perfect . . .

1/2 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons canned, crushed tomatoes

Pinch dried basil—finely crushed

Pinch dried parsley—finely crushed

Pinch dried oregano—finely crushed

**3 ounces part-skimmed milk, low moisture
mozzarella cheese—shredded**

2 large eggs*

2 tablespoonfuls canned, *crushed* tomatoes

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**4 teaspoonfuls grated Parmesan *or pecorino*
Romano cheese, as preferred**

Fresh coriander (*cilantro*) leaves, for garnish

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare **two 5-inch-ounce soufflé dishes**, by coating each with about 1/4 teaspoonful olive oil.

In a small bowl, combine crushed tomato with *finely* crushed basil, parsley, and oregano. Stir well.

Spread 2 tablespoonfuls of the seasoned tomato purée over the bottom of each baking dish. Evenly divide shredded *mozzarella* cheese among dishes.

Bake in preheated 325-degree F. oven for about 7 minutes, just until dishes are heated and cheese appears to be beginning to melt. Remove from oven.

Using the back of a spoon, make a wide depression in the center of the slightly melted cheese. Break an egg into a small dish. Slide it carefully into the depression in the cheese. Repeat with each egg.

Spoon remaining sauce mixture over eggs, dividing it evenly among dishes. Sprinkle about 2 teaspoonfuls of grated cheese over each.

Return to oven for about 10 minutes, or until egg whites are set.

Garnish with coriander (*cilantro*) leaves.

Serve at once, setting individual soufflé dishes on large dinner plates. Leave room for toasted Italian bread slices.

Yields 2 individual servings



Notes: Remember that the eggs will continue to cook after being removed from the oven. If it is necessary to hold them for a few minutes to allow for first course dawdling, do undercook them slightly. *The yolks should be runny and the whites firm, but not hard.*

This recipe is easily halved or doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 20.4 g.; FAT = 15.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 2.9 g.;
CALORIES = 221; CALORIES FROM FAT = 64%

TURKISH FARINA – ALMOND DESSERT

Irmik Helvasi

TPT - 2 hours and 18 minutes;
2 hours = chilling period

Having located a mail order source for organic, whole wheat farina, I started thinking about how my mother and grandmother used farina to make sweet, filling desserts, especially during the winter and more especially during the Depression and the rationing years of World War II. The farina for the pudding was cooked with the morning's hot cereal to save fuel and cooking time. Fresh fruit was neither plentiful nor reasonable and we all wearied of the canned fruit in the fruit cellar. Fruit jams were used to give a cake or a pudding a little extra sweetness but cakes and puddings were desserts that required early morning preparation; cake mixes and pudding mixes were not yet on shopping lists. Ice cream was a summertime pleasure since we had one of those tiny freezers in the top of the refrigerator which could not even keep the ice cubes frozen much less preserve the texture of ice cream. The thick cream on top of the pasteurized, but not homogenized, milk was saved to spoon on top of a pudding like this. In later years, when cream was delivered by the milk man and we no longer depended on the "top milk," "pouring cream," as the cream in the little milk bottle was called, sat on the table in a small pitcher.

As I worked on this pudding, I stumbled on a yellowed card in my recipe files dating from the 1970s. It was a "helva" from Turkey and was similar to this except a sugar/milk syrup was called for instead of honey and it was heavily flavored with cinnamon. It also reminds me somewhat of a favorite Greek dessert. I guess there have always been practical cooks in every culture.

We have enjoyed this for breakfast in the summer, especially when our grandson was young. He did not view it as just farina any more than I did; pudding for breakfast is a treat.



1 cup two-percent milk

1/3 cup organic, whole wheat farina*

3 tablespoons finely ground almonds or almond meal

2 tablespoons honey

1/4 teaspoon pure almond extract

Light cream or half and half; top-milk or pouring cream

Prepare a **5-inch (2-cup) soufflé dish** by lightly buttering the bottom.

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat milk until bubbles begin to appear around the edge. Reduce heat to *LOW-MEDIUM*.

While stirring, gradually add *farina*. Cook, stirring frequently, until the porridge thickens. Remove from the heat.

Add *finely* ground almonds, honey, and almond extract. Stir to combine thoroughly. Turn into prepared soufflé dish. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or for a day or two if convenient for your schedule. Run a knife around the edge of the soufflé dish. Place a small serving plate on top of the soufflé dish. Invert and allow the pudding to drop onto the serving plate. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Cut into small wedges to serve. *Serve chilled* with cream.** Refrigerate leftovers.

Yields about 4 servings

Notes: *Cream of Wheat cereal is not a substitute for this type of *farina*, in our opinion.

**If a sweeter pudding is desired, a sauce of equal parts *fat-free* sweetened condensed milk and light cream can be used.

A spoonful of blackberry jelly makes a perfectly beautiful garnish.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING (exclusive of cream) –
PROTEIN = 5.4 g.; FAT = 4.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 25.5 g.;
CALORIES = 168; CALORIES FROM FAT = 26%

*My local grocery store displays a sign as you enter the produce department
which promises that they will always have berries available.
Well, since the botanical definition of a berry does differ
from common usage, this could be just a merry game of semantics.
Tomatoes and watermelon are berries you know . . .*

*Next month I'll share recipes that include fruits that
you may not have known were berries.*

Please drop by,

Judy

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

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