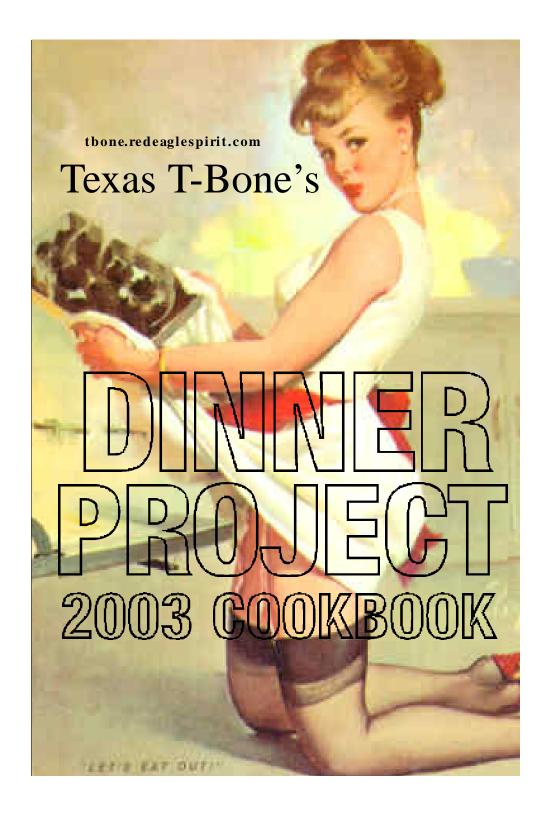


WHAT IS THE DINNER PROJECT? It's a compilation of recipes collected as part of a contest to find the easiest, most unique meal relative to what the wife and I eat at home.

WHO DOES MOST OF THE COOKING IN YOUR HOUSE, T-BONE?

WHY NOT A 2004 COOKBOOK? I got busy and didn't finish this until early 2004, but all the recipes were submitted in 2003, so I left the year unchanged.



## The Winning Recipe

This is the winning recipe, based on ease of preparation, availability of ingredients and uniqueness compared to what we normally eat at home.

## From Kelly at nonetooshabby.blogspot.com. Chicken Breast Wellington

**Selling point:** Fancy yet fairly easy, with simple ingredients.

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 sheet Pepperidge Farm Puff Pastry at room temper ature
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 pound boneless chicken breasts
- 4 ounces of cream cheese (1/2 package)
- Knorr Swiss Aromat Seasoning for Meat to taste (or your favorite spice)
- Lemon Pepper to taste
- Melted butter

#### Preparation

- 1. Take your room temp puff pastry sheet, unfold it onto a floured surface, sprinkle a little flour on top, and roll it out as flat as you can. Cut the dough into four equal sized squares.
- 2. Melt butter over medium heat and cook chicken breasts for five minutes on each side.
- 3. Place the chicken breasts in the center of each pastry square, and put 2 tablespoons of cream cheese on top of each breast.
- 4. Now sprinkle with your seasonsings.
- 5. Pull the edges of the pastry square up and fold them over to seal. (Make a "package")
- 6. Brush the top with melted butter (if you wish).
- 7. Bake uncovered in a preheated 350 degree over for 30 minutes.

#### **Serving suggestion:**

"It's pretty rich, so I usually serve it with just a salad."

Kelly has also posted on her blog, at least once, a list of basic spices, utensils and food she finds essential to a well-stocked kitchen. If you ask her really nicely, she may send a copy of it to you via e-mail. Just tell her T-Bone sent ya!

## **Beef Recipes**

# From Jamie at justjet.redeaglespirit.com/jj Slow-Cooked Roast plus Sides

**Selling point**: "I'm the Queen of quick dinners and the crock pot!!!"

#### Main dish:

Put a beef roast in the crock pot with Mesquite marinade and let it cook all day on low.

#### Side dishes:

- French Style Green beans mixed with roasted garlic/basil/onion and diced tomatoes
- My Famous Potatoes: instant potatoes \*follow directions on the box\* once they

finished mix in sour cream, shredded sharp chedder cheese, bacon bits and finely chopped chives. Mix thourghly and then place in a baking dish. Top with bacon bits, cheese and chives and place in oven at 350 until the cheese has melted.

• Homemade sourdough garlic bread \*gotta love those bread makers\*

### From Cyndi Pepper Steak

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 1/2 pounds round steak (cut into little cubes)
- 1/8 teaspoon chopped garlic (or powder if its all you have)
- 1 small chopped onion
- 1 chopped bell pepper
- 2 cans tomato sauce
- 1 stick butter
- 1/4 cup cold water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 Tablespoon corn starch

- 3 Tablespoons worstershire sauce.
- Cooked Rice

#### Preparation

In skillet melt butter, add beef and garlic, cook on medium heat until brown.
Add onions, peppers and tomato sauce, simmer 20 or so minutes til vegetables are tender.

Mix together water, corn starch, sugar salt and worstershire sauce add to meat and stir until it thickens slightly. Simmer 10 more minutes.

Serve over rice.

**Serving suggestion**: "We usually have this with a salad and rolls."

#### from Chad at guitarchad.blogspot.com Beef Stroganoff

#### Ingredients

- 2 lbs. sirloin sliced 1" thick
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 beef bullion cubes
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- 1/2 tsp salt

- 2 tbsp flour
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 cup sour cream

**Preparation**: Saute mushrooms and onion in butter, remove from pan and set aside. Add beef to pan and cook 15 minutes or until browned. Dissolve bullion in boiling water and add to meat in pan. Add tomato paste, mustard, and salt to pan. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Combine flour and 1/2 cup water and add to meat mix, boil, reduce heat and add mushroom, onion and sour cream. Heat and serve over noodles.

## **Beef Recipes**

#### From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com Swiss Steak

**Selling point:** "This is a favorite from my mom's kitchen. If you select lean beef, it's pretty healthy, and two people can get 2-3 meals out of it (apiece). The ingredients are readily available and cheap."

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 pounds round steak, cut into 1" to 1-1/2" strips
- 1 or 2 handfuls of flour
- 1 to 3 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1-1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup thinly sliced onion minced
- 1 8 oz. can tomato sauce
- 1 clove garlic, crushed

#### • 1/3 cup red wine vineagar

- 4 whole cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 large package egg noodles

**Preparation**: Pound flour into both sides of meat (the edge of a process). Combine dry ingredients in a small bowl. Sprinkle 1/2 of the dry ingredients onto one side of the meat. Brown the meat in olive oil, seasoned side down. Sprinkle remaining dry ingredients on top of meat before turning over. Add garlic, onion, tomato sauce, vineagar, cloves & bay leaf. Add water as needed, cover and cook over low heat for 2-3 hours, or until meat forks tender. Serve over hot, buttered egg noodles. I like to use an electric skillet for this recipe. The longer you cook it, the better it will taste. I like to make it on Sunday mornings and allow it to simmer all day, like a pot roast. Serves six.

#### From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com Southwestern Roast

**Selling point:** "This is a bit of a twist on the traditional pot roast recipe. Depending on the heat in the Ro-Tel, it can be a little spicy. Delicious!"

#### Ingredients

- 3 lb. roast (arm or chuck works best)
- 2 cups dry red or pinto beans
- 1 can Ro-tel tomatoes

- 1 can (4 oz.) chopped green chilis
- 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1 can (4 oz.) sliced or whole mushrooms
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup sugar
- garlic salt or garlic powder
- salt & pepper to taste

#### **Preparation**

Layer the ingredients over the roast. Cook at 275-300 for several hours until tender. This is one that does well in the oven or in a (LARGE) crock pot for most of the day. Leftovers will be plentiful!

### A Quotable Cook

## From Chevy Valentine at fatloud.blogspot.com

"Dude. Sloppy joes. Anyone can make Manwich and it's cheap as dirt and it seems like you're doing something kind of fun. Tacos same thing."

#### **Chicken Recipes**

#### From monotonous.org Chicken Salad

**Selling point**: "You could live off of this chicken salad."

#### **Ingredients**

- Lots of chicken
- 1 red onion finely chopped
- Lots of celery, chopped up
- 1 red pepper finely chopped (cannot be substituted for any other color)
- Lots of green onions
- About 1/3 of a cup of TOASTED slivered almonds. If you don't toast them, it will be gross, and if you don't include this ingredient, the whole recipe is for naught.
- Celery seed, salt and pepper. Go overboard with these.
- Hellmans/BestFoods mayonaisse. It's the same thing. You CANNOT use any other mayonaisse because all others are sick.
- Sometimes I kick in a little powdered garlic, but people sometimes complain

about this.

Preparation: Take a whole bunch of chicken breasts and boil them. Like a pounds worth. If you wanna get fancy, marinate them and grill them, but boiling works almost as well. After they're done boiling, (you can just tell), set them aside and start chopping up whatever you have in the house. Then shred the chicken with your hand. Don't chop it. It will be better if you just tear it apart into tiny shreds. I suppose you could throw in anything but [ingredients listed] are essential:

#### **Serving suggestion:**

"If you follow this, you're gonna have the best chicken salad imaginable. I make it at least once a week and everyone always freaks out. Don't put grapes in it, even if you're encouraged to, because that's the equivalent of using Miracle Whip or something else vile. Walnuts will take the place of almonds but nothing will take the place of Hellman's."

#### From Howard at 3leggeddog.typepad.com Company Chicken

**Selling point**: "I call this Company Chicken, but I've heard it referred to as several different things. I LOVE this stuff."

#### Ingredients

- boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- bacon
- Fat-free cans of Cream of Mushroom soup, Cream of Chicken soup, and low-fat sour cream (I hate the fat-free stuff).
- 1 jar dried beef (I think it's by Hormel)

#### Preparation

1. I remove the fat from the chicken, but

- that's up to you. Fold the chicken breast in half, wrap with piece of bacon, and poke toothpick through to keep it folded.
- 2. The sauce depends on the number of chicken breasts. I usually use 2 cans of soup each (4 total) to a pint of sour cream for 6 breasts. Combine soup and sour cream. Mix to taste. I like mine a bit tart so I about half a pint of sour cream. I can't give you exact amounts because it's never the same twice.
- Layer the bottom of a baking dish with the dried beef. Place chicken on top and pour sauce over the chicken. I usually try and cover the chicken. Bake at 375 or 400 till done. I think it takes 30 or 45 minutes.

**Serving suggestion**: "You can serve it with rice or egg noodles."

## **Chicken Recipes**

#### From D at noshoesorsocksrequired.net Crockpot Chicken

#### **Selling point:**

"I'm the queen of the crock pot."

#### **Ingredients**

- 10 skinless, boneless chicken breast
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon celery salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 (10.75 ounce) can condensed cream of mushroom soup (or cream of chicken)
- 1 (10.75 ounce) can condensed cream

#### of celery soup

- 1/3 cup dry sherry
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

#### **Preparation**

- 1. Rinse the chicken breasts and pat dry. Season with the lemon juice, salt, pepper, celery salt and paprika to taste. Place in a slow cooker.
- 2. In a medium size bowl mix the mush-room and celery soups with the sherry/wine. Pour mixture over the chicken breasts and sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.
- 3. Cook on low setting for 8 to 10 hours, OR on high setting for 4 to 5 hours.

Serving suggestion: "I serve it with noodles."

## From Chris at ecisgod.blogspot.com Ziplock Chicken

**Selling points**: "It's easy, it's quick and it's yummy."

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 1/2 lbs boneless chicken breasts
- 1 package of dry Good Seasons Italian Dressing
- 2 Table spoons of water
- $\bullet$  2 Table spoons of oil and a Zip-lock bag

#### **Preparation**

- 1. Combine all ingredients in the zip-lock and let marinate in the refrigerator (you may want to "mix" them a little by hand). The longer you let them marinate, the better.
- 2. Broil for 6 minutes on each side.
- 3. Serve with whatever you like with chicken.

**Serving suggestion**: "Yes, I know that's a lot to eat for two, but they are good as leftovers (to solve that quick bite to eat at lunch issue if you are willing to brown bag it)."

## **Quotable Cooks**

#### From X at opinionx.org

"Spaghettio's and cheese pizza are my favs.I like black bean tacos. Just use black beans instead of beef. Don't forget to add salsa to the beans."

#### From Adelle at adelle.net

"I am all for Homemade Gourmet. They make my life soooo easy! They have some cool stuff to make that takes only a little while."

## **Chicken Recipes**

#### From T-Bone at thone.redeaglespirit.com Quick Chicken Cacciatore

**Selling point:** "This is so easy to make, but is fancy enough to impress guests. The recipe calls for serving it over pasta, but we prefer rice because it lends a lighter feel."

#### **Ingedients**

- 1 package (10.5 oz.) frozen fat-free breaded chicken patties, partially thawed
- 1 medium green bell pepper
- 4 oz. mushrooms
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 8 oz. linguine (we sub for white rice)
- 2 cans (14.5 oz. each) Italian-seasoned diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 garlic clove (or 2 tsps garlic powder)

#### Preparation

- 1. Cut patties into 3/4-inch strips, slice mushrooms if necessary.
- 2. Cook your pasta or rice according to

package directions.

- 3. In a pan on medium heat with a bit of olive oil, cook the chicken strips for about 5 minutes, turning frequently.
- 4. Add tomatoes, bell pepper, mushrooms, onion and garlic. Bring to a boil and cover. reduce heat, simmer about 10 minutes or until veggies are cooked to your likeness (not so that they look like you).
- 5. Serve over the carb-loaded item of your choice.

#### **Serving suggestion:**

Light tossed salad, some garlic bread and then strawberry shortcake for dessert.



## **Quotable Cooks**

#### From Drowning Fish at drowningfish.blogspot.com

"The crock pot is great because you can throw it on and leave it basically unattended for most of the day. I'm a big fan of make a baked ziti, a lasagna, fajitas, or something where there is sure to be leftovers and we can eat it during the week. If you make a batch of ziti, and some fajitas on Sunday, that usually gets us through till Thursday if you're good about eating left overs."

#### From Kristiv at kristiv.blogspot.com Dinner Brainstorms

"Pasta with lentil bolognese sauce. Caribbean chicken with banana and coconut sauce. Bacon quiche with tomato and red oninon salad on the side (the chopped red onion marinated in balsamic vinegar). Yum."

### Pork, Other Poultry & Fish

# From Rose at greatgooglymoogly.blogspot.com Pork Barbecue

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 pounds of country-style pork ribs or pork butt roast
- 1 bottle STUBBS "Spicy" BBQ sauce
- At least 1 more bottle, total, combined, of ketchup, worcestershire, or remaining ends-of-bottles-of-bbq sauce. This is a "clean out the kitchen" recipe
- Hamburger buns

## From Allison at headkicker.net Salmon Filets

**Preparation**: Rub salmon fillets with olive oil and sear them (throw them in a hot wok for about a minute and a half on each side). \*Use a screen- they splatter\*. Sprinkle them

#### From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com Turkey Chili

**Selling point:** "You can use lean ground beef for this one if you prefer, but the turkey makes it a bit healthier. I like to use this for frito pies also."

#### **Ingredients**

• 2 pounds lean ground turkey breast

#### From Jamie at justjet.redeaglespirit.com/jj Smothered Pork Chops

#### **Ingredients**

- Pork chops
- Seasoning
- Cream of mushroom soup

• 1 large sweet onion, sliced into rings

#### Preparation

- 1. Put half of the onion rings in crock pot.
- 2. Throw meat in crock pot.
- 3. Dump sauce mixture into crock pot.
- 4. Cook on low for 8 hours.
- 5. Throw the rest of the onions in.

**Serving suggestion**: Splorp onto buns or eat with a fork. Serve with a small salad or corn on the cob or other BBQ-friendly vegetable. Also works with beef.

with garlic pepper, then put them in the broiler for about 4 minutes on each side. Take them out and sprinkle them with rosemary and thyme and give them about another minute in the broiler. Voila!

**Serving suggestion**: Serve with rice.

- 1 large white onion
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 large can whole tomatoes, chopped in a food processor with the liquid
- 3 Tbsp. chili powder
- 2 cans Ranch Style beans (or kidney beans)
- Salt & pepper to taste (I usually use a Tbsp or so of each)

**Preparation**: Brown meat, onions & garlic. Add remaining ingredients & simmer for a few hours. Add water if needed.

#### **Preparation**

- 1. Place pork chops in a baking pan w/ cover
- Season the chops with an all season salt, pour cream of mushroom soup (one or two cans)
- 3. Add a litle bit of water, place in the oven at 350 for about an hour. Keep an eye on them though, because you'll have to add water once in awhile and each chop cooks quicker or slower than others.

#### Soups & Salags

# From Buffy at arrrgh.redealgesprit.com Minestrone

Selling point: "Minestrone is one of the most forgiving soups around, and I prefer it to vegetable soup because the seasoning is more interesting, and the floaters have more variety. One of the best Minestrones I've ever had is a baked version with an incredibly beefy broth and mozerella baked over the top."

#### Ingredients

- 1 can white beans (or kidney beans), drained and rinsed
- 5 cans of College Inn Beef broth (low fat, low sodium if desired)
- 1 large onion, sliced in half and then slivered vertically
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 cup julienned carrots crosscut into 1" lengths
- 1-2 stalks of celery with leaves, diced
- 1/2 a red pepper sliced into narrow strips and diced
- 1 large potato peeled and diced

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pkg. fresh pasta: 3 cheese ravioli in mini size (or 1 cup cooked miniature pasta shells)
- 1 TEASPOON salt
- several twists of fresh ground pepper.
- 1 can recipe ready diced tomatoes with Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon dried basil, crumbled
- Fresh grated Parmesan (optional)

**Preparation**: Put the rinsed beans, bouillon and diced tomatoes into a large stockpot and bring to a boil. Heat the olive oil and saute the veggies until they have wilted, but not browned. Add the veggies, salt, pepper, and basil to the broth, return the soup to a boil and then reduce the heat to simmer for 30 minutes. Add the macaroni and simmer for another 15 minutes. If you prefer a thinner soup, add more broth. Serve with Parmesan sprinkled over the top.

**Serving suggestion**: "Make this soup personal. You can vary the ingredients to suit your own taste, or change them to take advantage of summer's bounty. I have a summer and a winter version of this soup."

## A Quotable Cook

#### From Kristiv at kristiv.blogspot.com The Case for Soups

"Since winter is just about to start, I'll mention soups.

Vegetable soups - potato, carrot and leek soup, lentil soup, curried lentil soup with apple.

Chicken broth soup, to keep you warm on crisp days.

Goulash soup or lamb meat soup (traditional Icelandic fare, which unfortunately I do not know how to make, what with leaving all the cooking up to my husband).

When it comes to food, it doesn't take much to keep me happy, as long as it is made carefully and with love. A bowl of steaming soup and a piece of bread sounds just wonderful."

## **Soups & Salads**

# From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com Cobb Salad

**Selling points:** "A huge salad that makes a nice presentation and is mighty tasty, as well as filling."

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 head romaine lettuce
- 8 bacon strips, cooked
- 2 avocados, cubed
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 1 red onion, shredded or minced

- 1 package crumbled bleu cheese
- 2 cooked chicken breasts
- 2 hard boiled eggs, sliced
- Dressing of your choice

**Preparation**: Shred lettuce and place in the bottom of a 9" x 12" x 2" casserole dish. Make "stripes" with the remaining ingredients. For example, you'll have a "stripe" of bacon, a "stripe" of avocodo, etc. This makes for a colorful presentation and also allows picky eaters to serve themselves only with ingredients they prefer. Feel free to add to the "stripes" - I also like to use bell peppers, mushrooms, etc.

#### From Buffy at arrrgh.redeaglespirit.com Summer Salad

**Selling spoint:** "Summer Salad is one of our old family favorites. I could eat it every day while produce is fresh. A visitor named it, saying that it tasted like Summer to him."

#### **Ingredients**

- Fresh, ripe tomatoes
- Cucumber, preferably the small "pickle" size
- Green onions
- Oil and vine gar
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Fresh dill, minced ... a lot of it

**Preparation**: Now, I'm basically lazy, so I

use Italian salad dressing on mine. I like the "Robusto" varieties with lots of seasoning and garlic, or Paul Newman's Italian Dressing. We cut the veggies into bite sized pieces. My salad tends to have more tomato and cucumber and less onion, but you can vary the proportions to suit yourself. Add the pepper and the dill and then cover it with salad dressing. I tend to have a heavy hand with the dressing, and a lot of it gets thrown out. Actually, you could use it as a merinade the next day if you saved it.

It's possible to use broccoli flowerettes, or even raw cauliflower in this salad. I occasionally omit the onion and substitute the broccoli. NEVER leave out the dill. It's the magic ingredient. Chill the salad before serving. Enjoy!

## A Quotable Cook

#### From Curly Girl at curl.blogspot.com Easy Does It: Pasta

"As a single girl in the city, who only cooks for herself, I can tell you that i think pasta is by far the easiest thing to make. Pasta with sauce on the whole thing. Pasta with garlic. Pasta with spinach and olive oil and feta cheese on top. Pasta with beans.

Or salads. Big huge salads with avocado, croutons, tomatoes, cheese, peppers.
Whatever. Easy stuff. Or my favorite-grilled

#### **Meatless Meals**

#### From Sarah at www.trisarahtops.com Three-Ingredient Pasta

**Selling point**: "Three ingredients. Can be more if you need further protein or veggies."

#### **Preparation**:

1. Boil spinach pasta of any variety (see, this is pretty flexible).

Defrost a frozen spinach souffle (I use one from Stouffers, I'm not ashamed to say).
 Mix the two together after cooked, in an over-safe pot. Add a little parmesean cheese, especially to the top, and broil for

long enough to have a nice crispy top layer.

**Serving suggestion**: "Add chicken, sausage, vegetables if you ever choose. Sometimes I put chicken sausages on the George Foreman and mix them in in slices."

#### From Pippa at www.zenfrog.com/pippasaid Cheap & Easy Veggie Dinner

Selling point: "It doesn't take that long, and requires little watching. Great for last-minute meals. The Crock Pot thing is great, but requires PLANNING and knowing that you want something like 25 hours ahead of time. I'm just not that decisive."

#### **Preparation:**

Cut up an onion and saute in a bit of oil. Cut up a couple of zucchini or summer squash or combination of the two and add to the onions. Add some mushrooms if you want. Some garlic, maybe. Then toss in a can of crushed tomatoes and salt & pepper. Oregano? Sure. Maybe parsley. Whatever you like. Like crushed red papper maybe. Serve over pasta. You can switch it all around and use artichoke hearts or eggplant or whatever. The possibilities are END-LESS. Simmer the whole thing on medium heat.

**♦** The way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Of course, it will get blood all over your kitchen if you perform the surgery yourself."

- Anne O'Nemus

#### From Dave at funkypancake.com Cheese and Potato Pie

**Selling point:** "My favourite [english spelling] meal of all time."

#### **Preparation**:

- 1. Take a few potatoes and peel them nicely.
- 2. Boil in a pan until cooked.

- 3. Remove from water and mash with a masher (mash lovingly to preseve the flava [ghetto spelling])
- 4. Grate some cheese on to it.
- 5. Stir it about a bit.
- 6. Put it in a baking tray
- 7. Put a little more cheese on top.
- 8. Grill for a few minutes until it's crusty.

**Serving suggestion**: "Eat with loads of ketchup."

### **Breakfast for Dinner**

#### From the Warrior Princess at americanwarriorprincess.blogspot.com Breakfast for Dinner

"If you love breakfast, make breakfast for dinner. Really, there is no rule that you can't have pancake and eggs for dinner. I have a friend who, in a very Seinfeld way, likes cereal and milk for every meal. In fact, there are many places in the world that breakfast and dinner are the same sorts of light foods and lunch is the big hot meal with meat. Be a rebel and eat what you like."

#### From eelnahs at eelnahs.blogspot.com Stuffed French Toast a la eelnahs

#### Ingredients

- 1 loaf of french bread sliced into 10 slices
- French toast batter:

3 eggs 1/2 cup of milk dash of vanilla cinnamon

• Filling

bar of cream cheese

1/2 cup of sour cream1/4 cup powered sugar2 tablespoonsof your favorite jam1 cup of favorite berries

**Preparation:** Mix batter, dip bread, brown on top of the stove in a pan coated with butter or pam. Mix mix filling in a pam greased 9x13 pan, put 5 slices of bread down ... put filling on top of bread, then put slices on top of bread. Broil for 4-6 mins until brown on top. Sprinkle powered sugar on top and enjoy!

## The Story of the Waffle Burger

Here's a little story, I'd like to tell, about a breakfast/lunch that I like so well!

#### From Texas T-Bone

Many years ago, I had grilled a few hamburgers out on the barbie one night, but didn't have any hamburger buns. Sure, I could have used plain old bread, but that's boring. I could have eaten it breadless (bite me, Dr. Atkins), but I wanted a sandwich.

In the freezer I had some frozen waffles – back then I didn't own a waffle iron with which to make my own waffles. I toasted them, stuck the meat in between, added some cheese and ketchup and – WAH-LAH! It was delicious. The sweetness of the waffles lent a different flavor than a bun would have. The mesquite-smoked flavor of the meat was just right. Sure, it's a bit weird, but part of me knows there is a billion-dollar fast-food idea just waiting to pop. *T-Bone's Waffle Burger, Where Breakfast Meets Lunch!* 

#### **Desserts**

# From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com Baked Custard

Selling point: "This is a favorite of my whole family. My grandmother used to make it as a special treat or when any of her grandkids weren't feeling well. It always made me feel better in a hurry!"

#### **Ingredients**

- 3 slightly beaten eggs
- 2 cups milk, scalded DO NOT BOIL
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- Nutmeg

Preparation: While milk is heating, mix eggs, sugar, salt and vanilla. Once milk is scalded, remove from heat and allow to cool for 15-30 minutes. Add slowly to egg mixture, stirring. Place custard cups, ramekins or any small, oven-safe bowls into a 9" x 12" casserole dish. Fill casserole dish halfway full of warm water. Pour custard into bowls and sprinkle nutmeg over the top. Bake for 45 minutes at 325. The recipe doesn't yield more than about 4 servings, but it doubles well.

#### From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com Chocolate Chip Bundt Cake

**Selling point:** "This one is muy delicioso, and your friends will be impressed. It's also super-easy to make, and the ingredients are super cheap."

#### **Ingredients**

• 1 Duncan Hines yellow cake mix

- 4 eggs
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 small carton of sour cream
- 1 package mini chocolate chips
- 1 package instant Jell-O chocolate pudding

**Preparation**: Mix all ingredients together until well blended. Bake in greased and floured bundt pan at 325 for 1 hour. Yummy!

## A Quotable Cook

## From Windowsill Wendy at bathtubgin.blogspot.com

"Here are some of my favorite recipes. I've tried to include meals that are at least somewhat healthy, inexpensive, easy to prepare and leave plenty of leftovers. I come from a long line of good southern cooks, and most of these recipes came from them. They've all been heavily tested – I love every one of them, and most of my friends do too, as evidenced by the fact that they always go back for seconds."

#### **Desserts**

#### From T-Bone at thone.redeaglespirit.com Red Velvet Cake

**Selling point**: "This is the Petite Filet's absolute favorite cake. The following is her mom's recipe for it."

#### **Preparation**:

- 1. Mix in small bowl and let stand: 2 oz. red food coloring 2 tbs cocoa
- 2. Cream 1/2-cup shortening and 1 1/2 cups of sugar
- 3. Add two eggs and the color paste, mixing well
- 4. Add 1 cup buttermilk, alternately

- with 2 /14 cup sifted cake flour (or 2 1/8 cup all-purpose flour), 2 tsp salt and 1 tsp vanilla
- 5. Mix well
- 6. Add 1 tsp vinegar, 1 tsp soda and mix together and fold into mixture while still foamy. Stir well, but don't beat.
- 7. Put batter in greased and floured cake pan
- 8. Bake at 350 de grees for 30-35 minutes

#### **Frosting preparation:**

- 1. Cream together 1 stick Oleo, 1/2 cup shortening and 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2. Add 3 tbs flour, 1 tbs at a time; 2/3 cup of milk and 1 tsp vanilla. Beat very well.
- 3. Spread onto the cooked and cooled cake.

### **Food As Gifts**

hen times are tough, but we still want to spread some holiday cheer, we have prepared small plates full of sugary treats for our friends and co-workers. This year, we'll probably be going the same route. The following are some ideas.

- 1. **The gift of fresh-baked cookies**. Take your favorite homemade cookie recipe and layer the ingredients in reverse order in a Mason jar. Type up the recipe and directions on your computer, adding some holiday decorations or personalization, print out, and fix to the jar. We gave my sister this one year, and she and her son enjoyed baking and eating the treats of their labor. Works well with any meal that uses primarily dry ingredients.
- 2. **Restaurant gift cards with a twist**. We buy a gift certificate from a restaurant only near us and give it to someone who lives far away. That way they will know we enjoy having them visit, and we can all eat out when they visit without spending so much money at once, because their meals are paid for in advance.
- 3. A scrapbook of favorite recipes. Family and close friends often share meals, which help us become closer. Why not collect recipes, photos, memorabilia that you shared with someone and make a personalized book? Granted, this idea would probably work best for the ladies. I'd feel strange getting a shoebox filled with beer-bottle tops and photos of me doing dumb things when I was drunk.
- 4. **The Classic Dinner Party**. Where has this gone? It seems to be reserved for only certain types of people, but everyone can benefit from cooking for people you love. It doesn't have to be expensive, overblown or perfect to be special. Invite your favorite people over and eat, drink and be merry! It's a gift most people would enjoy. Or at least I would.

#### Give the Gift of Chili Sauce

#### From Buffy at arrrgh.redeaglespirit.com Chili Sauce

**Selling point:** "This piquant sauce is best used with pork roast or other meats. It is thick and chunky, like a salsa, but that's where the similarities to salsa end."

#### **Ingredients**

- 12 to 14 pounds of ripe tomatoes
- 2 bunches celery, chopped
- 3 onions, chopped
- 3 green bell peppers, chopped
- 1/2 tablespoon cloves
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard
- 2 tablespoons cinnamon
- 1/4 cup salt
- 2 cups brown sugar, 1 quart cider vinegar

**Preparation**: Remove skins from tomatoes, cut up and place in a large enameled pot with the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer until the sauce thickens. (Use your own judgment as to how thick you want the sauce.) BE CAREFUL NOT TO BURN! Use a heat diffuser under the pan and stir periodically to prevent sticking to the bottom of the pan.

Canning instructions: Sterilize pint mason jars, covers and rings. Ladle chili sauce into jars, wipe the top edge of the jar clean, put on the lids and securely tighten the rings. Check the next day for any lids which have not sealed,by loosening the rings and testing the seal.

#### Personal additions to this recipe:

"We make one batch of this each year. I do it just for the scent that fills the house. We use the quilted pint sized jelly jars so that you only have a small amount open at one time. We give jars of this to family members who don't preserve, as Christmas gifts.

"We have learned, by trial and error, to begin

the preparations around 5 or 6 in the morning. My job is to peel and chop the tomatoes. The easiest way to do this is to bring a pot of water to a rolling boil, and dip four to six tomatoes into the water for 10-15 seconds. Remove the tomatoes with a slotted spoon or a sieve, and plunge them into cold water. Then, you can pierce the skin and peel it off. Discard the skin or add it to your compost pile.

"I cut the tomatoes in half and cut the core out. Then I cut the halves crosswise. Each chunk gets cut into thirds, so that each tomato is now in twelve chunks. This is not critical, but you ultimately want bite-sized pieces.

"Meanwhile, my Mother is chopping the celery, green pepper and onion. We have discovered that this recipe takes ALL DAY to cook if you only use one large stockpot. Since we have more than one enamel stockpot, we have taken to dividing the ingredients into two of them so that we can cook and can this all in one day.

"If you have never canned before, I recommend the Ball Blue Book, from the makers of the Ball canning jars, or a wonderful book called "Stocking Up," by Carol Hupping. You can get excellent basic instructions for canning from either. My mother chooses not to give this sauce a boiling water bath. She feels it is so acidic, with the quart of vinegar, that it won't support bacterial growth. Since we give the sauce as gifts, I prefer to be safe, so I immerse the closed jars in a boiling water bath for at least 15 minutes.

"If you have a dishwasher, and the water in your hot water heater is set high enough, you can sterilize the jars in the washer just before you fill them. The jars should be clean, dry and hot.

"Mother uses this on roast pork, and occasionally uses left over pork mixed with chili sauce as a spread for lunch."