

Somewhat Home-made Cooking

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Home cooked meals? No time to cook? For many people, cooking seems like a serious chore. It seems much easier to just order some takeout food, stop at a restaurant, or pop a ready-made meal into the microwave. It's not so much a matter of laziness, but of time. A lot of people have overstuffed schedules and often feel there is no time to devote to food preparation.

Included in this booklet are techniques for combining fresh ingredients with specially selected store bought items or convenience foods. Whether you call it semi-homemade, shortcut cooking or almost homemade the results--mouthwatering meals and desserts, prepared in minutes that taste like they were made from scratch.

We all want home-made flavor in the foods we serve our families and ourselves. But we don't want all the fuss that comes with homemade. So "Somewhat Home-made" can be the best of both worlds. There are several options for "Somewhat Home-made Cooking".

- Embellish certain helpful supermarket products by adding ingredients to them.
- Use shortcut products in our homemade recipes to cut down on prep time.
- Or we can choose assembly-like recipes, where we're basically putting various products and ingredients together to make tasty and interesting dishes.

Convenience foods are those that are partially or fully prepared. They can be canned, frozen, ready-to-eat, ready-to use or packaged mixes. When deciding what to buy, think about your time, energy, the quality of the food you can purchase and your food budget. Many convenience foods are actually less expensive than the home-prepared counterpart.

For easy recognition the **convenience foods** are identified with bold font in the following recipes.

Some specific products that lend themselves to the “Somewhat Home-made Cooking”

- Frozen or refrigerated pesto
- Refrigerated minced garlic
- Prepared pie crust—regular, graham cracker or cookie
- Frozen bread dough, white or wheat
- Frozen rolls—dinner, Texas or cinnamon rolls
- Whole rotisserie chicken--use when recipes call for shredded chicken—just remove the skin
- Canned chicken breast
- Shredded cheese
- Bottled marinara sauce--use when tomato or red sauce is called for
- Pizza sauce, pasta sauce or alfredo sauce
- Bottle salsa
- Bottled or canned enchilada sauce
- Biscuit mix—make biscuits, pancakes, waffles and other dishes.
- Cake mix—replace the oil with lower calorie ingredients such as strong coffee, fat-free sour cream, lemon yogurt or applesauce
- Frozen whipped topping—use light or fat free instead of whipped cream
- Instant or Cook and Serve pudding mixes
- Cream of mushroom soup (or other flavors)—can be used instead of making a gravy or cream sauce for casseroles
- Canned broth—much easier than making broth from scratch
- Concentrated coffee—much easier than brewing strong coffee for your baking recipes, buy a bottle and keep it in refrigerator once it is opened
- Canned or frozen vegetables
- Salad dressing--for flavor or marinades
- Dry salad dressing mixes
- Frozen shredded hash browns or O'Brien potatoes
- Boxed scalloped or au gratin potatoes
- Crescent Roll dough, canned biscuits or puff pastry
- Crescent dough now comes in seamless dough sheet
- Prepared salads or produce
- New products are available every day. Shop some time when you have extra time to look around.



Breakfast

Southwest Egg and Tater Tot Casserole

2 tablespoons butter
1/2 large onion, diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
1 red bell pepper, diced
12 large eggs
1 1/2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, divided
Salt & pepper, to taste
3 cups frozen tater tots
Chopped cilantro, for garnish
Salsa, sour cream, any extra toppings you'd like

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Sauté onions and peppers 5 to 7 minutes or until softened. Crack 12 eggs into large bowl and whisk together with salt and pepper. Add in cooked veggies and 1 cup cheese. Pour into greased 9x13 baking dish. Place tater tots onto egg mixture and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until cheese is melted and egg casserole doesn't jiggle. Top with cilantro and cut into pieces. Serve warm

Of course you could add some jalapeno or green chile, to taste, for a really spicy meal.



Sausage, Biscuit and Gravy Casserole

1 can (7.5 oz.) buttermilk biscuit dough
1 lb. sausage
6 eggs
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/2 cup milk
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 pkg. powdered gravy mix

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Cut biscuit dough into 1" pieces and cover the bottom of the pan. Brown the sausage and drain. Scatter browned sausage over the biscuit pieces, then top with cheese. Whisk egg and milk with a pinch of salt and pepper, pour over the other ingredients in pan. Make gravy according to instruction and pour over the top. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes. Cut and serve. Makes 8 servings.

Bubble Up Breakfast Bake

1 lb. reduced fat breakfast sausage
1 can (7.5 oz.) refrigerator biscuits
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
1 can (4 oz.) diced green chiles
6 eggs
Salt and pepper, to season
1/4 cup milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cook sausage in a medium skillet, until no longer pink. While cooking the sausage, cut each biscuit into 8 pieces and place in the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking dish that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Add the sausage to the pan, on top of the uncooked biscuits. Sprinkle cheese on top of that along with green chiles. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, salt and pepper and milk. Pour egg mixture over everything in the baking dish. Place in the oven 40 minutes or until a knife comes out clean in the middle of the dish. Be careful, the cheese might make it seem like its uncooked egg, but it is just cheesy goodness.

Amish Breakfast Casserole

1 lb. sliced bacon, diced
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1-2 cloves garlic, minced
 8 eggs, beaten
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 pkg. (24 ozs.) frozen, shredded hash browns, thawed
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
 1 1/2 cups small curd cottage cheese
1 1/4 cups shredded Swiss cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare a 9x13-inch baking dish by lightly coating with cooking spray. Dice the bacon into bite-sized pieces prior to cooking. In a large skillet, combine the onion and bacon and cook until bacon is crisp. Drain. Return to skillet and add the minced garlic. Sauté for about 1 minute or until fragrant. Remove from cooktop. In a large mixing bowl, mix together the remaining ingredient. Stir in the bacon mixture. Transfer to the prepared baking dish and bake uncovered 35 to 45 minutes, or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Makes 9 servings.

For individual servings, try cooking in muffin tins that have been sprayed with nonstick cooking spray, for 13 to 15 minutes. You could also substitute ham or sausage for the meat.

Ham, Egg & Cheese Breakfast Pockets

1 can (16.3 oz.) jumbo biscuit dough
 8 eggs
1 cup deli ham, chopped
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly spray two large baking sheets with cooking spray. Place 4 biscuits on each baking sheet and spread dough to form 6 inch rounds. Set aside. Scramble eggs, ham and cheese in a medium frying pan, until nearly done.

Divide mixture evenly among dough rounds (approximately 1/3 cup ea.) Keeping eggs to one half of each round. Fold remaining half of dough over scrambled egg mixture to create a half-circle. Seal edges with a fork. Bake for 15 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

Mini Breakfast Quiches

1 can (8 oz.) crescent rolls
 1/2 lb. breakfast sausage
 4 eggs
 1/2 cup milk
 1 Roma tomato, chopped
 1 mushroom, chopped
 1/4 cup green onion, sliced
 1/4 teaspoon basil
 1/8 teaspoon pepper
 1/8 teaspoon garlic salt
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
 Salt, to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Remove crescent rolls from can and seal perforations together. Cut out 8 individual squares. Spray a muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray. In each muffin cavity place a square. Fit the dough to the muffin cups, snugly. Remove any excess dough from the opening. Set prepared muffin tin aside. Brown sausage, drain grease and let sausage cook; set aside to cool. Combine eggs and milk in a large bowl. Beat vigorously for 1 minute. Add chopped tomato, mushroom, green onion, basil, pepper and garlic salt. Mix well. Add sausage to egg mixture and beat lightly. (Make sure your sausage is completely cool or it will cook the eggs.) Place about 1/4 cup mixture into each muffin cup. Do not fill to the top! Cook quiches in the oven for approximately 15 minutes. Top with 1 tablespoon cheese on each quiche and continue baking for another 1 to 3 minutes.

For something different, try some of these breakfast ideas for supper sometime.

Ham & Cheese Muffins

1 tablespoon butter
 1/2 cup dried minced onion
 1 pkg. (8 oz.) shredded Cheddar cheese
 1 1/2 cup biscuit mix
 1/2 cup milk
 2 eggs
 1 cup cooked ham, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Melt butter in a skillet. Add onion and cook over low heat until softened; set aside. Combine cheese and biscuit mix in a bowl; stir in milk and eggs just until moistened. Fold in ham and softened onion. Fill 12 greased muffin cups 3/4 full. Bake for 13 to 15 minutes, or until toothpick comes out clean. Let cool for 5 minutes before removing from muffin cups. Serve warm. Makes 1 dozen.

Peaches and Cream Refrigerator Oatmeal

2 cups uncooked regular oats
 1 cup low-fat yogurt (Greek yogurt is thicker & creamier)
 1 cup low-fat milk (or almond milk)
 1/2 cup chopped fresh peaches (or other fruit)
 Additional fruit for topping

Stir together oats, yogurt, milk and fruit. Spoon ingredients into 6 (1/2 pint) canning jars. Cover with metal lids. Chill 8 to 12 hours. Top each serving with 1/4 cup fresh peaches or other fruit. Makes 6 servings.

Peaches and Cream French Toast

1/2 cup butter
 1 cup brown sugar
 2 tablespoon reserved juice from canned peaches
 1 can (29 oz.) peaches, drained
 1 French baguette, cubed
 8 oz cream cheese, cut into small pieces
 12 eggs
 1 1/2 cups half-n-half
 1 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat butter, sugar and peach juice in saucepan until bubbly. Pour into a 9x13 inch baking dish. Scatter peach slices over caramel sauce. Top with bread cubes then pieces of cream cheese. Place eggs, half-n-half, and vanilla in blender; blend to combine. Pour egg mixture over bread and cream cheese. Cover and refrigerate at least an hour but preferably overnight. Bake, uncovered for 50 to 60 minutes.



The Main Meal

Prairie Pork Chops

- 1/2 cup spicy mustard
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 8 pork chops
- 1 box (6 oz.) stuffing mix
- 1 can (15.25 oz.) corn, drained
- 1 cup water

Spray 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a shallow bowl, mix brown sugar and mustard. One by one, coat each side of pork chops with mustard mixture and place in baking dish. Top chops with any remaining mixture. In a medium size bowl, mix stuffing, corn and water. Top pork chops with stuffing mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

Pizza Casserole

- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) pasta, cooked al dente
- 2 lbs. ground beef, browned
- 2 jars (44 oz. ea.) spaghetti sauce
- 1 pkg. (5 oz.) sliced pepperoni
- 2 cups shredded Mozzarella cheese

Mix pasta, hamburger and spaghetti sauce. Layer in two 9x13-inch baking dishes that have been sprayed with cooking spray. Add cheese and pepperoni, to taste. Bake one pan at 350 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes or until done. Freeze the other for a busy day!

Mix-n-match: add your favorite pizza fixings, olives, onions, peppers, Italian sausage, mixed cheeses, etc.



Beef Nacho Casserole

- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen sweet red and yellow peppers
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
- 2 cans (10 oz. ea.) refrigerated pizza dough
- 3 cups shredded taco-cheese blend cheese
- 1 jar (16 oz.) medium-hot salsa
- 1 can (2.2 oz.) sliced black olives, drained
- 6 green onions, sliced

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Coat 9x13-inch baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. In a large skillet, over medium-high heat cook peppers, ground beef and garlic salt; stirring to break up clumps of beef, until the peppers are soft and beef is no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Drain off any excess fat from skillet. Remove pizza dough from cans. Cut the dough crosswise into 1/2-inch slices, then cut each slice into quarters. In a large bowl, toss dough pieces and salsa. Add cooked meat mixture, 2 cups of cheese and olives. Scrape mixture into baking dish. Sprinkle the remaining 1 cup cheese over the top. Bake for 30 minutes. Sprinkle green onions evenly over the top. Bake an additional 5 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

Beef n Biscuits

1½ lean ground beef
 ½ cup chopped celery
 ½ cup chopped onion
 2 tablespoons flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
 1/8 teaspoon pepper
2 cans (8 oz. ea.) tomato sauce
1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen peas
1 can (7 ½ oz.) refrigerated
buttermilk biscuit
1 cup (4 oz.) shredded Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large skillet, cook the beef, celery and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink, drain. Stir in the flour, salt, oregano and pepper until blended. Add tomato sauce and peas; simmer for 5 minutes. Transfer into a 9x13-inch baking dish that has been sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Add biscuits to top of mixture. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown and cheese is melted. Makes 6 servings.

I believe I will try with frozen biscuits.
Yummy!

Potato and Beef Tortilla Skillet

1 ½ lbs. ground beef
1 box. (4.9 oz.) Au Gratin Potatoes
 ¾ cup hot water
1 can (11 oz.) Mexican, drained
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1 cup coarsely crushed tortilla chips

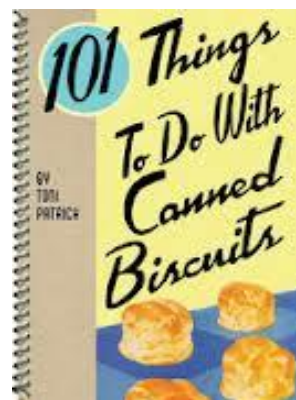
Brown and drain beef. Stir in potatoes, sauce mix and hot water. Heat to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer uncovered 17 to 18 minutes, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender. Stir in corn; sprinkle with cheese. Cover and simmer 2 to 3 minutes, without stirring, until corn is hot and cheese is melted. Sprinkle with tortilla chips immediately before serving.

Mexican Chicken Casserole

2 teaspoons olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 garlic clove, chopped
2 cans (4 oz. ea.) chopped green chiles
1 cup evaporated milk
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
 4 oz. cream cheese, cut into small cubes
1 jar (8 oz.) enchilada sauce
1 fully cooked rotisserie chicken,
shredded
1 cup chicken broth
 12 (6-inch) corn tortillas
 Cooking spray
½ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
Handful crushed tortilla chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large skillet, heat olive oil, add onion and garlic. Sauté. Add green chiles, milk, Monterey Jack cheese, cream cheese, enchilada sauce, shredded chicken and chicken broth. Heat thoroughly. Place 4 tortillas in the bottom of a 2-quart casserole dish sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Spoon 2 cups chicken mixture over the tortillas. Repeat layers, twice, ending with the chicken mixture. Sprinkle Cheddar cheese and crushed tortilla chips over the top and bake for 30 minutes or until heated through and bubbly. Serve warm.

Could be cooked in the microwave to speed things up. Microwave on HIGH 6 to 8 minutes or until heated through.



AuGratin Chicken Bake

- 1 bag (14oz.) frozen broccoli florets, thawed and drained**
- 1 box (7.8 oz.) Deluxe Creamy Au Gratin Potatoes**
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 tablespoon butter
- 4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 2 quart casserole or 11x7-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Cover bottom of dish with broccoli. Stir together potatoes, sauce package, water, milk and butter in medium bowl. Spread over broccoli. Place chicken breast halves on potato mixture. Bake uncovered 30 minutes at 400 degrees. Sprinkle grated cheese over chicken. Bake 3 to 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted and chicken has reached 160 degrees when checked with a meat thermometer. Let stand 5 minutes or until sauce is as thick as desired.

Six-Cheese Tortellini

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/4 cup Cheez Whiz**
- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) shredded Six-Cheese Italian Blend cheese**
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 pkgs. (9 oz. ea.) fresh cheese tortellini**
- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen peas**

Melt butter in a large heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add milk and bring to a simmer. Whisk in cheese dip. Gradually whisk in shredded cheeses. Stir until cheese melt and mixture begins to bubble, about 5 minutes. Whisk in cayenne. Meanwhile, cook tortellini in a pot of boiling salted water until just tender, about 4 minutes. Drain tortellini over frozen peas in a colander. Add tortellini and peas to cheese sauce. Toss to coat. Divide tortellini and sauce equally among 4 pasta bowls and serve.

Can be made 1 day ahead. Transfer tortellini and sauce to a 2 quart baking dish. Cover and bake until heated through about 25 minutes or heat in the microwave 6 to 8 minutes or until heated through..

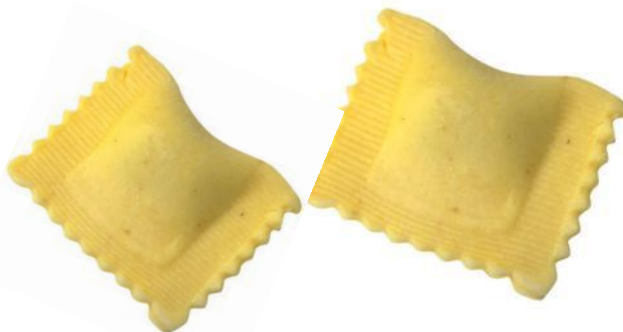
One-Pot Pasta with Tomato-Basil Sauce

- 1 pkg. (12 oz.) pasta**
- 1 can (28 oz.) diced tomatoes**
- 2 cups chicken broth**
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/3 cup firmly packed fresh basil leaves
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) baby spinach leaves**
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese**

Place pasta, tomatoes, chicken broth, onion, garlic, oregano, basil, salt, olive oil and crushed red pepper in a Dutch oven. Cover and bring to a boil over medium-high heat (about 12 to 15 minutes.) Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered 10 to 12 minutes or until pasta is slightly al dente, stirring at 5 minute intervals. Remove from heat and stir in spinach. Cover and let stand 10 minutes. Stir just before serving. Serve with Parmesan cheese.

Shrimp Pasta Pot: Prepare recipe as directed, stirring in 1 lb. peeled large, raw shrimp, deveined with spinach.

Chicken Pasta Pot: Add some shredded rotisserie chicken to the original recipe for the husband that “must have some kind of meat.”



Slow Cookin'

Slow Cooker Potato Soup

1 pkg. (24 oz.) hash browns
2 cans (14 oz. ea.) chicken broth
1 can (10.75 oz.) cream of chicken soup
 ½ cup chopped onion
 ½ teaspoon black pepper
 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese

Combine all ingredients except cream cheese and cook in slow cooker on LOW 5 to 6 hours. Stir in cream cheese, cook 30 additional minutes, stir occasionally.

Cube Steak and Gravy

2 lbs. cube steak
2 cans (10.75 ea.) cream of mushroom soup
1 envelope onion soup mix
 ¾ cup water
 Salt and pepper, to taste

Place all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cook on LOW all day. Serve over rice, noodles, mashed potatoes or with your favorite sides.

Slow Cooker Beer Chicken

2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 bottle or can beer (you can substitute apple juice)
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 1 tablespoon dried oregano
 ½ teaspoon black pepper

Place chicken in slow cooker. Pour beer or apple juice over chicken. Mix together all dry ingredients and distribute evenly over the top of the chicken breasts. Do not mix in with the liquid. Cook on HIGH for 4 to 5 hours or LOW 6 to 8 hours. Spoon drippings over chicken breasts before serving.



Easy Sweet and Sour Meatballs

1 pkg. (2 lb.) frozen meatballs, thawed
1 can (16 oz.) pineapple tidbits
1 bottle (18 oz.) barbecue sauce
 1 onion, diced
 1 green pepper, diced

Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW setting for 4 hours. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Italian Chicken

4 chicken breasts
1 pkg. Zesty Italian dressing seasoning
 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
2 cans (10 ¾ oz. ea.) cream of chicken soup
 1 tablespoons garlic powder
 Cooked pasta

Place chicken, seasoning, cream cheese, soup and garlic powder to slow cooker. Cook on LOW 4 hours. If sauce is too thick add a little milk. When you are ready to serve the chicken, cook pasta according to package. Drain pasta. Add pasta to the chicken sauce and mix together.

Wrap It Up

Sausage Roll Ups

1 lb. hot sausage
Dash salt & pepper
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese
2 cans (8 oz. ea.) crescent rolls

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a sauté pan, brown sausage; drain. Add dash salt and pepper. Blend in cream cheese until the cream cheese is melted. Unroll on can of crescent rolls and place on a baking sheet. With your fingers, gently press the seams together to seal them. Spread the sausage mixture evenly over the crescent roll dough, leaving about 1/2-inch border along the edges. Unroll the remaining package of crescent rolls and place on top if the sausage mixture. Press the edges together to seal. Gently press the seams together. Bake at 375 degrees for about 20 minutes, or until crescent roll dough is golden brown. Cut into small squares and serve.

Broccoli Cheddar Chicken Braid

2 cans (8 oz. ea.) Crescent rolls
2 cups chicken chunks, cooked
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
2 cups broccoli, frozen, steamed and chopped
1/2 cup light mayonnaise

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. On a parchment paper lined cookie sheet, spread both cans of crescents length wise to form a long rectangle. Press each of the seams to form a single layer of dough. In a large bowl, combine chicken, cheese, broccoli and mayonnaise. Spread mixture over the center of the dough evenly to create a log. Using a sharp knife, cut horizontal strips 1 inch apart down each side of the crescent dough. Fold the dough strips over the top of

the chicken mixture, alternating left and right to create a braid. Bake for 28 to 30 minutes until golden brown.
Makes 5 servings.

BBQ in a Blanket with Buttermilk-Ranch Sauce

1 cup pulled barbecued pulled pork (without sauce)
1/2 cup your favorite bottled barbecue sauce
1 can (16.3 oz.) refrigerated jumbo biscuits

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Toss together pulled pork and barbecue sauce. Press jumbo biscuits into triangles (about 5 inches on each side.) Spoon 2 tablespoons pork mixture along 1 edge of each triangle. Roll up triangles. Place rolls, seam side down, 2 inches apart on a parchment paper lined baking sheet. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Meanwhile prepare Buttermilk Ranch Sauce.

Buttermilk Ranch Sauce

1/4 cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon bottled barbecue sauce
1 teaspoon Ranch dressing mix
1/4 teaspoon salt

Stir together ingredients until smooth.
Serve with BBQ in a Blanket.

A parchment paper lined baking sheet prevents sticking and offers ease of clean-up.



Flaky Reuben Bites

1 can (8 oz.) crescent rolls
¼ lb. thinly sliced corned beef
½ cup shredded Swiss cheese
1/3 cup sauerkraut, well, drained

Dipping Sauce

½ cup Thousand Island dressing
1 tablespoon milk

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Unroll dough into 2 long rectangles, pressing each to form 12-inch long rectangle; press perforations to seal. Layer half of corned beef on each rectangle, cutting to fit if necessary. Top each with cheese and sauerkraut. Starting at one side, roll up each tightly; seal long edges. Place, seam side down, on parchment paper lined baking sheet; tuck edges under. Bake 12 to 14 minutes or until golden brown. Meanwhile, in small bowl, mix dipping sauce ingredients. To serve, cut warm rolls into 1-inch slices, place on serving platter. Serve with dipping sauce.

Chicken Salad

Empanadas

2 cups shredded cooked chicken
½ cup mayonnaise
1/3 cup chopped toasted pecans
¼ cup chopped celery
1 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
¾ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 can (16.3 oz.) refrigerated jumbo biscuits

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Stir together chicken, mayonnaise, pecans, celery, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Roll biscuits into 6-inch circles. Place about ¼ cup chicken mixture in center of each circle; fold dough over chicken mixture. Press edges with a fork or crimp to seal. Cut slits in tops of pies to allow steam to escape, if desired. Place pies on a parchment paper lined baking sheet. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. Makes 8 servings.

Easy Bierocks

1 pkg. frozen Texas Rolls
1 ½ -2 lbs. hamburger
1 onion, chopped
1 head cabbage, shredded or 2 bags shredded cabbage
Salt and pepper, to taste
4 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Thaw rolls according to package directions. In a Dutch oven, cook hamburger and onion until brown; drain. Add shredded cabbage, salt and pepper. Reduce heat and cover until cabbage is tender. Drain and cool. Stir in cheese. Spray cookie sheets with nonstick cooking spray or line with parchment paper. When meat is cool and dough is thawed; form 2 rolls in ball and roll into a large circle and fill each with two heaping tablespoons of meat mixture. Pinch shut and place on baking sheets, seam side down. Leave plenty of room between dough for rising. Cover with plastic wrap that has been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Let set to rise about 30 to 45 minutes. Bake in a preheated oven at 350 degrees approximately 18 to 20 minutes until golden brown. Store or freeze in plastic bags.

These are great reheated in microwave. Eat them with mustard.



You could use deli chicken salad or left over chicken salad for these empanadas.

Calzones

1 pkg. frozen Texas rolls, thawed but still cold

Flour

2 oz. sliced pepperoni

8 oz. sausage, browned and drained

1 can (2 ½ oz.) sliced black olives, drained

½ cup sliced mushrooms

½ cup chopped green pepper

1 cup shredded Mozzarella cheese

1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

1 cup pizza or marinara sauce, heated

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Press 3 rolls together, using a little flour, roll them into a 12-inch circle. Make three more circles with the other rolls. Combine pepperoni, sausage, olives, mushrooms, green peppers, cheese and Italian seasoning. Divide mixture equally and spoon onto one half of each circle. Fold dough over (like a turnover and pinch edges together. Place on a large sprayed baking sheet that has been lined with parchment paper. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. To serve dip in heated pizza sauce. Makes 4 servings.

Mini Cheese Calzones

6 sticks (1 oz. ea.) string cheese

1 pkg. refrigerated bread stick dough

1 cup marinara sauce or Ranch dressing

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Unwrap the string cheese and cut them in half crosswise. Open or unroll the bread-stick dough and separate into 12 rectangles. Coil a rectangle of bread dough around a piece of cheese stick as if you were wrapping it with yarn. Completely cover the cheese, tucking the dough ends under and pinching them to seal closed. Repeat with the remaining dough and cheese. Place the dough-covered cheese on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake the mini calzones in a preheated 400 degree oven for 12 minutes until golden brown. Serve with a bowl of marinara or Ranch Dressing.

Pesto Biscuit Pizza

1 can (16.3 oz.) refrigerated jumbo biscuits

Refrigerated basil pesto

10 cherry tomatoes, cut in half

Crumbled feta cheese

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Roll biscuits into 6-inch rounds; place 2-inches apart on 2 parchment paper lined baking sheets. Spread 1 ½ tablespoons refrigerated basil pesto on each round. Top each pizza with tomatoes and 2 tablespoons feta cheese. Bake 5 minutes. Rotate pans, and switch from top to bottom racks; bake 4 to 5 more minutes or until golden.

Fried Chicken Tacos with Buttermilk Jalapeno Sauce

½ cup refrigerated light Ranch dressing

1 large jalapeno pepper, stemmed

1 bunch fresh cilantro

2 garlic cloves, chopped

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

12 (6-inch) corn tortillas, warmed

12 fried chicken breast tenders

Sliced radishes, if desired

Process Ranch dressing, jalapeno pepper, cilantro, garlic and lime juice in a blender or food processor 2 to 3 seconds until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides as needed. Place 1 fried chicken breast tender, cut into chunks, in each of the warmed corn tortillas. Serve with dressing and sliced radishes. Makes 6 servings.

Use this creamy sauce to dress up store bought fried chicken tenderloins or as a salad dressing dip for wings. Double up on the tortillas for truck style tacos.

Greek Chicken Tacos

1/2 pint grape tomatoes, quartered
4 ozs. feta cheese, crumbled
 1/2 cucumber, chopped
 1/2 cup green olives, chopped
 1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
 3 pepperoncini salad peppers, chopped
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
 2 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 garlic clove, pressed
 1/2 teaspoon salt.

Deli roasted chicken, shredded

Crisp lettuce leaves, butter or romaine

Stir together tomatoes, cheese, cucumber, olives, onion, salad peppers, parsley, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, salt. Place 1/4 cup shredded deli roasted chicken in each of 12 lettuce leaves; add tomato mixture. Makes 6 servings.

Crisp lettuce cups offer a light, refreshing spin to this Greek salad-inspired tacos, but feel free to use warm flour tortillas or pitas instead.

BLT Wraps

3 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
4-5 (10 inch) flour tortillas
 2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 2 avocados, chopped
 2 green onions, chopped
 2 cups mixed salad greens
 10 slices bacon, fried crisp and crumbled
1/3 cup ranch salad dressing
 2 Tbsp. mayonnaise

Spread some of the softened cream cheese on each flour tortilla. In large bowl combine tomatoes, avocado, green onion, salad greens, cooked bacon, ranch salad dressing, and mayonnaise and mix well. Place on tortillas and roll up. Serve immediately or wrap well and chill for 3 to 4 hours, then serve.

Baked Chimichangas

1 lb. ground beef
 1 onion, finely chopped
 1 clove garlic, minced
 2 teaspoons chili powder
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
2 cans (8 oz.) tomato sauce
1 can (4 oz.) chopped green chiles
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
Burrito sized flour tortillas

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray; set aside. In a skillet over medium-high heat brown beef with onion, garlic, chili powder, oregano and cumin. Stir in tomato sauce and green chiles; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered, until the flavors are blended and the mixture thickens, slightly, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the cheese. Meanwhile, wrap the tortillas in foil and place in the oven to warm for 10 minutes. Spoon about 1/2 cup of filling into the center of each tortilla. Fold in the sides, then roll to enclose the filling. Place the chimichangas, seam-side down, on the baking sheet. Lightly spray the tops of the tortillas with nonstick cooking spray. Bake until golden and crisp, about 20 minutes. Do not turn.



Veggies and Sides

Hasselback Potatoes

6 medium sized potatoes
 2-3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced, if desired
 Olive oil
 Sea Salt
 Freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Put the potato on a cutting board flat side down. Start from one end of the potato, cut almost all the way through, at about 1/4-inch intervals.

Do not cut all the way through.

Arrange the potatoes on a baking sheet and insert the garlic in between slits. Drizzle olive oil over potatoes. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Bake the potatoes for about 40 minutes or until the top of potatoes turn crispy and inside is soft.

Roasted Cauliflower

1 head cauliflower
 1 1/2 cups plain Greek yogurt
 1 lime, zested and juiced
 2 tablespoon chile powder
 1 tablespoon cumin
 1 tablespoon garlic powder
 2 teaspoons sea salt
 1 teaspoon black pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees and spray a baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside. Trim the base of the cauliflower to remove any green leaves and the woody stem. In a medium bowl, combine the yogurt with the lime zest and juice, chile powder, cumin, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Dunk the cauliflower in the bowl and use a brush to smear the marinade evenly over its surface. (Excess marinade can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to three days and used with meat, fish or other veggies.) Place

the cauliflower on the prepared baking sheet and roast until the surface is dry and lightly browned, 30 to 40 minutes. The marinade will make a crust on the surface of the cauliflower. Let the cauliflower cool for 10 minutes before cutting into wedges and serving.

Garlic Roasted Broccoli

1 bunch broccoli, cut into florets, stems peeled and sliced or diced
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 3 cloves garlic, sliced
 Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Toss the broccoli with olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper of baking sheet. Spread them out and then roast, without stirring, until the edges are crispy and the stems are tender crisp, about 20 minutes.

Roasted Cabbage Slices

1 head cabbage
 3 tablespoons olive oil
 Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Slice cabbage 1/4 to 1/2-inch thick, starting at the top of the head so the inner pieces for circles within the slices. Spread 1 tablespoon oil on baking sheet. Place cabbage on baking sheet the drizzle with remaining oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 35 to 40 minutes or until tender in the middle and sides are starting to turn golden brown.

Grilled Corn

1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen corn
 Olive oil
 Salt and Pepper

Spread frozen corn on a baking sheet, sprinkle with olive oil, salt and pepper. Broil for 5 minutes.

Spicy Green Rice

3 tablespoons butter
 1 medium jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced.
2 cups quick cooking rice
1 can (10 ½ oz.) condensed chicken broth
1 can (7 oz.) Salsa Verde
 ¼ cup chopped cilantro

Melt butter in a 3 quart saucepan over medium-high heat; add jalapeno pepper. Sauté 2 to 3 minutes or until tender. Add rice; cook, stirring constantly, 5 minutes or until golden brown. Stir in chicken broth and Salsa Verde; bring to a boil. Cover and remove from heat; let stand 5 minutes. Stir in fresh cilantro. Makes 4 servings.

Creamy Salsa Potatoes

4 cups water
 1 cup milk
 ¼ cup butter
2 boxes (4.9 oz. ea.) scalloped potatoes
¾ cup chunky salsa
 ½ cup sour cream
1 can (4 ozs.) chopped green chiles
½ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro, if desired

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a 3 quart saucepan, heat water, milk and butter to boiling. Stir in 2 pouches of potatoes and 2 pouches sauce mix. Stir in salsa, sour cream chiles and cheese until well blended. Spoon potato mixture into dish. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Sprinkle with cilantro.

This dish would microwave well. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes on High or until heated through and potatoes are tender.

Marinated Asparagus

2 cans (12 oz. ea.) asparagus spears, drained
1 jar (12 oz.) roasted red peppers
1 bottle (16 oz.) Sundried Tomato Vinaigrette or Zesty Italian Dressing, add to taste

Layer asparagus and red pepper in serving dish. Top with dressing, cover and refrigerate.

Raspberry Spinach Salad

1 pint fresh raspberries
1 bag baby spinach
 ½ cup sliced almonds
 3 sliced kiwi
½ bottle Raspberry Vinaigrette Salad Dressing

Wash raspberries and pat dry with a paper towel. Toss with the spinach, almonds and kiwi. Pour salad dressing on top and toss until well mixed.

Apple Slaw

¾ cup sour cream or fat free Greek yogurt
 1/3 cup sugar
 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons dry ranch salad dressing mix
1 pkg. (8 oz.) coleslaw mix
 3 green apples, cored and diced
 4 green onions, thinly sliced
 Salt and pepper, to taste

Whisk sour cream, sugar, vinegar and Ranch seasoning in a large bowl to blend. Add cabbage mixture, apples and green onions. Toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Cover tightly and chill 20 minutes or up to 4 hours. Serve cold.

Breads

Easy Lemon Pull A-Part Rolls

12 frozen rolls (thawed but still cold)

2 lemons, zested

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 cup butter, melted

Mix lemon zest with sugar. Cut rolls in half and place in a 9x13-inch baking dish that has been sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Drizzle melted butter over rolls. Sprinkle with lemon zest/sugar mixture, reserving 1/2 of mixture to sprinkle on just before baking. Cover with sprayed plastic wrap. Let rise until double in size. Remove wrap. Sprinkle on remaining mixture. Bake at 350 degrees 20 to 25 minutes. Remove immediately from pan and place on cooling rack. Drizzle Citrus Glaze over rolls. Makes 12 servings.

Citrus Glaze

1 tablespoon butter, melted

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Powdered sugar

Mix butter and lemon juice. Add powdered sugar just until thickened for a glaze. Drizzle over pull-a-parts.



Can't Miss Cinnamon Rolls

1 pkg. 12 frozen cinnamon rolls

1 box (3 oz.) Cook and Serve Vanilla Pudding

1 stick butter

The night before, spray your 9x13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Separate the cinnamon rolls and lay them in a single layer in the dish, reserving icing package that comes with the rolls. Sprinkle the unprepared vanilla pudding over the frozen rolls. Melt butter and pour over the rolls. Spray a sheet of plastic wrap lightly with cooking spray, cover the rolls tightly and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, remove the thawed rolls and let set on counter for 30 to 45 minutes until doubled in volume. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes until light golden. Spread icing and serve.

Ice Cream Bread

2 cups vanilla ice cream, softened

1 1/2 cups self-rising flour

1 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon grated lemon zest

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray an 8 x 4-inch loaf pan with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, mix together ice cream, sugar, flour and zest until just combined. Place mixture into the loaf pan and smooth out. Bake for 45 minutes or until toothpick stuck in the loaf comes out clean. Remove from the pan and let cool.

**Try some other combinations::
strawberry ice cream & with 1/2 cup
fresh sliced strawberries**

Or

**vanilla ice cream & 1/2 cup chopped
bananas.**

Let your imagination be your guide.

Glazed Raisin Cinnamon Biscuits

2 ½ cups biscuit mix
 ½ cup raisins
 ⅔ cup milk
 2 tablespoons sugar
 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Glaze

⅔ cup powdered sugar
 1 tablespoon warm water
 ¼ teaspoon vanilla

Pre-heat oven to 450 degrees. Stir all biscuit ingredients just until soft dough forms. Place dough on a surface sprinkled with biscuit mix; roll to coat. Shape into a ball and knead 10 times. Roll ½-inch thick. Cut with 2 ½-inch round biscuit cutter. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 9 to 11 minutes or until golden brown. While biscuits are baking, in a small bowl, beat all glaze ingredients until smooth. Spread over warm biscuits.

7 up Biscuits

2 cups biscuit mix
 ½ cup sour cream
 ½ cup 7-up
 ¼ cup melted butter

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cut sour cream into biscuit mix, add 7-up. Makes a very soft dough. Sprinkle additional biscuit mix on board or table and pat dough out the same size/shape as the pan you are going to bake them in. Cut biscuits into squares. Melt ¼ cup butter and pour in a 9-inch square pan. Place cut biscuits in pan, they will be touching, bake for 20 to 25 minutes.

This recipe can easily be doubled for a bigger crowd.

Easy Banana Nut Bread

1 box yellow cake mix
 1 egg
 ½ cup low-fat milk
 1 cup mashed ripe bananas (about 2 medium)
 ½ cup chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, egg and milk. Add bananas; beat on medium speed for 2 minutes. Stir in pecans. Pour into two greased 8x4-inch loaf pans that have been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until a toothpick, inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Makes 2 loaves.

Freeze one of these quick loaves to enjoy later!



Sweets

Berry Cheesecake Fluff

1 tub (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping
2 to 2 ½ cups vanilla yogurt
1 pkg. (3.4 oz.) cheesecake instant pudding mix
1 bag (16 oz.) frozen mixed berries

In a medium sized bowl, fold Cool Whip into vanilla yogurt. Sprinkle with pudding mix and stir well. Add berries mix well. Let sit in refrigerator for 30 minutes or more and then stir well to dissolve pudding. Serve cold. Makes 7 to 9 servings.

You could also add fresh fruit such as bananas, strawberries, etc. Even a few miniature marshmallows or coconut.

Skinny Raspberry Lemonade Cake

1 box (18.25 oz.) white cake mix
3 teaspoons Raspberry Lemonade Flavored Crystal Light Drink Mix
1 container (Light Raspberry Lemonade flavored yogurt or 1 (6 oz.) plain Greek yogurt of choice
3 egg whites
1 cup water
1 container (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping, fat free

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium size bowl or stand mixer, mix cake mix, egg whites, Crystal Light mix, yogurt and water until well mixed and lump free. Pour mixture into a 9x13-inch pan or two 8-inch round pans that have been greased and floured. Bake 25 to 30 minutes. Let cake cool and top with whipped topping. Garnish with fresh raspberries or lemon slices.

Cherry Cream Cheese Turnovers

16 frozen dinner rolls, thawed
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1/3 cup sugar
1 ½ cup cherry pie filling

Icing

1 cup powdered sugar
1 tablespoon butter, melted
3 tablespoons milk
½ teaspoon almond flavoring

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine 2 rolls and roll into an 8-inch circle. Repeat with remaining rolls. Combine cream cheese and sugar: mix well. Divide cream cheese mixture evenly (approximately 1 tablespoon) between circles, spreading it over half of each and leaving ½-inch border. Divide pie filling evenly (approximately 2 tablespoons) and spoon over cream cheese mixture. Brush border of bottom halves with water; fold top halves over filling to enclose completely. Press edges to seal with your fingertips, then crimp firmly with a fork. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Some of the filling may seep out. Combine icing ingredients and drizzle over cooled turnovers.

Berry Cookie Cobbler

2 bags (12 oz. ea.) frozen mixed berries, thawed
1 can (21 oz.) apple pie filling
1/3 cup sugar
1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 pkg. (18 oz.) refrigerated sugar cookie dough
Vanilla ice cream

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix berries, apple pie filling, sugar and cinnamon. Transfer fruit mixture to an 8x8-inch baking dish. Crumble the cookie dough over the fruit, covering thickly and completely. Bake, uncovered, until cookie crust is golden and crisp and juices bubble thickly, about 45 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream.

Fresh Peach Dumpling Roll-Ups

1 can (8 oz.) crescent rolls
 2 large peaches
 1/2 cup butter
 1/2 cup sugar
 1/2 cup water
 Cinnamon and sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9x13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray. Cut each peach into quarters. Unroll the crescents and sprinkle the inside of each crescent with cinnamon and sugar. Place a peach slice on each crescent roll and roll up. Place the roll in the baking pan. In a medium saucepan, heat the butter, sugar and water until boiling and it thickens up. Remove from heat and pour over the crescents. Sprinkle crescents with additional cinnamon and sugar. Bake for 27 to 30 minutes or until the tops are golden brown.

Malted Milk Ball Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 pkg. (17.5 oz.) chocolate chip cookie mix
 1/2 cup butter, softened
 1 egg
1 cup malted milk balls, crushed
 1/2 cup chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium bowl, combine cookie mix, butter and egg. Mix well. Stir in malted milk balls and pecans, and blend well. Drop by heaping teaspoonful onto greased baking sheet; bake 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven; cook 1 minute and transfer to cooling rack. Makes about 1 1/2 to 3 dozen cookies.

Red Velvet Brownies

1 box Red Velvet Cake Mix
 3/4 cup butter, melted
 1 egg
 1/2 cup water
 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
 1 cups walnuts or pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Combine egg, butter and water in a bowl. Add box mix, stir until the ingredients are combined and lumps are gone. Add chips and 1 cup of nuts. Pour into a greased 13 x 9-inch baking pan. Bake 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool for 15 minutes before cutting.

Chocolate chips can be omitted and substituted with 2 tablespoons cocoa powder.

Pink Lemonade Pie

2 Graham Cracker Pie Crust
1 can (6 oz.) frozen pink lemonade, thawed
1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk
1 tub (8 oz.) frozen whipped topping
 Red food coloring, if a pinker color is desired

In a large bowl, mix together sweetened condensed milk and lemonade concentrate. Fold in whipped topping. Pour into pie crusts. Refrigerate until completely chilled.



Blackberry Dumplings

1 package (14 ounces) frozen blackberries (3 cups), thawed and drained

1/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup water
1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 cup biscuit mix

2 tablespoons sugar

1/3 cup milk

Ground cinnamon

Whipping (heavy) cream or vanilla ice cream, if desired

Mix blackberries, 1/3 cup sugar, the water and lemon juice in 4-quart slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW heat setting 3 to 4 hours (or HIGH heat setting 1 1/2 to 2 hours) or until mixture is boiling. Mix baking mix and 2 tablespoons sugar in small bowl. Stir in milk just until dry ingredients are moistened. Drop dough by 6 spoonfuls onto hot berry mixture. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Cover and cook on high heat setting 20 to 25 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of dumplings comes out clean. To serve, spoon dumpling into dessert dish. Spoon berry mixture over dumpling. Top with whipping cream or ice cream, if desired.

Texas Gold Bars

1 box yellow cake mix

3 eggs, divided

1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup butter, melted

4 cups (1 lb.) powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 300 degrees and spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix cake mix, melted butter and one egg to a soft dough. Mix powdered sugar, softened cream cheese and remaining two eggs until smooth, about 1 to 2 minutes. Pour on top of crust. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes until top is golden brown. *top of crust. Bake at 300 for 40-50 minutes until top is golden brown.*

Chocolate Caramel Bliss

1 pouch (1 lb 1.5 oz) Betty Crocker double chocolate chunk cookie mix

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 tablespoon water

1 egg

36 round milk chocolate-covered chewy caramels, unwrapped

36 pecan halves

Pre-heat oven to 375°F. Place miniature paper baking cups in each of 36 mini muffin cups. In large bowl stir cookie mix, oil, water, and egg until soft dough forms. Shape dough into 36 (1-1/4 inch) balls; place in muffin cups. Bake 8 to 9 minutes or until edges are set. Immediately press one milk chocolate-covered caramel into center of each cookie cup. Cool two minutes. Top with pecan halves. Cool completely, about 30 minutes. Remove from pans with narrow spatula.

