

The DISH



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I am so ready to put winter behind us and jump into Spring! And the weekend weather gave us a glimpse of what's to come. Now if only the wind would calm down.

It was a great Easter Sunday. I always look forward to Easter as we get up bright and early for church and then spend the day with family. We all pitch in and bring food to share and this year I was in charge of vegetables — my favorite thing! So how did I choose what to bring? I didn't. I ended up bringing several different options and hoped for some leftovers. These were a few different options that I thought sounded delicious for the special day. Happy belated Easter!

Pear-Blueberry Ambrosia with Creamy Lime Dressing

8 oz. mascarpone cheese
2 Tbsp. sugar
2 tsp. grated lime zest
2 Tbsp. lime juice
3 medium ripe pears, peeled and chopped
3 medium ripe bananas, sliced
1½ cups fresh blueberries
½ cup chopped hazelnuts

In a small bowl, mix mascarpone cheese, sugar, lime zest and lime juice.

In a large bowl, combine pears, bananas and blueberries. Spoon cheese mixture over fruit; gently toss to coat. Sprinkle with hazelnuts. Refrigerate leftovers.

Mashed Potatoes with Garlic-Olive Oil

4 lbs. red potatoes, quartered
½ cup olive oil
2 garlic cloves
2/3 cup heavy whipping cream
¼ cup butter, softened
2 tsp. salt
½ tsp. pepper
2/3 to ¾ cup 2% milk
3 green onions, chopped
¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese, opt.

Place potatoes in a Dutch oven; add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook, uncovered, until tender, 15-20 minutes.

Meanwhile, place oil and garlic in a small food processor; process until blended.

Drain potatoes; return to pan. Mash potatoes, gradually adding cream, butter, salt, pepper and enough milk to reach desired consistency. Stir in green onions. Serve with garlic-olive oil and, if desired, cheese.

Mashed Cauliflower au Gratin

2 large heads cauliflower, broken into florets
1½ cups shredded Parmesan cheese
1 cup shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese
6 Tbsp. butter, cubed
¾ tsp. garlic salt
½ tsp. Montreal steak seasoning
TOPPING:
1 cup Italian-style panko bread crumbs
¼ cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place cauliflower in a stockpot; add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until very tender, 10-12 minutes.

Drain; transfer to a large bowl. Mash cauliflower; stir in cheeses, cubed butter and seasonings. Transfer to a greased 3-qt. or 13-by-9 inch baking dish.

In a small bowl, mix bread crumbs and melted butter until evenly coated; sprinkle over cauliflower mixture. Bake, uncovered, until heated through and topping is golden brown, 40-50 minutes.

Brown Sugar Pineapple Glazed Ham

PINEAPPLE HAM GLAZE:

1 cup packed dark brown sugar
12 oz. cola or Dr. Pepper
2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 Tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
1½ Tbsp. Dijon mustard
1½ Tbsp. grainy mustard
1 tsp. ground ginger
½ tsp. onion powder
¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
¼ tsp. kosher salt

SPIRAL HAM:

1 spiral-sliced ham (6-9 lbs.)
20 oz. crushed pineapple

PINEAPPLE HAM GLAZE: Combine all glaze ingredients in a medium-sized saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, reduce heat to a simmer and cook, stirring often, 20-30 minutes, or until glaze is the consistency of syrup. Remove from heat and set aside.

BROWN SUGAR PINEAPPLE SPIRAL HAM: Heat oven to 325 degrees. Use a sharp knife to score the surface of the ham with half-inch-deep slices spaced 1 inch apart. Cover and bake for 1 hour.

Brush half the glaze over the ham, being sure to spread some down into each cut. Spread the crushed pineapple over the ham, again pressing down, and then pour half the remaining glaze over the surface. Bake the ham, uncovered, 15 minutes then repeat glazing as follows:

Continue cooking and glazing/basting the ham (once you have run out of glaze, just baste with the glaze from the bottom of the pan) every 10 minutes until the internal temperature registers 140 degrees on an instant-read thermometer. This could take a total 40-60 minutes.

Buttermilk Biscuits

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
¼ cup shortening
¾ cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. In a bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; cut in shortening until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in buttermilk; knead dough gently. Roll out to half-inch thickness. Cut with a 2½ inch biscuit cutter and place on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake until golden brown, 10-15 minutes.

Homemade Lemon Pudding Cake

¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups of white granulated sugar
1 small box of jello lemon pie filling or instant lemon pudding
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon zest
4 eggs
1¼ cup whole milk
1/3 cup canola oil
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1¾ cups all-purpose flour
3 Tbsp. cornstarch
4 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Grease and flour a standard Bundt pan.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder and salt, then set aside.

Using an electric mixer on medium speed with a paddle attachment, cream together the butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add in the lemon pie filling mix powder (do not cook it) and combine thoroughly. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, making sure each is thoroughly incorporated. Mix in the lemon zest.

Combine the milk, oil and vanilla extract in a large measuring cup or bowl. Starting with the dry ingredients, alternate pouring a third of the wet and dry ingredients into the mixer bowl, incorporating thoroughly after each addition. You will end on the wet ingredients. Mix on medium speed for 2 minutes after the last addition.

Pour the cake batter into the prepared bundt pan and bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until a tester inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Invert the cake onto a baking rack to cool.

Frost with Lemon Buttercream Icing (see below) when the cake has completely cooled and sprinkle lemon zest over the icing if wanted.

Lemon Buttercream Frosting

1 cup of salted butter
4 cups of powdered sugar
2 Tbsp. lemon zest
3 Tbsp. lemon juice
2 tsp. cream

Whip butter with the paddle attachment, if you have one, or just a general beater with your mixer.

Add in powdered sugar, one cup at a time, beating continuously. Add lemon zest and lemon juice. Then added the 2 tsp. of cream to thin it out.