

The DISH



VICKI RASMUSSEN
FOOD COLUMNIST
vickir@windomnews.com

I hope you are all ready for this special weekend to spend with family and friends and that we truly remember the Reason for the Season! We try to make a whole weekend of celebrating and one of our favorite meals to do is Christmas brunch. So, whether you enjoy eating breakfast for breakfast, lunch or dinner, you've got a few options to choose from. Merry Christmas to you and your family!

Overnight Everything Bagel Breakfast Casserole

6 everything bagels, lightly toasted
8 large eggs
1 cup half-and-half
Salt & pepper, to taste
2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
1/3 tsp. cayenne pepper
1/2 cup Parmesan, shredded
1 cup grated cheddar, divided
8 oz. cooked sausage links, diced
1/2 bell pepper, diced
8 oz. cream cheese
1 cup Tater Tots
Green onions, to garnish

Break the bagels into bite-sized pieces and place into a buttered 9-by-13-inch casserole dish.

In a large bowl, crack the eggs. Add the half-and-half, mustard, cayenne pepper and salt and pepper. Whisk briskly for 1 minute. Pour the egg mixture over the bagel pieces — try to cover each one.

Add the Parmesan cheese and 1/2 cup cheddar cheese to the casserole dish. Use a spoon to gently toss the casserole mixture.

Cut the cream cheese into 14 squares. Distribute the top of the casserole with the cream cheese, sausage, bell peppers and Tater Tots. Top with the remaining half of cheddar cheese. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. The longer it sits, the better and moister it will be.

Bake, covered, at 350 degrees for 40 minutes. Remove the cover and bake for 15 more minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes. Serve with coffee and enjoy!

Note: Lightly toasted bagels are able to absorb the custard much better, but still have all of the flavor that fresh bagels have. Stale bagels can also be used, but fresh and toasted is better.

Tater Tot Breakfast Casserole With Sausage

1 cup chopped ham
1 1/2 cups ground pork sausage (cooked and crumbled)
1 bag frozen Tater Tots
8 eggs
1/4 cup chive & onion cream cheese
1 cup milk
1 1/2 cup shredded colby jack cheese
1 Tbsp. dried chives
1/2 cup bacon (cooked and chopped)
1/2 tsp. salt and black pepper, to taste

In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, cream cheese, chives and milk. Whisk together. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine one bag of frozen Tater Tots, chopped ham, cooked sausage and shredded cheese. Mix around gently. Pour Tater Tot mixture into a greased 11-by-13-inch casserole dish.

Next, pour your egg mixture into the dish as well, right over the Tater Tots (evenly). Sprinkle 1/2 tsp. of salt and black pepper evenly over the top (optional).

If you're making it the night before, now would be the time to cover it with foil and place it in the refrigerator. When you're ready to bake, preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Remove casserole from refrigerator and let it sit on the counter while the oven preheats.

When the oven is ready, place the casserole in the oven and bake for about 60 minutes, turning the dish around halfway through. The casserole is done when the eggs set, the Tater Tots are golden brown and the casserole is bubbling. Remove from oven. It will firm up a little as it sits in the hot dish while cooling. After it cools for about 8 minutes, add chopped bacon all over the top. Cut the casserole into squares and serve.

Southwest Breakfast Casserole

12 large eggs
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. Kosher salt
1/2 tsp. ground coriander
6 oz. shredded Monterey jack/cheddar cheese blend
16 oz. small curd cottage cheese, low-fat
1/4 cup butter, melted
(2) 4 oz. cans diced green chilies
1 cup whole kernel corn (canned corn-drained, or frozen corn)
15 oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9-by-13-inch glass baking dish.

With a mixer, beat eggs until light. Add all remaining ingredients and blend well. Pour into prepared dish and bake for 55-60 minutes until puffy and golden and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Top with avocado slices, salsa and/or hot sauce.

Note: If you'd like to add cooked bacon or crumbled

cooked sausage to the mix, this is also an option.

Cinnamon French Toast with Cream Cheese Glaze

4 bread slices (If you can, use sourdough artisan bread. It has a more chewy texture and won't get soggy.)

2 large eggs
1 Tbsp. heavy cream
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. vanilla
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, for frying

GLAZE:

4 oz. cream cheese, softened (room temperature)
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. vanilla
Powdered sugar, for dusting the tops of bread (opt.)

Cream all the ingredients together for the glaze, in a medium mixing bowl. Set aside.

Heat a large skillet or frying pan on medium to high heat. As the skillet is heating up, prepare the egg mixture for the bread.

In a wide medium mixing bowl, combine the eggs, heavy cream, cinnamon, nutmeg and vanilla. Whisk until all combined. Dip each slice of bread into the egg mixture. (No need to submerge each slice of bread all the way, just enough to coat each side. Not the crust.) Lay onto the heated pan with butter. Flip when golden brown.

Spread a spoonful of the cream cheese glaze onto each slice of hot French toast. Sprinkle with powdered sugar (optional). Enjoy!

Note: Recipe may easily be doubled. Store and refrigerate cooked French toast and cream cheese glaze for up to 3 days. May individually wrap and freeze already cooked French toast for up to 3 weeks.

Freezer Croissant Breakfast Sandwiches

1 Tbsp. olive oil
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 cup half-and-half
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
8 mini croissants, halved horizontally
4 oz. thinly sliced ham
4 slices cheddar cheese, halved

Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium high heat. Add eggs to the skillet and cook, whisking until they just begin to set. Gently whisk in half-and-half; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Continue cooking until thickened and no visible liquid egg remains, about 3-5 minutes; set aside.

Fill croissants with eggs, ham and cheese to make 8 sandwiches. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and place in the freezer.

To reheat, remove plastic wrap from the frozen sandwich and wrap in a paper towel. Place into microwave for 1-2 minutes, or until heated through completely. Serve immediately.