

SHOP TALK

A Twice-Monthly Newsletter for our Team.

May 1, 2024

The most powerful leadership tool you have is your own personal example."

John Wooden

"Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality."

Warren Bennis

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists. When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves."

Lao Tzu

"Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal."

Vince Lombardi

"If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then you are an excellent leader."

Dolly Parton



National Military Appreciation Month in May is a month-long observance honoring the sacrifices of the United States Armed Forces.

Today, the United States Armed Forces is comprised of six branches including the Army, Navy, Airforce, Marines, Coast Guard, and Space Force. The U.S. military force is 2.2 million strong and includes National Guard and Reserve units.

There are more military-related observances during the month of May than any other month, so it is an appropriate time to celebrate the men and women in uniform. During May, we recognize Loyalty Day, VE Day (the end of World War II in Europe on May 8, 1945), Armed Forces Day, Military Spouses Day, and Memorial Day.

The month honors active duty, guard and reserve members, and veteran service members. All month long, let's publicly honor the U.S. military and all they do to serve and protect our country.

Thank military personnel and veterans for their service.



FRUIT-FILLED PASTRY PUFFS

Dead simple, tasty, and different. Makes 24

16	oz	cream cheese, softened
1	cup	powdered sugar
2	tsp	vanilla extract or flavoring
¼	cup	margarine, softened
1	each	puff pastry sheet, thawed
1	each	egg
1	can	pie filling of your choice

- Combine cream cheese, sugar, vanilla, and margarine in a mixer bowl.
- Mix well, scraping the bowl a couple times during the mixing. Set aside.
- Lay the puff pastry sheet out on a floured surface and roll out to about 12 x 18 inches. Allow the dough to relax about 5 minutes on the table.
- Cut the pastry into 4 strips about 18" long.
- Cut the strips into 6 pieces each.
- Place them on a sheet pan with parchment.
- Add 1 Tbsp water to the egg in a bowl. Beat well.
- Brush the egg onto the surface of dough pieces around the edges (middle will be covered).
- Sprinkle granulated sugar over each dough piece.
- Spread a tablespoon of cream cheese onto the center of each dough piece.
- Top the cream cheese with a portion of the pie filling. Suggestion. Cut up apple or peach filling into smaller pieces.
- Bake at 400 F for 15-18 minutes. Check at 15.
- Remove, let cool a few minutes and serve.



BAKED SPINACH & CHEESE PUFFS

A delicious, savory pastry for dinner. Makes 15

8	strips	bacon, crisp, crumbled
8	oz	cream cheese, room temp.
1	each	egg
1/2	tsp	garlic powder (not salt)
1/2	tsp	black pepper
1/2	tsp	dried oregano
16	oz	frozen spinach, thawed, pressed very dry
1/2	cup	shredded cheddar cheese
1/4	cup	grated parmesan cheese
1	sheet	puff pastry, thawed

- Spray muffin tin with food spray. Set aside.
- In a bowl, combine 1 egg, cream cheese, and seasonings. Blend until well mixed.
- In a mixer bowl, combine spinach, cheddar, bacon, and parmesan cheese. Mix on low just until blended.
- Add the cream cheese mixture and blend together just until it comes together.
- Roll out the puff pastry to 12 x 15' cut into pieces about 3 x 3.
- Place each piece in a muffin tin, pressing it in.
- Spoon in a portion of the spinach mixture.
- Fold the dough corners into the center of each muffin tin. They don't need to be sealed well.
- Bake at 400 F about 22 minutes, or until the puff pastry is golden brown.



MEATY BREAKFAST CASSEROLE

This recipe makes 1 shallow half pan.

6	cups	hash browns, thawed, dried
1	cup	Cheddar cheese
1/2	cup	diced Swiss cheese slices
1/2	cup	sliced green onions
1	cup	ham, diced in 1/4 inch pieces
1	cup	bacon, crisp, crumbled
8	each	eggs, beaten
2	cans	evaporated milk
1/2	tsp	black pepper
1/4	tsp	salt

- Spray a half pan with food spray.
- Line the bottom with hash browns
- Sprinkle with cheese, meats and onions.
- Combine milk, eggs, salt and pepper; blend well.
- Pour into potato mixture and refrigerate overnight.
- Prior to baking, allow to stand about 30 minutes at room temperature.
- Bake at 350 F about 60 minutes but check at 50.
- Remove from oven, let stand about 10 minutes and cut or score into 15 portions.
- Place on steamtable for service.



GREEK STYLE LEMON POTATOES

Simple and easy, this recipe serves about 10.

3	lbs	potatoes, cut into thick wedges
1/3	cup	olive oil
4	Tbsp	lemon juice
2	tsp	salt
1	tsp	dried oregano
1	tsp	black pepper
3	cups	chicken broth

- Place the potato wedges in a bowl, season with salt, pepper, and oregano.
- Pour over potatoes the oil and lemon juice, toss until well coated.
- Transfer to a sheet pan.
- Pour in the chicken broth.
- Bake at 400 F until tender and golden brown, about an hour but check at 50 minutes.
- Remove and transfer to a shallow steamtable pan. Place on serving line.



SIMPLE GARLIC SHRIMP

This amazingly simple, tasty recipe serves about 15. Serve with rice or pasta.

1/2	cup	olive oil
5	lbs	shrimp, peeled (31/35 or 50/60 count)
2/3	cup	garlic, finely minced
1 ½	tsp	red pepper flakes
1/4	tsp	cayenne
1	cup	lemon juice
1/4	cup	olive juice (from green olives)
3/4	cup	butter
1 ½	cups	chopped fresh parsley
2	Tbsp	water, or as needed (if needed)

NOTE: Work shrimp in 2 batches

- In a skillet, heat half the oil until very hot; add half the shrimp in a layer. Season with salt.
- Cook a minute, until shrimp begin to turn pink.
- Remove shrimp and work other batch. Remove, leaving oil in the pan.
- Stir in lemon & olive juice, butter, and half the parsley. Simmer until butter melts and the sauce becomes a bit thick. If too thick add some water.
- Add back the shrimp and cook just a minute until they are heated and well coated with the sauce.
- Remove and place in a steamtable pan for service, garnishing with the remaining parsley.
- Serve with hot rice, or pasta (angel hair, spaghetti noodles are best; not a thick pasta).



LEMON BLUEBERRY BREAD

Tart and sweet, with a smooth and rich texture, this makes one standard loaf pan.

1/3	cup	butter
1	cup	granulated sugar
1/4	cup	lemon juice
2	each	eggs, at room temperature
1 ½	cups	flour
1	tsp	baking powder
1/2	cup	milk (2%)
1	cup	frozen blueberries
1/2	cup	chopped pecans or walnuts
2	Tbsp	grated lemon zest
1/4	cup	granulated sugar
2	tbsp	lemon juice

- In mixer, beat butter and sugar until creamy.
- Add eggs and lemon juice, blend well.
- Blend baking powder and flour; add to the mixer in alternate amounts with the milk. Be sure to scrape the bowl after additions.
- Fold in blueberries, nuts and lemon zest.
- Transfer to a greased 8 x 4 baking pan.
- Bake at 350 F for about an hour. It is done when a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.
- Combine the ¼ cup sugar and lemon juice, and drizzle over the warm bread.
- Let cool completely before slicing to serve.



HASH BROWNS BREAKFAST CUP

As good for sit-down dining as it is for grab and go, this recipe makes 12 breakfast cups.

- 6 cups shredded hash browns, thawed
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 8 each eggs
- 1/2 cup milk, 2%
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 Tbsp margarine
- 12 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese

- Set oven to 400 F.
- Prep muffin tin with food spray.
- Combine potatoes and cheeses, then press down 1/2 cup into each muffin tin wells, into the bottom and up the sides.
- Bake until golden brown – about half an hour.
- While waiting, combine eggs, milk, salt, and pepper. Whisk together until well blended.
- In a skillet, melt the margarine and scramble eggs and bacon until eggs are just cooked; no liquid should remain, and they should be soft.
- Portion the eggs into the muffin cups.
- Top with cheddar cheese and bake about 5 minutes until cheese is melted.
- Remove and place in steamtable pan for serving.



CHEESY POTATO CASSEROLE

Makes 1 shallow (2 1/2") Steamtable pan.

NOTE: use leftover baked potatoes for this.

- 10 each baked potatoes, chilled
- 1/2 cup margarine
- 2 cans cream of mushroom (or chicken) soup
- 1 pint sour cream
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 3 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup cornflakes cereal, crushed
- 1/4 cup margarine, melted

- Melt 1/2 cup margarine in large saucepan. Add soup and cook until it bubbles.
- Remove from stove and add milk, sour cream, green onions and cheese. Stir well.
- Grate the potatoes with a box grater, the large openings, into the soup mix. The peels will fall away as you grate the cold potatoes.
- Transfer mixture to a shallow half pan.
- In a bag or a bowl, blend the 1/4 cup of margarine and the corn flakes to make a topping.
- Sprinkle the topping over the potato mixture.
- Bake at 350 F for about 45 – 60 minutes.
- Remove when the casserole is lightly browned and the liquid bubbling.
- Transfer to steamtable for serving.



CHICKEN & SAUSAGE SAUTÉ

This dish is also known as Chicken Scarpariello, a simple stovetop entrée made from either boneless chicken thighs or diced chicken. Serves 15 - 20.

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| 5 | lbs | cubed chicken meat |
| 4 | lbs | Italian sausage |
| 2 | each | onions, thinly sliced |
| 2 | each | red bell peppers, thin sliced (julienne) |
| 2 | tsp | dried sage leaves or powdered |
| 4 | Tbsp | garlic, fresh, minced |
| 16 | each | pickled cherry peppers, or sport peppers, thinly sliced |
| 1/2 | cup | liquid from the pepper jar |
| 2 | cups | chicken stock (broth) |
| 3 | tbsp | granulated sugar |
- On a flat top grill or sauté pan, brown the chicken pieces on all sides to a golden brown.
 - Remove and set aside. Grill the sausage the same way, then remove and cut on a bias as shown in the photo above. Set aside
 - To the skillet or on grill, sauté the peppers and onions in some olive oil until just tender, then add the garlic and cook until the garlic is fragrant but not too brown. Add the sage and sugar. Stir.
 - Combine all ingredients now and sauté another minute or so.
 - Place in a steamtable pan, add the chicken broth and put in the oven.
 - Bake at 350 F for about half an hour.
 - Remove and place on the line for serving.



CHICKEN SAUSAGE & ZUCCHINI

Serves 15. You can use penne or bowtie instead.

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|----------|-------|---------------------------------|
| 2 | packs | dried pasta, cooked and drained |
| 2 | lbs | Italian sausage |
| 4 | lbs | diced chicken thighs |
| 2 | each | onions, diced |
| 1 | Tbsp | garlic, minced |
| 2 | each | green bell pepper, diced |
| 2 | tsp | Italian seasoning |
| 6 | each | medium zucchini, sliced 1/4" |
| 1 | can | Ro-tel |
| 3 1/2 | cups | canned pasta sauce |
| To taste | | salt and pepper |

- Slice the sausage in 1 inch pieces on a bias.
- In a roasting pan or in a Dutch oven, cook the pasta and chicken until they are no longer pink,
- Add onion, garlic, and bell pepper along with seasonings. Sauté until vegetables are tender.
- Stir in tomatoes, pasta sauce and zucchini and bake until the zucchini are tender, about 15 minutes or so.
- Alternatively, you can cook on the stovetop until the zucchini is tender.
- Remove, stir in the pasta and transfer to a shallow steamtable pan for serving.





MAQUE CHOUX & SAUSAGE

A traditional Cajun dish, this will serve about 10.

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|-----|------|------------------------------------|
| 5 | Tbsp | margarine |
| 1 | lb | andouille or smoked sausage, diced |
| 8 | cups | kernel corn, thawed |
| 2 | lbs | cut okra, thawed, and drained |
| 2 | each | red bell pepper, diced |
| 2 | each | onion, diced |
| 2 | Tbsp | garlic, fresh minced |
| 1 ½ | tsp | thyme, dried |
| 1 | Tbsp | salt |
| 2 | cups | cream (you may need more) |
| 1 | tsp | cayenne |
| 1 | tsp | black pepper |

- In a skillet, brown the andouille in the margarine.
- Add the corn, okra, bell peppers, garlic, and seasonings. Sauté until vegetables are softened, about 10 minutes or so.
- Add the cream and bring to a boil.
- Reduce to a simmer and cook until it thickens a bit. This will take another 5-10 minutes. If it is too thick, add more cream and simmer until it returns to temperature.
- Remove and transfer to a steamtable pan and place on the line for serving.



SALMONELLA and PREVENTION

Researchers for the National Institutes of Health recently published revised estimates on the ratio of human and bacteria cells found in the body. They found that in the average adult body there exists approximately 30 trillion cells and around 38 trillion bacteria. So for most of us, we have more bacteria living in and on our bodies than we do cells that actually make up our bodies.

A vast majority of these tiny single celled organisms are not only beneficial, but necessary for our health. Bacteria help us to digest our food and provide our bodies with needed vitamins. They can even help fight off illness and eliminate disease-causing cells. But out of 38 trillion tiny bugs living as a part of us, we know that not all are so helpful. Some, like Salmonella, are in fact dangerous and can cause illness or even be fatal.

There are over 2,500 known strains of Salmonella bacteria. They can be classified as one of two types: Salmonella Typhi and Nontyphoidal Salmonella. Salmonella Typhi exists only in humans and, as you may have guessed by the name, is the culprit behind Typhoid Fever. It was more prevalent before the advent of modern public sewage systems, but it can still be found today.

A person carrying Salmonella Typhi can host the bacteria for months or even years in their bloodstream and in their intestines.

Nontyphoidal Salmonella can be found in a number of farm animals, typically in the intestines. Foods at



risk of contamination include poultry and eggs, meat, and milk and dairy products. Waste from animals can also run off in streams and contaminate produce. Both types can cause illness in humans and certain precautions should be used to prevent the growth and spread in the kitchen.

Salmonella can be killed off by cooking poultry, meat, and eggs to the minimum temperatures advised by the FDA and USDA. Whole cuts of meat, fish, and shellfish should reach 145 degrees Fahrenheit. Ground or processed meats and eggs should reach 160, and all forms of poultry (ground or whole) should reach 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

Special care should also be taken to prevent cross contamination. Cutting boards, knives, and work stations should be cleaned and sanitized between tasks. This means that any time we stop working with one type of food or meat, we must stop and properly clean and sanitize all equipment and the work station before handling another.

Proper handwashing is also crucial to mitigating the risk of spreading harmful bacteria. Be sure to use warm water and enough soap to form a lather. Vigorously scrub, especially under your fingernails. You should do this for a minimum of 10-15 seconds before completely drying your hands. While gloves can be helpful in handling food safely, they can actually heighten the risk of contamination if we're not careful. They create a warm, moist environment on the hands; a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. It is important that we remove our gloves and wash our hands between tasks before putting on a new pair.

Finally, it is important to exclude anyone with symptoms of illness from the kitchen. We can wash our hands and sanitize equipment all we want, but if we're keeping someone in the kitchen who is sick we're putting everyone at risk. The best thing to do is to keep that person home and let them get better before returning.

Following these simple guidelines will keep both us and our customers and their families safe. More

information on Salmonella and other food borne illness causing bacteria including information on current recalls and outbreaks can be found at www.foodsafety.gov.

-Logan Aucoin

COOL KITCHEN HACKS

SPRAY YOUR SPOON OR CUP: spraying either with food spray before using it with sticky stuff or oily stuff will help it to flow right off or out of the container.

SUB-IN A PAPER TOWEL FOR PARCHMENT: No parchment around? Line a greased baking pan with a paper towel instead — it works just as well!

Squeeze Citrus with Tongs: Tongs help you get leverage on that lemon or lime, so you get every bit of juice out!

