CULTURAL DIVERSITY in FOOD

American cooking has become a melting pot of diverse cuisines using herbs and spices from all over the world. The first gifts from Native Americans to the first European settlers were recipes using corn in hoecakes, pumpkin pie, Indian pudding, succotash, and hasty pudding. Native spices include dill, chives, mustard, parsley, garlic, and basil. Creole cooking, which marries French, African and Spanish cuisines, and Cajun cooking, is very hot and spicy, has ventured from the far South regions where it originated to all over America. The next few pages will help rev up your meals using another country’s specialties.

Mexican

To create a Mexican-spiced meal, use cilantro, garlic, chili powder, cumin, oregano, chili peppers and cinnamon. Several Mexican peppers are available at the grocery store. Argbol chili peppers are bright red pods that are almost as hot as cayenne peppers. Chipotle peppers have a rich smoky flavor. The Serrano pepper is more pungent and spicy than the larger jalapeno.

Salsa is the Mexican word for sauce and can signify cooked or fresh ingredients. Authentic Mexican salsa includes tomatillos, a round, cherry-like fruit. Another Mexican fruit is the prickly pear which is well suited for salads, jellies and jams. Jicama, often referred to as the Mexican potato, has a sweet, nutty flavor which is good both raw and cooked.

The hand-shaped tortilla can be made from corn flour (mesa) or wheat flour, but it is always baked on a griddle. It can be eaten plain or wrapped around various fillings. Tortillas are the base for burritos, tacos and other dishes. They are sold prepackaged in the refrigerator section of most grocery stores.

The Caribbean, Central & South America

Because of the abundance of tropical fruits, Caribbean cooking reflects a myriad of flavors from hot and spicy to fruity. Guava originates in Central America and can be eaten fresh or juiced. Uniq fruit, a native to Jamaica and a cousin to the grapefruit, is also an exotic change in fruits.

The Scotch bonnet pepper is used widely in jerk barbecue and other meat dishes. Jerk seasoning is a special spice blend that is great with grilled chicken and pork. Add small amounts of black and green peppercorns, coriander, nutmeg, mace, cinnamon, curry, saffron, cayenne pepper, allspice, ginger, tamarind, cilantro, cloves and chili powder to your next barbecue sauce, soups, pastas or main dishes. Jamaican ginger is a rich, heavy, sweet spice, perfect for barbecue recipes.

Caribbean Rice Pilaf

Mince one each of red, green and yellow pepper, one medium onion and 4 cloves of garlic. Sauté all ingredients in one tablespoon of oil for 3-5 minutes. Add one tablespoon of curry powder and mix well. Serves six over three cups of cooked rice.
France

Over 600 varieties of cheese make cheese an important part of French cuisine. French crepes are a versatile pancake stuffed with leftovers or a fruit filling. French chervil and tarragon are sweet herbs which impart a delicate flavor to marinated vegetable or meat salads. Shallots are a cross between an onion and garlic with a more delicate, sweet flavor. Dijon mustard is used to glaze poultry, seafood or meats, or as an accompaniment.

Germany

Germans consider pepper an essential spice. Add juniper, cloves or allspice to meat marinades. Juniper berries are popular in sauerbraten and stuffed poultry. Savory leaves are popular in soups, stews, broiled fish or chicken. Caraway can be added to cabbage, breads and potatoes to make a Bavarian-style side dish. Poppy seeds, which originated in Holland, can intensify the sweet flavor in fruit salads or breads.

The Mediterranean

Commonly used Mediterranean spices are garlic, lemon, oregano, mint, bay leaf and parsley. Flavor a yellow cake with anise seed. Annatto seed is an integral part of Spanish cooking. It imparts a natural red-yellow color and pungent flavor to rice and seafood. Many dishes, such as patella, use a small amount of saffron. Greek oregano is sweet and strong when added to tomato sauce. Mandarin oranges grown on the Mediterranean coast are delicious.

Tuscan Style Vegetables

Slice one each red and yellow pepper, medium onion, zucchini, and 2 large portabella mushrooms. Sauté all ingredients in 1 tablespoon oil and add one cup of prepared marinara sauce. Simmer 10 minutes until vegetables are cooked and serve four.

Italy

A simple way to cook Italian-style is to buy Italian seasoning, which is a blend of garlic, thyme, basil, oregano, parsley and marjoram. A ¼ teaspoon each of rosemary, oregano and thyme added to 1 cup of plain tomato sauce turns the meal into real Italian. A traditional first course is antipasto—an assortment of cheese, smoked meats, olives, fish and marinated vegetables. Caponata is generally served as a salad, side dish or part of an antipasto, consisting of eggplant, onions, tomatoes, anchovies, olives, pine nuts, capers and vinegar, all cooked together in olive oil. Minestrone is a classic Italian soup chock full of vegetables, beans and pasta. Ratatouille is a popular dish that combines eggplant, tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, zucchini, garlic and herbs all simmered in olive oil. Biscotti, a twice-baked cookie is enjoying resurgence in popularity. Of course, spaghetti, fettuccine, manicotti, lasagna and pizza will always be Italian favorites.

Scandinavia

Scandinavians use mainly the sweeter spices, even in their sauces. Cardamom, poppy seed, cinnamon, nutmeg or caraway add a Scandinavian touch. Dill seed is popular when seasoning seafood. Flatbreads and crisp breads accompany stews. Home-produced ham and bacon are favorites, as are rabbit and pheasant.

Africa

African food encompasses a wide variety of foods. Sweet potatoes can be baked and sprinkled with coconut, cardamom and brown sugar. Add tomato chunks to white fish that has been sprinkled with vinegar, turmeric, chili powder, cumin and garlic before baking. Couscous is a very fine grain made from semolina flour. Cooked, it may be served with milk as porridge, with a dressing as a salad, with added vegetables or sweetened and mixed with fruits for dessert.
The Middle East

Middle Eastern food includes whole grains, dried beans, yogurt, vegetables, herbs, garlic, onions and seasonings. To spice up your dishes, start with a small amount of tahini, mint, lemon juice, cinnamon, nutmeg, cumin and fenugreek. Humus is a thick sauce made from mashed chickpeas seasoned with lemon juice, garlic and olive or sesame oil, or sesame seed paste (tahini). Serve with pita. Dolmas are stuffed grape leaves, usually with vegetables or fruits stuffed with a savory, well-seasoned filling, such as ground lamb, squash, eggplant, cabbage quinces and apples. Dolmas are usually braised or baked and may be eaten hot or cold. Bulgur, also known as wheat pilaf, can be combined with parsley and tomato to produce a Middle Eastern salad. Since many varieties of figs are grown in the Middle East, many dishes use them.

India

To make any menu taste Indian, add curry. Curry goes well with meats, rice, grains, sauces, soups and stews. Turmeric and saffron can be used interchangeably for flavor as well as for the yellow color. Try sweet curry for the same flavor as hot curry, but with less spice. Other spices to use include ajwain seed (useful in flavoring ordinary lentil and bean dishes), cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, cloves and fenugreek.

Sweet Potato Soup

Add one 15-ounce can of sweet potatoes and 2½ cups of fat free milk in a blender and puree. Add one 14-ounce can of reduced sodium chicken broth, ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg, and ¼ teaspoon white pepper. Heat thoroughly.

The Orient

Oriental cooking varies from country to country. Chinese add ginger, garlic, sesame seeds, hot peppers, mustard and soy sauce to their rice dishes. Japanese add teriyaki, ginger, garlic, mustard and wasabi or green horseradish. For Thai flavor, add red curry paste or powder, coconut milk, basil, cilantro, mint and red pepper.

British Isles

Mace, fennel, basil, mustard, Worcestershire, thyme, curry, bay leaf, sage and parsley are common spices in British cooking. Fennel can be added to almost all fish dishes and mace can be used in place of nutmeg to flavor doughnuts, fruitcake, muffins and vegetable beef soup.

Use Your Imagination!

Cuisines are so numerous; they can't all be mentioned here. But with a little imagination, your kitchen excursions can take you all around the world. Go to your local library and check out the available international cookbooks. Pick a recipe and take a trip around the world!

Be sure and consult your physician or registered dietitian before making any changes in prescribed health care regimes.

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Recipes from the Kitchen of Sandra Bastin
March 1997, revised November 2005

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.
At the beginning of the twentieth century, few people in the United States practiced religions other than Christianity. Today, diverse religious and cultural practices are much more prevalent.

As we enter the 21st century, a majority of people in the U.S. identify themselves as Christian; including, 61 million Roman Catholics, 32 million Baptists, 14 million Methodists, and 4.3 million Presbyterians. Over 4 million Americans are members of one of the Eastern Orthodox Christian churches. The U.S. is also home to some 5 million Buddhists, 3.3 million Jews, 3 million Muslims, and 1.2 million Hindus. Four major branches of Judaism, two branches of Islam, and differing forms of Hinduism and Buddhism have all found significant numbers of adherents in the United States. These groups represent a wide variety of religious practices and traditions. There is also a significant portion of the population that does not align itself with any religious doctrine and considers itself agnostic or atheist.

Because of this diversity, a wealth of important religious holidays and cultural celebrations occur in the winter months traditionally known as the "holiday season." With the hustle and bustle of this busy time of year, it is easy to overlook practices or observances that are different than those you and many of your friends and family members may celebrate. Certainly no one wants to embarrass or offend anyone. Here are a few tips and guidelines for displaying respect for religions and traditions that may be observed by long-time members of your community as well as new residents.

*Be Accurate and Sensitive:* Cultural differences are wonderful opportunities for families to learn about various religions and cultural traditions and their historical importance. Both children and adults need the opportunity to share their spiritual or cultural heritage, but be aware that some religions teach that celebrating holidays, even birthdays, is not in accordance with their faith. As appropriate, seek alternative ways to celebrate together—collect items for a food pantry or toys for children at a homeless shelter; create a community cultural collage; or begin a new tradition that celebrates the values you share with your diverse circle of friends and family members.

*Avoid Stereotyping:* Many groups celebrate the same holiday, but not necessarily in the same way. Some holiday customs have incorporated stereotypes such as images of Native Americans on Thanksgiving cards and decorations. Take time to learn why Thanksgiving is a reminder of broken promises to some as well as a time for togetherness and thanks for others. Making new cards and decorations that demonstrate respect and inclusion is a great way for families to spend time together.

*Be Constitutionally Appropriate:* Religious symbols such as a cross, menorah, crescent, Star of David, crèche, the Buddha, and symbols of Native American nations, among others, should not be used as decorations at public events. However, when hosting holiday observances as part of public events and functions, as in schools, it is appropriate to use such religious symbols as educational examples of the culture and heritage of various groups.

*Recognize Individual Needs of People:* There are several fixed public holidays when public offices are closed and employees have time off from work. In addition, there are other moveable holidays when offices are open and some people do not work in order to observe their traditions and customs. Before arranging meetings, travels, or work schedules, check with representatives of different religious or cultural groups to learn what holidays are also days when people do not work. Also keep in mind that public prayers can be unintentionally exclusive when the speaker offering the prayer uses language outside other persons' faith or spiritual practice. These are occasions to acknowledge a divine presence,
give thanks, seek blessings for the entire community, and to draw together the different faiths and traditions in a common purpose.

When you are uncertain about a particular religious practice or cultural tradition, look for common themes that promote understanding and respect. Keep a pocket calendar handy to record dates of special holidays and celebrations as you learn of them. Use these opportunities to educate yourself and others that there are many ways to be inclusive and sensitive to a diversity of faiths and cultures. Living as communities that respect different religious, ethnic, and cultural heritages is a great way to celebrate the universal spirit of the long winter holiday season.

Resources:


Diversity Resources, Multicultural Resource Calendar™, Amherst, MA, 2000.


Prepared by:

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As our modern society develops, we find new demands on our home and work lives. Few places is this more evident than in finding the time to celebrate our heritage and practice our faith—whatever forms these may take. At one time the rhythm of our lives was closely tied to the change of seasons. Many of our daily routines no longer rely on those natural signs for setting our clocks and calendars. But when it comes to our religious practices and cultural traditions, we hold on to those rituals that link us to our heritage.

Evidence of this bond with our diverse histories comes by recognizing that different cultures and religious faiths use different time lines and dates to mark significant events such as the new year. Some groups follow the Gregorian calendar, which starts in the month of January and defines a year as twelve months containing 365 days, while others follow lunar calendars.

Religious holidays and festivals vary in the timing of their observances, too. Baha’i holidays begin at sunset the day preceding the holiday. Jewish holidays start at sundown the day before the first full day of the holiday and end at sundown on the last day of the holiday. The Jewish calendar year is 354 days and every so often a leap month is added. This is one of the reasons why Jewish holidays fluctuate year to year. The Jewish calendar is primarily lunar (based on the new moon) while in the United States we essentially use a solar calendar.

Islamic holiday festivals begin with the first sighting of the moon on the evening before the first day of the holiday. For example, the holy month of Ramadan begins when a crescent moon is observed the evening prior to the first day of the month of Ramadan. The beginning of these festivals and events depends on the observation of the moon. In this sense, the Islamic calendar is an observation-based calendar.

In more modernized areas, Buddhist holidays are often celebrated on the weekend closest to the day on which the holiday actually occurs. Different Buddhist traditions celebrate holidays on different dates. Consult the followers of the tradition in your area for the exact date they will celebrate a given holiday.

Many cultures and religions have holidays to celebrate the changing of the seasons, the beginning of a new year, or the birthday of a founder or a spiritual leader. Cultural holidays and religious observances are days when students may not wish to attend school and adults may not go to their place of work. And keep in mind that many important celebrations are linked to different calendar systems. Here is a partial list of religious and cultural groups’ holidays and observances.

AFRICAN AMERICAN: Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26 to January 1. This is a holiday that began in the United States in 1966 and is fashioned after an East African harvest festival. This celebration focuses on seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

BAHA’I: Baha’i’s observe the Birthday of the Bab on October 20 by suspending work and coming together for prayer and festivities. The Bab is considered a spiritual messenger and forerunner of Baha’u’llah, the prophet and founder of the faith. Baha’u’llah’s birthday occurs on November 12 and is another significant day of observance for Baha’i’s.

BUDDHIST: Bodhi Day is December 8 and celebrates Buddha’s Enlightenment—a time when he gained understanding of the truth of existence, was freed from human suffering, and found perfect happiness. This date is based on the Japanese Buddhist calendar and observed by Mahayana Buddhists.

CHRISTIAN: Countries with a majority Christian population celebrate the major Christian holidays as times when people do not work. Individuals practicing Eastern Orthodox Christianity celebrate holidays according to the Eastern Orthodox religious calendar, which observes Christmas on January 7. Roman Catholic Christians and most Protestant faiths follow the tradition of celebrating Christmas on December 25, the date established in the 4th
century as the official day for celebration. At the same time, there are some Protestant groups that do not recognize nor celebrate Christmas, public holidays, or birthdays. People immigrating from Mexico may bring with them the tradition of celebrating two Christmases. December 25th is observed as the birth of Christ and no gifts are exchanged. Gifts are given on the second day of celebration, January 6th - the Day of the Gift. This is the day, in Christian tradition, when the Magi gave gifts to the Christ child.

ISLAM: Ramadan, The Month of Fasting, is the holiest month of the Muslim year. Eid al-Fitr, The Feast of Breaking the Fast, marks the end of this period of fasting with festivals, buying and wearing new clothes, and celebrations over three days. Ramadan, depending on the Muslim calendar, can be celebrated anytime from November to February. Eid al-Fitr arrives in early winter. These religious festivals and holidays may significantly affect business openings and work schedules. This is especially true of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha (The Feast of Sacrifice which occurs in early spring).

JEWISH: Religious or observant Jews in the United States spend most of the holy days of Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year), which occurs in early to mid-fall, and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), which follows eight days later, praying in religious sanctuaries. Many do not work during Sukkoth, the agricultural holiday celebrating the final ingathering of food for the winter. This observance lasts seven days during which food is eaten in temporary huts. Hanukkah, the most well-known Jewish holiday, usually falls on various days in December. Hanukkah is considered a minor holiday in the Jewish religion and as a result days are not taken off to pray. This holiday commemorates the victory of the Jewish people at the end of a three-year period of religious persecution in which their independence was restored in 165 B.C. Passover, observed for 8 days in the spring, is the celebration commemorating the leaving of Egypt, and Shavuot (Festival of Weeks), which also occurs in mid-spring, commemorates the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people. Jewish religious holy days are public holidays days in Israel.

NATIVE AMERICAN: Powwows are gatherings for Native Peoples that may occur from one to several days. People meet together to join in dancing, singing, visiting, renewing old friendships and making new ones. This is a time to renew thoughts of the old ways and to preserve a rich heritage. The dates for powwows vary depending on the individual Native Nation and you need to check with members of that nation to learn when they conduct this event.

Communities, cultures, and societies rely on rituals and traditions to provide a sense of belonging and stability. People observe religious holidays in a variety of ways and it is expected that they take a break from normal activities in order to focus on celebration, personal reflection, or prayer.

As our society becomes more globally aware and connected, our calendars will reflect the growing diversity that enriches our lives. Acknowledging different religious and cultural practices helps to create caring and respectful communities that both honor and welcome diversity.

Resources:

Diversity Resources, Multicultural Resource Calendar™, Amherst, MA, 2000.

Prepared by:

Gae Broadwater, M.S., M.P.A., State Specialist for Community Resource Development, Kentucky State University.
Holidays Around the World
Recipe Sheet

BEVERAGES

Wassail - Christmas

1 quart tea
1 quart cranberry juice
1 quart apple juice
2 c. orange juice
¾ c. lemon juice
1 c. sugar
12 whole cloves
3 2-in. cinnamon sticks

Simmer together at least 20 minutes before serving. Makes 20 (6 oz.) servings

Per serving: calories 100, fat 0g, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrate 25g, protein 0g

Chocolate Caliente -Christmas

4 squares Baker’s chocolate broken into small pieces
2 cups skim milk
2 drops vanilla extract
1 pinch cinnamon
1 pinch ground cloves

Combine the ingredients in a saucepan and heat; gently stirring. Do not boil. Mix with a whisk and then pour into mugs. Sprinkle additional cinnamon to cover the top and add sugar to taste. Makes 2 serving.

Per serving: calories 204, fat 16g, cholesterol 5mg, carbohydrate 31g, protein 8.5g

DESSERTS

Baklava - Ramadan

1 (16 ounce) package phyllo dough
1 pound chopped nuts
1 c. butter
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 cup water
1 c. white sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
½ cup honey

Preheat oven to 350 °F. Butter the bottoms and sides of a 9×13 inch pan.

Chop nuts and toss with cinnamon. Set aside.

Unroll phyllo dough. Cut whole stack in half to fit pan. Cover phyllo with a dampened cloth to keep from drying out as you work. Place two sheets of dough in pan, butter thoroughly. Repeat until you have 8 sheets layered. Sprinkle 2 - 3 tablespoons of nut mixture on top. Top with two sheets of dough, butter, nuts, layering as you go. The top layer should be about 6 - 8 sheets deep.

Using a sharp knife cut into diamond or square shapes all the way to the bottom of the pan. You may cut into 4 long rows then make diagonal cuts. Bake for about 50 minutes until baklava is golden and crisp.

Make sauce while baklava is baking. Boil sugar and water until sugar is melted. Add vanilla and honey. Simmer for about 20 minutes.

Remove baklava from oven and immediately spoon sauce over it. Let cool. Serve in cake papers.

Per serving: calories 361, fat 25g, cholesterol 24mg, carbohydrate 32g, protein 5.5
Sweet Pineapple Kugel – Hanukkah
8 oz. broad noodles
6 eggs
4 Tbsp. pareve margarine, melted
1 c. sugar
1 8oz. can crushed pineapple with juice
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. cinnamon
Vegetable Oil
Pineapple rings
Cherries

Preheat oven to 350°F. Parboil the noodles in salted water. Rinse and drain. Combine eggs and margarine. Beat well. Add the sugar, crushed pineapple and juice, vanilla, and cinnamon. Mix well. Add to the noodles. Grease a 9”x13” baking dish with vegetable oil. Pour in the kugel. Place pineapple rings on top, with a cherry in the middle of each ring. Bake 40-60 minutes, until golden. Serves 8.

Per serving: calories 310 fat 11g, cholesterol 180mg, carbohydrate 47g, protein 8g

Tres Leches Cake with Whipped Cream Topping - Christmas
6 eggs, whites and yolks separated
1 1/2 c. granulated sugar
2 c. all-purpose flour
1/8 tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 c. ice water
1 tsp. vanilla extract

For The Soaking Syrup:
1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk
1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
1 c. whole milk
1 c. heavy whipping cream
1/4 c. rum, brandy or frangelico (optional)

For The Whipped Cream Topping:
2 c. heavy whipping cream
1 c. granulated sugar
1 tsp. lemon extract or 2 tsp. lemon juice (optional)
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Garnish: (optional)
1 can cling peaches, halves
1 c. chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350’ F. Lightly grease and flour a 9” x 13” baking dish and set aside.

In a bowl of an electric mixer, beat the egg whites on low speed until soft peaks form. Gradually add the sugar and beat until stiff peaks form. Add in the egg yolks one at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix the flour, baking powder and salt together and add to egg mixture. Mix in the 1/4 cup of ice water and vanilla extract.

Pour batter into prepared baking dish, and bake in preheated oven at 350°F for 25-30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in center of cake comes out clean. Remove cake from oven and place on wire cooling rack. Let cool in baking dish for 10 minutes. (DO NOT turn cake out of baking dish) While cake is cooling, make the Soaking Syrup.

In a large bowl, mix together the sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk, the whole milk and the heavy whipping cream. Mix well. Stir in rum, brandy or frangelico, (if using, the liquor or liqueur is an optional ingredient). While cake is in baking dish, with a toothpick or skewer poke holes over top of cake and pour the Soaking Syrup over the top of cake until completely absorbed. (DO NOT remove cake from baking dish).

Once cake has cooled completely, refrigerate (in baking dish) for at least 3 hours before frosting with whipped cream topping. Spread whipped cream topping evenly over Tres Leches Cake and garnish top of cake with peach halves and chopped pecans or garnish of your choice.


Whipped Cream Topping
TIP: Before making the Whipped Cream Topping, chill your beaters and bowl in freezer for 10-15
minutes. (Make sure your heavy whipping cream is well chilled also).

Pour heavy whipping cream into a large mixing bowl, beat until soft peaks form; add the sugar, vanilla and lemon extracts (lemon extract or lemon juice is optional) and beat until stiff peaks form. (Important Note: Do not overbeat the heavy whipping cream or your whipped cream will turn into butter).

Per serving: calories 705 fat 35g, cholesterol 121mg, carbohydrate 88g, protein 10g

Yule Log - Christmas
4 large eggs separated
3/4 c. sugar, divided
1 tsp. vegetable oil
1 tsp. almond extract
2/3 c. sifted cake flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
2 tsp. powdered sugar
Mocha Buttercream Frosting
Garnishes: cocoa, holly leaves, cranberries

Brush bottom and sides of a 15x10 inch jellyroll pan with vegetable oil; line with wax paper, and oil and flour wax paper. Set aside.

Beat egg yolks at high speed with an electric mixer until thick and pale; gradually add 1/4 cup sugar, beating constantly. Add 1 Tbsp. oil and almond extract, stirring well.

Beat egg whites until foamy; gradually add remaining 1/2 cup sugar, beating until stiff but not dry. Fold into yolk mixture.
Combine flour, baking powder, and salt; gradually fold into egg mixture. Spread batter evenly into prepared pan.

Bake at 350° F for 8 minutes or until center of cake springs back when touched.

Sift powdered sugar in a 15x10 inch rectangle on a cloth towel. When cake is done, immediately loosen from sides of pan, and turn out onto towel. Carefully peel off wax paper. Starting at narrow end, roll cake and towel together, jelly roll fashion; cool completely on a wire rack, seam side down.

Unroll cake, spread with 1 cup Mocha Buttercream Frosting and carefully roll without towel. Place, seam side down, on a serving plate. Spread remaining frosting over cake. Diagonally cut a 1 inch slice from 1 end of cake, and place against top center of cake to resemble the knot of a tree. Score frosting with fork tines to resemble bark. Chill at least 1 hour.

Garnish, if desired. Makes 8-10 servings.

Mocha Buttercream Frosting:
1/2 c. butter or margarine, softened
5 c. sifted powdered sugar
1/3 c. cocoa
1/4-1/2 c. cold strong coffee
2 tsp. s vanilla
Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy; add powdered sugar, cocoa, 1/4 cup coffee, and vanilla, beating well. Add enough remaining coffee to reach desired spreading consistency. Makes 2 1/2 cups.

Per serving: calories 457 fat 12g, cholesterol 108mg, carbohydrate 86g, protein 4g

Sweet Potato Pecan Bars - Kwanzaa
1/3 c. butter or margarine, softened
1/4 c. sugar
1-1/4 c. graham cracker crumbs
3 Tbsp. finely chopped toasted pecans
2 eggs, beaten
2 c. mashed sweet potatoes*
1/2 c. dairy sour cream
1/2 c. sugar
1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp. ground cloves
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 3 c. milk
1 c. chopped toasted pecans

*Sweet potatoes can be mashed several days in advance.
In a medium mixing bowl combine butter and the 1/4 cup sugar. Stir in graham cracker crumbs and the 3 tablespoons pecans until well-combined. Press onto bottom of a lightly greased 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Bake in a 350°F oven for 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool slightly (5 minutes) while preparing filling.

For filling: in a large bowl stir together beaten eggs, mashed sweet potatoes, and sour cream. Stir in the 1/2 cup sugar, the flour, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon until smooth. Stir in milk. Pour sweet potato mixture over prebaked crust, spreading evenly. Bake in a 350°F oven about 25 minutes or until a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Immediately sprinkle with remaining chopped nuts; press lightly into filling. Cool completely. Cut into bars about 2x1-1/2 inches. Cover and store in refrigerator up to 24 hours. Makes 36 bars.

*Note: Use canned or left-over cooked mashed sweet potatoes.

Per serving: calories 99, fat 6g, cholesterol 12mg, carbohydrate 11g, protein 1.5g

Fortune Cookies—Chinese New Year
1 egg
1/4 c. sugar
1 Tbsp. water
2 Tbsp. melted butter
1/4 tsp. vanilla
1/3 c. flour
Dash of salt

Instructions:
1. Write different fortunes on 12 strips of paper (about 2 inches x 1/2 inch strips).
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
3. Separate 1 egg.
4. Grease two dark non-stick cookie sheets with oil (not cooking spray)
5. Put into medium size bowl: 1 egg white and 1/4 cup sugar
6. Add and mix 1 tablespoon water, 2 tablespoons melted butter and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla.
7. Add and stir 1/3 cup flour and dash of salt.
8. Batter will be thick; should drop off of spoon in a continuous stream.
9. Drop heaping teaspoonsful of batter onto greased cookie sheets (only 3 at a time).
10. Swirl the batter around with the back of a spoon until cookies are very thinly spread and almost transparent (3-inch rounds; any bigger and the cookie will crack when folded).
11. Bake for 5 minutes until lightly browned at edges.
12. Working quickly, place a fortune in the center of each cookie.
13. Fold cookie in half enclosing fortune, to form a semi-circle.
14. Grasp rounded edges of semi-circle between thumb and forefinger on one hand.
15. Place forefinger of other hand at center of folded edge, and push in, making certain solid sides of cookie puff out.
16. Place each cookie in small muffin tin, open edges down, until cookie is set.
17. Store in airtight container.

*Note: If the cookies harden before you get them folded after taking them out of the oven, place them back in the oven for 5-10 seconds and they will loosen up enough to get them folded. You will need to fold them immediately after taking them out of the oven.

Makes 12 fortune cookies.

Per serving: calories 50, fat 2.5g, cholesterol 25 mg, carbohydrate 7g, protein 1g
Finland Recipes

Fish is a staple in the Finnish diet. Tuna Dipping is an appetizer that can be served in small individual dishes with crisp rye bread or whole grain crackers.

Tuna Dipping
1 (4 ounce) can tuna, packed in water
1 small onion
1 teaspoon capers
3 tablespoons cottage cheese
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Black pepper
Salt

Blend all ingredients together until smooth. Serve with Fin Crisps (substitute rye or whole grain crackers). Garnish with capers.

Serving: ¼ cup Yields: 8
Nutrition facts per serving: 45 calories, 2 g fat, 10 mg cholesterol, 130 mg sodium, 2 g carbohydrate, 5 g protein

Root vegetables are very popular side dishes. The vegetable dishes compliment entrees including pork, sausage, lamb and reindeer.

Caramelised Swedes (Rutabaga)
1 rutabaga (approximately 1 pound), peeled and cubed
2 small onions, cut into quarters
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons rosemary
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
½ cup gingerbread crumbs
Salt and pepper
Bleu cheese (optional)

Boil cubed rutabaga in water until tender. Drain well. Fry the rutabaga in butter. Add onions and sugar. Cook, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Add the rosemary and vinegar. Reduce heat, cover with lid and simmer until tender. Season with gingerbread crumbs, salt, pepper. Optional: Sprinkle with blue cheese crumbs.

Serving: ½ cup Yield: 6
Nutrition facts per serving: 130 calories, 5 g fat, 10 mg cholesterol, 240 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrates, 2 g protein
Finnish Vegetable Salad
5 beets, boiled
2 carrots, boiled
2 potatoes, boiled
4 spears dill pickle
1 onion
1 apple
Parsley

Cut the vegetables into ½ inch cubes. Arrange neatly on a dish. Decorate with parsley. Serve a dressing on the side.

Dressing
½ cup whipping cream
1 teaspoon white wine vinegar
Salt
White pepper
Beet juice (water from cooking beets or juice from pickled beets)

Whip cream until frothy. Season with vinegar, salt, pepper, and beet juice (enough to give the dressing a pink color). Serve in bowl next to salad.

Serving: ½ cup Yields: 8 servings
Nutrition facts per serving: 150 calories, 8 g fat, 30 mg cholesterol, 350 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrate, 2 g protein

Potato Salad
1 pound potatoes
Pinch of salt
⅛ leek or small onion, chopped
2 spears dill pickle, cubed
2 large apples, cubed

Cook potatoes until tender. Peel and cut into small cubes. Add salt, onion or leek, pickles, and apples. Toss vegetables in dressing. Cover and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Garnish with dill.

Potato Salad Dressing
1 cup plain yogurt
1 tablespoon mustard
1 teaspoon herbal salt
Pinch of curry

Serving: ½ cup Yield: 6
Nutrition facts per serving: 100 calories, 0 fat, 250 mg sodium, 23 g carbohydrate, 5 g protein

Ceramic roosters were often inserted into the upper crust of a pie to vent the steam during baking. Pie roosters can be found in cooking specialty stores.

Mushroom Salad
1 cup water
1 tablespoon lemon juice
⅓ pound fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced
1/3 cup sour cream, fat free
2 tablespoons grated onion
½ teaspoon salt
Ground pepper
Romaine lettuce

Boil water with lemon juice. Add mushrooms, cover. Simmer 2 to 3 minutes. Drain. Combine sour cream, onion, salt and pepper. Add to mushrooms and toss carefully. Serve on crisp lettuce leaves.

Serving: ½ cup Yield: 4
Nutrition facts per serving: 40 calories, 0 fat, 310 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 3 g protein
Blueberry Rooster (Rye Pie) ¹
1 cup butter
½ cup sugar
1 ¾ cups rye flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Filling:
4 cups blueberries
½ cup sugar

Mix the sugar, flour, and baking powder together. Add the soft butter; stir until smooth and even.

Butter a deep dish pie pan. Press ⅔ of dough onto the base and sides of pan. Pour the blueberries into the dough. Sprinkle with sugar. Roll out the remaining dough, using your fingers to cover the “rooster.” Bake at 400°F for about 1 hour. Option: Make individual tarts.

Serving: 1/8 of pie Yield: 8
Nutrition facts per serving: 400 calories, 24 g fat, 60 g cholesterol, 75 mg sodium, 48 g carbohydrate, 5 g protein

Tippaleivät (Funnel Cakes) ¹
3 eggs
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
Zest from 1 lemon, grated or 1 tablespoon lemon rind, dried
¾ cup 1% milk
1 ¾ cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
For frying: oil or coconut grease

Whisk the eggs and sugar. Add seasoning, milk, and baking powder to flour. Mix until batter is smooth. Place batter in a decorating tube, or parchment paper funnel.

Heat grease in a pan. Place a metal mold in the grease. Molds can be made by cutting top and bottom from an empty can. Squeeze batter from the decorating tube to the center of the mold (preventing it from spreading) making a criss-cross pattern. Cook until golden brown on both sides. Remove from grease. Drain on a paper towel. When cool, sprinkle with confectioner’s sugar.

Serving: 1 (4 inch) cake Yield: 12
Nutrition facts per serving: 260 calories, 18 g fat, 310 mg sodium, 20 g carbohydrate, 3 g protein
Pork is a more popular meat than beef in recent years due to “mad cow disease” in Europe. Chicken has only become affordable in recent years.

**Stuffed Ham Au Gratin**
8 pieces of endive
8 slices of cooked ham
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
Pepper and salt
½ cup gruyere cheese, grated
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 egg yolk
1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese

Wash and clean endive; put in saucepan with lemon juice and a bit of salt. Add water to cover. Boil for 15 minutes; drain. In saucepan, melt butter and add flour. When smooth, add milk gradually and bring mixture to boil, until sauce thickens. Add gruyere and allow cheese to melt. Stir in egg yolk; heat again until sauce thickens further. DO NOT allow sauce to boil.

Wrap endive in ham slices and arrange in oven-proof dish. Pour cheese sauce over ham and sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Heat in oven at 350°F for 35 minutes.

Serving: 1 ham wrap Yield: 8
Nutrition facts per serving: 170 calories, 10 g fat, 80 mg cholesterol, 650 mg sodium, 8 g carbohydrate, 14 g protein.

Goulash is a type of stew that could be made with beef or game. The unique flavor is created by using spices such as allspice, cloves, and paprika. Some stores carry a Hungarian paprika that has a sweet flavor.

**Goulash**
1 ½ pounds steak, cut in 2 inch cubes
2 tablespoons shortening
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 onions, diced
8 whole allspice
½ teaspoon paprika
2 cups water
1 (3 ounce) can tomato paste
3 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced
1 cup tomatoes, diced
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Brown meat in hot shortening in a large fry pan with lid. Season with salt, pepper, and paprika. Add water, garlic, onions, all spice, tomato paste, and tomatoes. Add potatoes. Cover pan and cook on medium heat until potatoes and meat are tender.

Serving: 1 ½ cups Yield: 8
Nutrition facts per serving: 230 calories, 8 g fat, 50 mg cholesterol, 220 mg sodium, 19 g carbohydrate, 22 g protein.

**References:**
2Recipe adapted from: Good Things to Eat from Around the World. West Hernando Middle School Future Homemakers of America, 1995.

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Greek Salad

Ingredients:
1 hothouse cucumber, unpeeled, seeded and sliced ¼ " thick
1 red bell pepper, large-diced
1 yellow bell pepper, large-diced
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
½ red onion, sliced in half-rounds
½ pound feta cheese, ½ inch diced (not crumbled)
½ cup calamata olives, pitted

For the vinaigrette:
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
¼ cup good red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ cup good olive oil

Directions:
Place cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes and red onion in a large bowl.
For the vinaigrette, whisk together the garlic, oregano, mustard, vinegar, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Still whisking, slowly add the olive oil to make an emulsion. Pour the vinaigrette over the vegetables. Add the feta and olives and toss lightly. Set aside for 30 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Serve at room temperature.
Orange Ginger Chicken

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1/4 cup orange marmalade

2 teaspoons freshly peeled and grated ginger root

2 teaspoons minced garlic

2 tablespoons orange juice

3 tablespoons soy sauce

1 (16-ounce) bag Italian mixed frozen vegetables

Cut chicken into 1-inch pieces. In a zip-top bag, add marmalade, ginger root, garlic, orange juice, soy, and chicken. Place in refrigerator and marinade for 2-10 hours. When ready to cook, place chicken and marinade in a hot skillet and cook until chicken is no longer pink (5-10 minutes). Add Italian mixture and stir-fry until vegetables are done. May add lid to fully cook vegetables quicker. Complete in 6-10 minutes. Serves 6.

Per serving: 273 calories, 40 g. protein, 2 g. fat