# Life's too short to eat boring food

Recipes (and scrapbook!) from a bohemian bourgeois household

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#### **Greetings and Salutations!**

This year, Ryan and I decided to do something a bit different for Christmas. We thought it would be fun to share a significant part of our home with our family and friends – that is, food from our kitchen. These are recipes that we have created, received from friends, or acquired during our travels.

For example, when we stayed at the Sylvia Beach Hotel in Newport, Oregon last January we were able to sweet-talk the

chef into parting with her mouth-watering recipe for Seafood Salpicon.

There's also a few recipes, like the *Baklava* or the *Salmon Benedict*, that I've introduced to Ryan and he's been addicted ever since.

"And what's with the bohemian bourgeois thing in the title?" you ask. A good friend of ours, Jackie Loucks, gave us that nickname because we exude "poor me" suffering artist mannerisms.



We visit with Jack Kerouac during a pilgrimage to City Lights Bookstore in San Franscisco, California.

Our house is decorated with post-college furniture and recycled thrift-store chic, and we shop at the many gourmet grocery stores in our area. It may be funky and eclectic, but it's home.

This has been a great year for us. I left the Columbian and joined the staff at RedChip, a small-cap stock analysis publication. The job change has proven to be beneficial because I'm working downtown with a great group of people and a lot of exciting projects, including a radio show. Ryan has moved from working Coffee People at the airport to a location near the convention center. The hours are better, but he misses the planes.

We're also trying to keep up with our travelling. We've been to San Francisco, Reno, San Jose, Phoenix, Seattle, the Oregon Coast and we're headed to Madrid, Spain in March, 2001. I took a few side trips of my own, going to Spokane, the San Juan Islands, Yakima, and a crazy three day, 1600 mile road trip through Oregon, California, and Nevada with my best friend, Misty, after I purchased my new car.

This summer, we hiked to the summit of Sleeping Beauty, a local peak, and I attended my 5<sup>th</sup> annual Chris Isaak concert.



We take a moment to remind Santa that we've been very good all year.

The Blue Angels performed stunts in the skies above us when we went to the air show in Hillsboro. We held our own in a bowling league this summer, although his high game score beat mine by about 15 points. I auditioned for Jeopardy! (again) but didn't quite make the cut. Ryan attended a book signing by Sonny Barger, the founder of the Hell's Angels motorcyle club. We even got a chance to meet and talk with Lloyd Kaufman, president of Troma Films and director of such

independent hits as Toxic Avenger and Tromeo & Juliet.

We hope you have a terrific holiday season and a wonderful year to come. Enjoy the recipes!

Love, Jenn and Ryan December, 2000

### Smoked Salmon Spread

When I lived in Spokane, I ran into a few people who insisted that their family's smoked salmon recipe was the best to be found anywhere. Although initially not fond of the taste of salmon, I've since developed quite a love for it, and have even developed a few recipes of my own. Fortunately for us, smoked salmon is plentiful in the Pacific Northwest. This is a delectable treat with crackers or fresh-baked bread. -ja

½ pound smoked salmon 1 package cream cheese, softened 1 teaspoon liquid smoke Dash of garlic powder Dash of pepper

Combine all ingredients. Use a hand mixer to blend until creamy. Add milk if you desire a lighter consistency.



Ryan tests out the laws of gravity and art in a sculpture by the Space Needle in Seattle, Washington.

#### <u> Wicked Deviled Eggs</u>

A tasty way to take care of all the eggs the Easter Bunny brings. These are also terrific for summer picnics or barbecues. -ja

12 hard-boiled eggs, shells removed ½ cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons prepared mustard
3 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
1 teaspoon curry powder
½ teaspoon minced garlic
Salt and pepper to taste
Paprika

Half eggs lengthwise; remove yolks and mash with a fork. Stir in mayonnaise, mustard, relish, curry, garlic, salt and pepper. Mix until smooth. Stuff egg whites with yolk mixture. Garnish with paprika. Chill before serving for best results.



Jenn refines her artistic skills during a family egg painting session.

#### <u>Bar-B-Cups</u>

My brother, sister, and I loved it when Mom would make this for dinner when I was a kid. I like it now because it is a flexible recipe with many possibilities for variations. It was a quick and easy meal in college, and I've used it successfully as party or "movie night" food. -ja

1 pound ground beef\*

1/4 cup finely chopped onion

2 cups grated cheddar cheese

2 tubes Hungry Jack biscuits

BBQ sauce

Worsteshire sauce

Mustard

Brown sugar

Ketchup

#### \*Can substitute boneless chicken breasts

Preheat oven according to biscuit directions. Cook ground beef, adding onions when beef is nearly completed cooking. Drain when beef and onions are completely cooked. Add about 1/3 cup of BBQ sauce, then add Worsteshire sauce, mustard, brown sugar, and ketchup to taste.

Stretch each biscuit and pat inside a muffin tin. Spoon meat into each biscuit about 2/3 full. Top with grated cheese and bake according to biscuit directions.

### Cool Cucumber Dill Dip

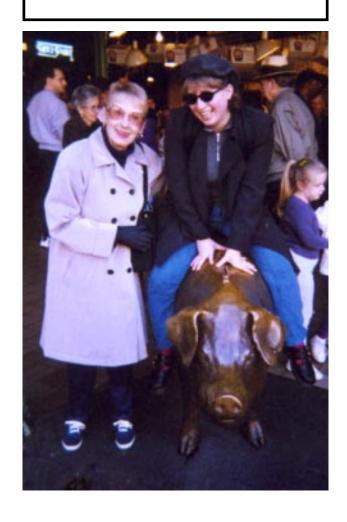
I got this recipe from my good friend Martha Lou Wheatley while I was working as a production assistant at the PBS station in Spokane, Washington. Cool Cucumber Dill Dip is wonderful as a veggie dip, and makes a great topping for baked potatoes. It is also excellent served with fish as an alternative to tartar sauce. My favorite time of year to make this is when I can get fresh dill and cucumbers from one of the local farmer's markets. -ja

1 large cucumber 2/3 cup plain yogurt 1/3 cup light mayonnaise 1 tablespoon fresh dill 1/8 teaspoon salt

Peel cucumber, remove seeds, and chop up finely. In a bowl, mix yogurt and mayonnaise well.

Add cucumber, dill, salt and onions and mix until blended. Chill until ready to serve.

Jenn and Nana take a break from the flying fish at Seattle's Pike Place Market and visit with Rachel, the resident piggy bank.





Appetizers, anyone? Ryan and his mom, Mary Sue, show how eager they are to get some Zesty Artichoke Dip.

### Zesty Artichoke Dip

This is one of our favorite snacks when curling up on a chilly evening with a movie. Zesty Artichoke Dip is especially good served on baguette slices. -ja

1 small jar quartered artichoke hearts 1 can chopped green chiles (or jalapenos) 1 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese 1 cup of mayonnaise

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Combine all ingredients. Turn into small baking dish. Bake 5-10 minutes or until heated through.

# Veggie Spread

½ cup grated carrot
½ cup chopped broccoli
½ cup chopped red pepper
1 package cream cheese, softened
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
1 tablespoon fresh dill
1 tablespoon grated onion
Dash of garlic powder
Dash of pepper

Combine all ingredients except vegetables. Use a hand mixer to blend until creamy. Add milk if you desire a lighter consistency.

Blend in vegetables by hand. Serve with crackers, vegetables, or bread.

Oh, what a feeling! Jenn and Misty celebrate after Jenn wins \$400 on an Elvis slot machine during their three day road trip. One more quarter and the payout would have been over \$100,000. The \$400 paid for gas, food, and the speeding ticket Jenn received on her way out of Reno.



# Blue Cheese Potato Salad

My appreciation for blue cheese has been expanded since I've been with Jenn. This has fast become one of my favorite blue cheese incarnations. —rh

This can also be called my "hundred dollar potato salad." One time when I prepared this dish for a picnic my garbage disposal got backed up. After getting the plumber out to my apartment to unstop the sink, this potato salad cost me over a hundred dollars. Even more ironic was that after I went through all the trouble to make the potato salad, it was raining so hard the picnic was cancelled. Such is life! It is still one of my favorite side dishes. -ja

8 – 10 red potatoes, cooked and cubed ½ cup thinly sliced celery ¼ cup grated carrot 1 cup mayonnaise 1 small jar artichoke hearts, drained and quartered ½ cup crumbled blue cheese 1 small red onion, finely chopped salt and pepper to taste

Mix mayonnaise, blue cheese, artichoke hearts, onion, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add celery, carrot, and potatoes and toss lightly. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and chill before serving.

### Seafood Salpicon

If you're a bookworm (like us!) and need some time away from it all, head to the Sylvia Beach Hotel, a bed-and-breakfast in Newport, Oregon. All the rooms are decorated for an author, like Dr. Seuss or Mark Twain, and the attic library has comfortable chairs and wall-to-wall books. Downstairs is an excellent restaurant that serves breakfast and dinner. The following is a recipe we got from their chef. -ja

1 cup olive oil
1/3 cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons garlic
2 tablespoons sugar
½ jalapeno
1 bunch cilantro
1 tablespoon cumin
2 tablespoons chili powder
3 tablespoons lemon juice

Combine all ingredients in a blender and puree. Pour over cooked seafood (Shrimp, crab, halibut, scallops, etc.) and toss lightly.

Garnish with cilantro, green onion and red pepper. Chill until ready to serve.



Happy Birthday Ryan! Newport is a great place to celebrate and relax. The hotel is right on the beach and within walking distance of several eclectic shops, as well as a pottery studio.

"Is that my autobiography you're wearing, or are you just happy to see me?" Lloyd Kaufman, in town to promote his latest movie and squeeze in a book signing for <u>All I Need to Know About Filmmaking I Learned from the Toxic Avenger</u>, took some time out to talk with us. He's a little eccentric and very nice!



### Zucchini "Glop"

Have some zucchini that needs a home? Pick up some incredible zucchini at the farmer's market? This is rapidly becoming our favorite way to prepare zucchini. I got this recipe from my co-worker, Kathleen, who has been making it for her family for years. This dish also tastes great as a dip with wheat thin crackers. -ja

1 pound zucchini
1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
¾ cup grated Swiss cheese
6 tablespoons butter
1 – 2 teaspoons flour
Milk or cream
Fresh bread crumbs
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400° F. Grate all zucchini into a bowl and sprinkle it with ½ teaspoon of salt. Sauté the onion in half of the butter until it's soft but not brown. Add the garlic when the onion is nearly cooked.

By handfuls, squeeze the liquid out of the zucchini into a separate saucepan, then add the zucchini to the onions. Sauté for a few minutes until the zucchini is just cooked. Heat the zucchini juices.

Add the rest of the butter to the squash and onion mixture and make a roux with the flour. Add the hot zucchini juices and cook until thickened. Thin out with a bit of cream of milk, then add a third of the grated Swiss cheese.

Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place mixture in a small casserole dish and cover with a mixture of bread crumbs and remainder of Swiss cheese.

# <u>Hungarian Mushroom Soup</u>

Close to our home is Old Wives Tales, a hippie-style family-friendly restaurant that has incredible Hungarian Mushroom Soup. After a few visits there and some experimenting at home I came up with a pretty close replica of their signature soup. Enjoy! -ja

½ pound white mushrooms, thinly sliced
½ pound portabella mushrooms, thinly sliced
1 stick of butter
1 medium sized onion, grated
4 tablespoons quick-mixing flour
1 cup milk
16 oz. sour cream
2 tablespoons fresh dill, finely chopped
1 veggie bouillon cube
1 tablespoon Hungarian paprika
2 tablespoons burgundy
Pepper to taste

Melt butter and sauté onions - after about 5 minutes, add mushrooms & dill to pan. Cook well. Stir in flour, mix well. Gradually stir in milk. Add sour cream, bouillon, paprika, pepper, and burgundy. Simmer until heated through.

Serve with fresh bread or crackers.



We fly the friendly skies over Oregon and Washington.



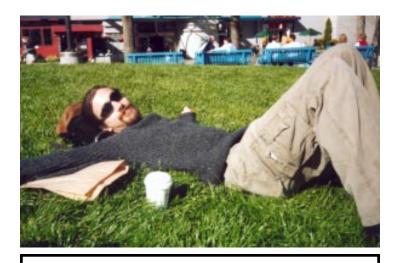
The fountains in downtown San Jose are a fun place to play.

# <u> Oven-Fried Hazelnut Chicken</u>

This is a tasty weeknight dish that goes well with rice and vegetables. -ja

1 cup fine dry bread crumbs ½ cup finely chopped hazelnuts
1 2½- to 3-pound broiler-fryer chicken, cut up ¼ cup butter, melted dash of pepper dash of garlic powder dash of cumin

Preheat oven to 375° F. Rinse chicken pieces and pat dry with paper towels. Mix bread crumbs, hazelnuts, and spices in a pie tin. Brush each chicken piece with butter, then roll chicken in hazelnut coating and place in shallow baking pan. Bake for about 50 minutes or until tender. *Do not turn*.



Ryan lounges by the Space Needle.

#### <u>Salmon Benedict</u>

Once again it's all Jenn's fault for my love of this dish. Around Portland salmon is almost standard on Eggs Benedict and many places offer crab as a seasonal alternative. For a seafood lover like me that kind of combination is deadly. —rh

This is a great variation on the traditional Eggs Benedict and one of Ryan's favorite brunch dishes. Serve with a side of home-fried potatoes. -ja

1 pound smoked salmon 6 eggs 3 English muffins, split and toasted Hollandaise Sauce (We use the envelope mix from the store)

Heat salmon in a foil-covered dish in the oven at 350° F for 10 minutes. Remove skin and divide salmon into 6 sections. Place salmon sections on top of toasted English muffins. Poach eggs, drain, and place on top of English muffins. Cover with Hollandaise sauce and serve.

# Polenta with Cilantro Sauce

This is a tasty dish that is well worth the work. I made this for Ryan on Valentine's Day. Fresh flowers, champagne, and teddy bear are optional. -ja

1 tube prepared polenta
Olive oil
3/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
2 cloves finely chopped garlic
2 tablespoons red wine
1 large portabella mushroom, sliced
4 sun-dried tomato sausages, sliced
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
Dash of salt
Dash of pepper
1 cup milk

Bouquet of fresh flowers Bottle of Martini & Rossi Asti champagne Teddy Bear, cute and cuddly

Set table with flowers and teddy bear. Put the champagne on ice.

Heat olive oil in a frying pan. Cut polenta into one-inch slices and fry on both sides until polenta is a toasty color. Set polenta slices aside in a shallow baking dish in a 250° F oven. Cook sausages and add to baking dish. Sauté portabella mushrooms in olive oil and add to baking dish.

In a medium saucepan, melt butter. Add garlic and cilantro; sauté. Stir in flour, salt and pepper. Add milk. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly. Add red wine. Cook for 1 minute more.

Arrange polenta cakes, sausages, and mushrooms on plates. Spoon sauce over cakes and serve. Put on jazzy music and pop champagne cork. Enjoy.



Yeah, we're too cute for our own good. We know it. It was nice to be with Rob on his 21st birthday in San Jose, California.



En garde! Jenn and Misty stage a salt and pepper fight at a Seattle cafe.



Misty, Jenn, and Ryan hang out at Pike's Place Market in Seattle, Washington.

### Green Chicken Enchiladas

1 pound boneless chicken breasts ½ bunch cilantro, finely chopped 2 cloves garlic, minced 3 tablespoons olive oil 1 can corn, drained 1 red or orange pepper, chopped 2 tomatoes, chopped ¼ cup peanut butter 1 teaspoon cumin 2 cans green enchilada sauce 2 cups Monterey Jack cheese 2 cups cheddar cheese 2 packages corn tortillas Salt and pepper to taste Green Salsa Sour Cream Cilantro

Preheat oven to 350° F. Cook chicken breasts and garlic in heated olive oil in a large pan. Chop chicken into bite-sized pieces and place in large mixing bowl. Add chopped cilantro, corn, red pepper, tomatoes, peanut butter, cumin, ¼ cup enchilada sauce, a handful of cheese, salt and pepper to bowl and mix well.

Pour a small amount of enchilada sauce into a large shallow baking dish and tip dish until bottom is coated. Bring remainder of sauce to low heat in a wide shallow pan. Take a tortilla and place it in the sauce until tortilla is warm and pliable. Remove tortilla from sauce and place it in baking dish. Spoon enchilada filling into tortilla; roll up and push to side of dish. Repeat until dish is filled and enchilada filling is gone. Pour enchilada sauce from pan over enchiladas in baking dish. Cover with cheese and bake for 30 minutes or until bubbly.

Garnish with cilantro; serve with salsa and sour cream.

# Stringy-Bean Pesto Quiche

This is a variation on a quiche served at Deux Gros Nez ("Two Big Noses"), a coffeehouse in Reno, Nevada. The barista who worked there refused to give me the recipe so I went home and developed my own version. This dish goes very well with a green salad and a cappuccino. This recipe also appears in the KSPS Cooking With Friends Family Favorites Cookbook. -ja

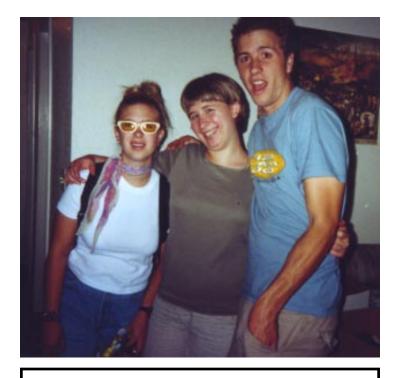
½ bunch fresh basil
½ cup parmesan cheese
1/8 cup pinenuts
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 package Hungry Jack biscuits
4 eggs
1 ½ cup milk
1 cup Monterey Jack cheese
¼ cup chopped mushrooms
¼ cup finely chopped onions
1 cup fresh green beans
1 tablespoon chopped garlic
2 tablespoons butter
Salt and pepper to taste

Use a rolling pin to flatten biscuits into one piece. Stretch biscuits over large pie tin. Take a fork and make small indentations all over the crust, insuring that it doesn't rise completely. Bake in oven according to directions for half of the directed time. Set aside after baking, but keep oven on at 325° F.

Combine basil, parmesan cheese, olive oil, and pinenuts in blender until it has a smooth consistency. Set aside. Sauté mushrooms and onions in butter; drain and put aside. Boil green beans until tender; drain and set aside.

Combine eggs and milk together, then add pesto, vegetables, and garlic to this mixture. Place half of the cheese in the crust - pour egg mixture into the crust - then top with remaining cheese.

Bake at 325° F for 20-25 minutes, or until an inserted knife comes out clean, and the top is "golden green." After baking, allow cooling for ten minutes before serving.



Laura, Jenn, and Rob share a sibling moment at Laura's house in Reno, Nevada.

### Almond Ginger Cookies

These cookies were very popular at my house in college. They are very tasty with milk or served with a dish of vanilla ice cream. This recipe also appears in the KSPS Cooking With Friends Desserts Cookbook. -ja

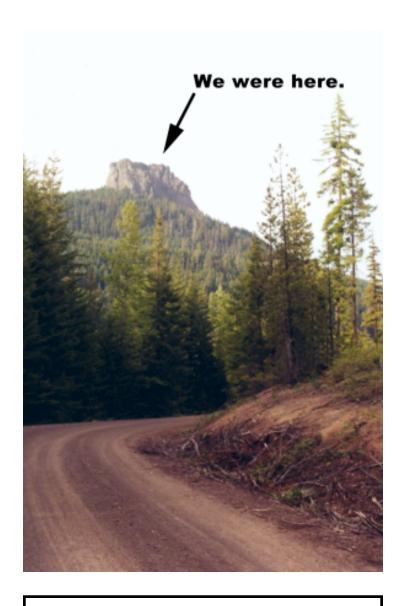
6 cups flour
4 teaspons baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
2½ teaspoons cinnamon
½ teaspoon ginger
¼ teaspoon cloves
¼ teaspoon nutmeg

2 cups white sugar 2 cups margarine or butter 2 eggs ½ cup maple syrup

1 cup finely chopped toasted almonds 1 cup chopped crystallized ginger 1 cup white sugar

Preheat oven to 325° F. Mix first 7 ingredients in one bowl and the next 4 in another bowl. Gradually mix the first ingredients into the second. Mix well, then blend almonds and crystallized ginger into the dough.

Put 1 cup white sugar into a bowl. Roll dough into small balls, roll in white sugar, then press onto baking sheet. Bake for 13 minutes. Use a spatula to put cookies on a cool counter for 5-10 minutes after baking.



We hiked Sleeping Beauty Peak this summer. The path was steep, and somehow we made it to the top.



Cactus Rescue Squad! We replanted this cacti in Brett and Jackie's yard after Ryan found it abandoned on a Scottsdale, Arizona sidewalk.

### <u>Cinnamon Ice Cream</u>

This is a recipe I got years ago from the proprietors of Café Del Rio, a small southwestern restaurant in Carson City, Nevada. They serve it with fresh sopapillas rolled in cinnamon sugar, topped with fresh strawberries and drizzled in caramel. It's like heaven in a bowl. -ja

1 pint cream
1 pint whole milk
1 cinnamon stick
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 tablespooon sugar

9 egg yolks 1 cup sugar

Whip the egg yolks and sugar to ribbons. Bring the first 5 ingredients to a boil. Temper milk into egg yolks. Return all to sauce pan. Cook slowly – <u>don't boil</u> – until the mixture coats the back of a wooden spoon. Cool, then freeze in an ice cream machine.

### **Espresso Brittle**

This is one of Ryan's specialties, which isn't surprising for a coffee junkie like him. -ja

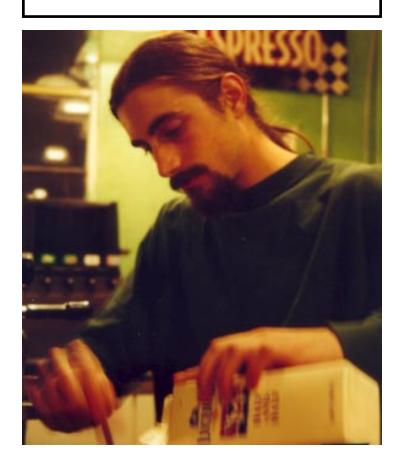
You just have to love a coffee candy combination. This was a big hit with all the people who had the nerve to try it. –rh

1/3 cup espresso beans
1 ½ cups sugar
¾ cup light corn syrup
½ cup water
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces

Preheat an oven to 350° F. Place the espresso beans on a baking sheet and toast them for 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool, then crack them by placing them in a plastic bag and hitting them with a mallet. Cover the kitchen counter with aluminum foil and lightly oil the foil. Spread the cracked espresso beans evenly over the foil.

In a medium-sized heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, syrup and water and bring the mixture to a boil, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Continue to boil until the mixture becomes amber in color. Remove from heat, stir in the butter, and pour the mixture evenly over the beans. Allow brittle to cool for one minute. Use an oiled rolling pin to flatten the mixture to about 1/8 of an inch. Let cool, then break into irregular pieces. Store in a tightly closed container.

Ryan prepares an espresso drink while moonlighting at Huckleberry's Books & Coffee in Vancouver, Washington.





It's performance time at the air show... do you know where your pilots are?

When two of the Blue Angels regular crew members were unable to report for duty after a night in a Portland brewpub, pilots Jennifer Alvin and Ryan Handschug stepped in as last minute replacements.

After dazzling the crowd with spiffy stunts and high-speed fly-by's, Ms. Alvin and Mr. Handschug taught the Blue Angels new tricks like picking up an espresso drink while cruising through the Coffee People drive-through in an F/A-18 Hornet and finding a parking spot for a 24,500 pound plane in the tiny parking garage at Powell's Books.

Due to their impressive flight performance Ms. Alvin and Mr. Handschug will travel with the Blue Angels crew as substitute pilots for the remainder of the show season.

### <u>Belgian Fudge Cake</u>

I got this recipe from Pat, a wonderful woman I had the pleasure of working with on the KSPS Cooking with Friends show. Whenever I've brought a batch to RedChip, I've been cursed at because it is such a "decadent temptation." Good or evil, it is simple to make and guaranteed to please. -ja

#### Cake:

- 4 ounces butter
- 3 tablespoons golden syrup, preferably Lyle's
- 8 ounces digestive biscuits, broken into small pieces
- 2 ounces golden raisins
- 4 ounces red glace cherries, quartered
- 5 ounces plain Ghiradelli chocolate

Grease and line a one pound loaf pan. Melt butter and syrup. Stir in biscuits, fruit, and broken chocolate. Mix gently to completely coat. Press into pan. Leave in fridge until set. Turn onto board.

#### Fudge Icing:

2 ounces Cadbury's milk chocolate

1 ounce butter

6 ounces icing sugar

2 tablespoons water

Melt chocolate and butter with water in double boiler. Stir in icing sugar and spread over cake.

Dust cake with icing sugar and decorate with grated or curls of plain chocolate.

# <u>Lemon Berry Cheesecake</u>

I love to make cheesecake! This is one of my favorites. -ja

I love to eat cheesecake! This is one of my favorites. -rh

2 cups gingersnap crumbs (blender + gingersnaps = perfect crumbs) 1 cube butter (melted)

2 packages cream cheese (softened)
1/3 cup sugar
4 eggs
1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
3 tablespoons lemon juice (fresh works best!)
1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel

#### Topping:

1 1/2 cups sour cream 3 tablespoons sugar 1/2 teaspoon vanilla 1/2 cup raspberries, washed and patted dry

Garnish: raspberries mint leaves curled lemon peels

For the crust, combine the cookie crumbs and the butter well. Pat firmly and evenly into the bottom of a 10 inch springform pan. Put the crust in the fridge until you're ready for it again. Preheat the oven to 375 F.

Blend all of the cheesecake ingredients together until very smooth. Pour over crust and bake for 25 minutes, or until a toothpick comes clean out of the center. Allow to cool completely. Do not run a knife around the edge of the pan before cooling.

Blend all the topping ingredients until smooth. When cooled, pour topping over cheesecake and bake at 375 F for 8 minutes.

Allow cheesecake to cool in fridge for at least 12 hours before serving. Garnish as desired with raspberries, mint leaves, and curled lemon peels.

#### Variation: Vanilla Spiced Pear

Substitute ½ cup hazelnuts for ½ cup gingersnap crumbs in the crust.

Increase vanilla to 2 ½ teaspoons and do not add lemon juice or lemon rind.

For topping, toss 2 cups thinly-sliced pears in cinnamon and sugar.

Also works well with apples or peaches.



Missy, Jenn, Misty, and Rachel enjoy the music and ambiance at Saturday Market in Portland, Oregon.

#### <u>Baklava</u>

I've tried baklava from just about every place in town that makes it and Jenn still makes it the best. –rh

This is one of Ryan's favorites. The baklava is usually gone within 24 hours after I make it, which is amazing for such a rich dessert. -ja

3/4 cup honey
1 cup water
½ lemon
1 orange slice (1/4 inch thick, with peel)
1 cinnamon stick
1 pound package of phyllo dough
1¾ cups finely chopped nuts (almonds, pistachios, combination, etc.)
2½ tablespoons sugar
1¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1 pound unsalted butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350° F. Combine honey, water, cinnamon stick, lemon and orange in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Simmer for 15 minutes. Mixture should coat the back of a spoon. Remove from heat. Take out the cinnamon stick, lemon and orange slice. Allow syrup to cool. Refrigerate.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine nuts, sugar, cinnamon and cloves.

Butter a large baking dish. Put down one sheet at a time, working quickly, and brush a thin layer of melted butter on each sheet. When you've stacked half of your phyllo dough, evenly spread the nut mixture over the dough. Butter and stack the remainder of the phyllo dough.

With a sharp knife, cut the filled dough into diamond shapes, making cuts about 1 ½ inches apart. Do not cut all the way through the bottom layer of the phyllo dough.

Bake at 350° F for 30 minutes, then raise oven temperature to 475° F and bake for 10 to 15 minutes more until baklava is a golden brown. Remove from oven, and pour cooled syrup evenly over the top of the baklava. Recut baklava, this time cutting all the way through the bottom layer.

**Notes:** Phyllo dough dries out quickly. I recommend covering it with plastic wrap and a clean damp dish towel.

Jenn and Misty in a "selfpicture" on the beach during the crazy road trip. The first time we tried this, the waves snuck up behind us and we ran for high ground.



### **Yodka Martini with a Twist**

This is my staple drink when I'm out on the town. Despite its simple recipe it is one hard drink to make or get made right. This due to the fact that good vodka has no taste, so the vermouth and lemon twist, though small in amount, are what define the taste. But don't let yourself think you can get away with a cheap brand of vodka. Cheap vodka makes a martini that is undrinkable and unpleasant feeling. Absolut Vodka is my personal favorite and I sometimes switch to Skyy vodka when I am looking for something different. You will have to experiment to make a martini that is right for you. Enjoy. —rh

2-3 oz. Absolut vodka
Dash dry vermouth or to taste
Lemon peel

Place the bottle of vodka in the freezer one or more days ahead of time. As an option you can also freeze the bottle in a block of ice with only the top sticking out. Chill martini glasses by filling them with ice and water. Load up your shaker with ice, then vodka, and last vermouth. Shake till you think its dead, about ten seconds. Empty water from martini glasses and pour the contents of the shaker into the glasses, no ice should make it into the glass. Cut a strip of peel off the lemon, twist over the glass and then drop it on in. For a little more lemon flavor cut a wedge of lemon and remove the fruit so that you have the whole rind to drop in.



"No, I'm not evil. I just look that way in photos." -rh

# Stay in Touch!



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