CAST IRON FAVORITES
[ FROM FRIED CHICKEN TO MAC & CHEESE ]

TOP-RATED BUTTERMILK BISCUITS
page 19

NEVER-FAIL SOUTHERN BISCUITS
TALL, BUTTERY, FLAKY LAYERS
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SOUTHERN SWEETS
From perfectly crisp pies and tarts to jam-filled coffee cakes and fluffy dinner rolls, the even heat distribution of cast-iron skillets makes them ideal for baking. This collection of recipes features time-honored classics plus tips for keeping your skillets (new and heirloom) well-seasoned and always at the ready.

3 EASY WAYS TO ORDER
GET TO KNOW YOUR CAST IRON

Cooking and Baking in Cast Iron

Skillet Sizing Guide

Caring for Your Cast Iron and Enameled Skillets
**IT’S NO SECRET**

We love cast-iron cookware. Whether a skillet is brand-new or has years of loyal service layered into its seasoning, there’s no vessel we trust more with our treasured family recipes. But it’s more than just nostalgia that draws us to these hefty pans on a daily basis. From their superior heat retention to their nearly unbreakable durability, we’re giving you the lowdown on why cast iron will always have a place in our kitchens—and should have a spot in yours too.

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**IT HAS THICK WALLS**

From chicken fryers to deep Dutch ovens, heavy-duty walls are one of the most unique features of cast iron. Unlike stainless steel and aluminum pans, which are heated mostly from a layered base, the sides of cast-iron pans preheat as well. With heat cooking food from all sides, your meal often cooks quicker no matter what you’re making. These thicker walls also make cast-iron pans extremely durable.

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**IT HAS A NATURALLY NONSTICK SURFACE**

Before there were chemically coated pans or ceramic nonstick pans, there was cast iron—it’s the key to cooking the perfect fried egg or delicate fillet of fish, and Southerners have kept it on their stove tops for generations. While standard nonstick pans are sensitive to metal utensils and high heat, cast iron doesn’t suffer from the typical wear and tear if it’s cared for properly. In fact, the more you use them, the more nonstick your skillets will become. Occasional seasoning and consistent use help develop a glassy surface that releases food easily.

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**IT STAYS HOT**

A little patience goes a long way when cooking with cast iron. It heats up and cools down slower than thinner materials like stainless steel, but it holds that heat much longer and much more consistently—even after cooking. If you want your meal to stay piping hot on the way to a party, cast iron is a potluck lifesaver. For example, baking a cobbler or casserole in a cast-iron skillet lets you take your dish straight from the oven to the party while keeping it nice and toasty.

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**... OR COLD**

If you prefer your sweets and savories on the colder side, all you need is a cast-iron skillet and a fridge or freezer. Freezing or chilling your skillet prior to layering an icebox dessert helps keep your chilly treat from melting in the car or overturning in a cooler. Just be sure to use a kitchen towel or pot holder when handling a freezing skillet to prevent hurting your fingers! Never place a cold skillet in warm water; let it come to room temperature before cleaning. Do not freeze enamel-coated cast-iron pans.
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**Lodge** — Reasonably priced and easy to find, many consider Lodge to be the cast-iron cookware industry standard. These pans are measured by the diameter of their top edges.

**Finex** — Known for their signature octagonal shape, Finex skillets are easiest to measure from flat edge to flat edge. Each pan is helpfully marked with its measurement.

**Butter Pat** — Named not for their size or pattern, but people, these skillets are measured by cooking surface—add two inches to this number for its equivalent standard skillet size.
Whether old or new, or classic or modern, cast-iron skillet sizes, names, and labels don’t always match between brands. Check out these handy charts to see how a few popular pans measure up!

**CONVERTING VOLUME**

Just because a recipe doesn’t call for cast iron doesn’t mean it can’t be made in a cast-iron skillet. With the help of our conversion chart, you’ll be taking all your favorite breakfasts, dinners, and desserts over to the iron side.

**No Need to Loaf Around**
If your favorite pound cake or banana bread recipe calls for an 8x4-inch loaf pan or if your favorite casserole yields 1 quart of filling, you can use an 8-inch skillet instead for superior texture and to keep it warm longer.

**Don’t Be Square**
Skip the 9-inch square baking pan for your next batch of brownies or biscuits, and try out a 10-inch cast-iron skillet instead for an unbeatable crust.

**No 13x9? No Problem.**
If you have a 12-inch skillet, any recipe calling for a 13x9-inch baking dish or pan is fair game. From lasagna for a crowd to a generously frosted birthday cake, a foot-wide pan is up to the challenge.
Measuring the diameter of a pan is the key to knowing if it is considered an 8-inch, 10-inch, 12-inch, and so on. Cast iron makers measure and market their pans differently, with some using the diameter measurement of the bottom of the skillet, also called the cooking surface. This number is often smaller than the diameter across the top of the skillet because most skillets have a gentle slant in their sides. A pan may have a 6-inch-wide cooking surface but an 8-inch-wide top. In this case, our test kitchen would consider it to be an 8-inch skillet for recipe use. When we call for a 10-inch skillet in our recipes, we mean a skillet that measures 10 inches from one top edge to the opposite top edge, measuring across the center. So no matter what size is listed on the manufacturer’s website or even marked into the pan itself, a quick check with a ruler will tell you if the pan is too small, too big, or just right for a recipe.
Depth is another key measurement to know for cooking with your favorite skillet. It’s less important for things like searing a steak or roasting vegetables, but when it comes to baking, frying, and even sautéing, the depth of a pan is a key player in recipe success or failure. To measure your pan, place the base of a ruler at the inside base of the pan and hold it up to the sides. Never measure depth from outside the pan, as a thicker base could give the appearance of more depth than is actually available for cooking. In most cases, standard skillets are about 2 inches deep. This size is high enough to keep cake and cornbread batter from spilling over the sides but not so high that a spatula has a hard time getting into the edges of the pan. This size is also appropriate for shallow frying. But when you want to heat more than an inch of oil, you need a skillet that is 3 to 4 inches deep to safely cook and fry. If you want to deep fry, a Dutch oven is your best bet.
SEASONING CAST IRON

After many years of testing and cooking with cast iron, Jeff Rogers, The Culinary Fanatic blogger and cast-iron cookware expert, has developed a tried-and-true method for seasoning cast iron, and now he’s sharing it with the readers of Southern Cast Iron. His seasoning method works well for vintage cast-iron cookware as well as modern pieces. Jeff uses Crisco vegetable shortening to season cast iron, which produces a durable finish, though you can use vegetable or canola oil if you have it on hand. In his method, heating the pan first allows for easy application of shortening or oil. Placing the pan upside down in the oven avoids excess oil from pooling and creating sticky spots on the pan, which can eventually flake off or cause your surface to not be nonstick.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

| Vegetable shortening, canola oil, or vegetable oil | Lint-free cotton rag | Lint-free paper towels (such as Scott Shop Towels) |

1. Preheat oven to 200°. Put the skillet in the oven upside-down for 20 minutes.
2. Apply a liberal amount of shortening or oil to the rag. (Because the skillet will be warm, the Crisco will melt quickly.) Wipe off all fat with an absorbent paper towel.
3. Put the skillet back in the oven upside down, increase temperature to 300°, and set a timer for 15 minutes.
4. After 15 minutes, remove the skillet and wipe lightly with clean paper towel again.
5. Return the skillet to oven, increase oven temperature to 400°, and let it go for 2 hours. Let the skillet cool completely in the oven.
6. Repeat the process if you want your skillet to have more sheen. Do not repeat more than 3 times in a row.
CAST IRON
USE & CARE

If you take the time to properly care for your cast-iron cookware, it will reward you and your family with generations of loyal service. Follow these tips to keep your heirlooms—whether seasoned or enameled iron—in tip-top shape.

SEASONED

KEEP THEM CLEAN
Be sure to clean your pans as soon as they’re cool enough to handle. Scrub gently with a stiff-bristle brush or a non-scratch scouring pad. Water leads to rust, so avoid submerging your cast-iron cookware. As to whether to use soap—that’s up to you. We avoid it when possible to protect the seasoned surface.

KEEP THEM DRY
After rinsing, it’s crucial to dry your cookware completely. Wipe dry with a clean kitchen towel, and then apply a very thin coat of vegetable oil, rubbing it into the surface. Heat on the stovetop over medium-low heat or in the oven at 300°F until dry, about 10 minutes. Let cool; wipe surface with a clean kitchen towel, and heat for 5 more minutes.

RESPECT YOUR CAST IRON
Taking care of your cookware means understanding its likes and dislikes. Cooking with fats, cleaning gently, and storing in a clean, dry place are the keys to preserving your pan’s seasoning. Harsh abrasives, acidic foods, and exposure to water can break down the finish or cause rust.

ENAMELED

BE GENTLE
The finish on enameled cast iron can be fragile, so handle your pieces with care to avoid chipping, and never use metal utensils, as they can scratch the surface.

GREASE THEM UP
Unlike regular cast iron, enameled cast iron is not non-stick. To avoid sticking, cook over medium heat using adequate amounts of oil or fat. If sticking does occur, use dish soap, water, and a non-scratch scouring pad to scrub away the mess. Or, try boiling water in the piece with a bit of dishwashing liquid for extra-stubborn bits.

MAKE THEM SHINE
Over time, enameled cast iron can become stained. To help remove stains, soak the cooking surface in peroxide mixed with baking soda, then scrub with dish soap, water, and a non-scratch scouring pad to keep your enameled cast iron looking as good as new.
CLASSIC BREADS

From buttery, flaky biscuits to golden loaves of cornbread, these cast iron-baked breads are a delicious addition to any meal.
CLASSIC SOUTHERN CORNBREAD

Whatever your skillet size, we’ve got the perfect recipe for you.

FOR AN 8-INCH SKILLET
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 cup plain white or yellow cornmeal
½ cup all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
1¼ cups whole buttermilk
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 large egg

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Pour oil into a deep 8-inch cast-iron skillet. Place pan in oven until oil is very hot, about 8 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, and salt. In a small bowl, whisk together buttermilk, melted butter, and egg. Make a well in center of dry ingredients; add buttermilk mixture, stirring until combined. Carefully pour batter over hot oil in skillet.
3. Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 25 minutes.

FOR A 10-INCH SKILLET
2 tablespoons canola oil
2 cups plain white or yellow cornmeal
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
2½ cups whole buttermilk
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2 large eggs

1. Follow previous directions using a 10-inch skillet; bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 27 minutes.

FOR A 12-INCH SKILLET
3 tablespoons canola oil
4 cups plain white or yellow cornmeal
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons baking powder
1 tablespoon kosher salt
5 cups whole buttermilk
¾ cup unsalted butter, melted
4 large eggs

1. Follow previous directions using a 12-inch skillet; bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 35 minutes.

Kitchen Tip

The hot oil should shimmer before adding the batter. This helps the center of the cornbread bake evenly and ensures a crisp crust. Use at least a 2-inch deep skillet to ensure the batter will fit.
HEIRLOOM TOMATO AND PARMESAN CORNBREAD
Makes 1 (10-inch) loaf

Highlight the seasonal sweetness and unique shapes of heirloom tomatoes in this colorful cornbread.

3 small heirloom tomatoes, sliced ¼ inch thick and seeded
2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
1 tablespoon canola oil
2 cups plain yellow cornmeal
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 ½ cups whole buttermilk
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2 large eggs
1 cup yellow corn kernels
½ cup chopped fresh basil
¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese divided
Goat cheese, to serve
Garnish: fresh basil, ground black pepper

1. Place tomato slices on paper towels; sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt. Let stand for 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 425°. Pour oil into a 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Place pan in oven until oil is very hot, about 8 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, and remaining 1½ teaspoons salt. In a medium bowl, whisk together buttermilk, melted butter, and eggs. Make a well in center of dry ingredients; add buttermilk mixture, stirring just until combined. Gently fold in corn, basil, and ½ cup Parmesan. Carefully pour batter over hot oil in skillet.
4. Pat tomato slices dry, and arrange on top of batter. Sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup Parmesan.
5. Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 55 minutes. Serve with goat cheese. Garnish with basil and pepper, if desired.

FARMERS’ MARKET CORN STICKS
Makes 14

This humble side becomes the centerpiece of the supper table when it’s chock-full of fresh produce.

¼ cup vegetable oil
1 large egg
½ cup fresh corn kernels, divided
4 tablespoons diced jalapeño, divided
4 tablespoons diced red bell pepper, divided
¼ cup sliced cherry tomatoes
2 tablespoons minced red onion
2 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Brush wells of 2 (7-well) cast-iron corn stick pans with melted butter. Place pans in oven to heat for 5 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, salt, and pepper. In a small bowl, whisk together buttermilk, oil, and egg. Make a well in center of dry ingredients; add buttermilk mixture, ¼ cup corn, 2 tablespoons jalapeño, and 2 tablespoons bell pepper, stirring just until combined.
3. Carefully remove hot pans from oven. Divide batter among prepared wells, and sprinkle with tomatoes, onion, feta, thyme, remaining ¼ cup corn, remaining 2 tablespoons jalapeño, and remaining 2 tablespoons bell pepper.
4. Bake until golden brown and crisp, about 18 minutes. Serve immediately.
BUTTERMILK BISCUITS
Makes 12

These perfect biscuits are rich, buttery, flaky, and ready for your favorite fillings and toppings.

3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour*
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon kosher salt, plus more for sprinkling
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 1/4 cups cold unsalted butter, cubed
1 cup cold whole buttermilk
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Honey and jam, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, and baking soda. Using a pastry blender, cut in cold butter until mixture is crumbly. Stir in cold buttermilk until a shaggy dough forms.
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface. Pat dough into a 10x8-inch rectangle, and cut into fourths. Stack each fourth on top of each other, and pat or roll into a rectangle again. Repeat process three more times. Pat or roll dough to 3/4-inch thickness. Using a 2 1/2-inch round cutter dipped in flour, cut dough without twisting cutter, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place biscuits on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Freeze until cold, about 10 minutes.
4. Lightly brush top of dough with egg, and lightly sprinkle with salt. Place biscuits on a cast iron baking pan or smooth side of a cast-iron griddle 1 inch apart.
5. Bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes. Serve warm with desired toppings.

*We used White Lily.

Kitchen Tip
Biscuits can also be baked as directed in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet.
SAUSAGE AND CHIVE BISCUIT WEDGES
Makes 8

These savory biscuits are great for breakfast, lunch, or dinner any day of the week.

2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
⅓ teaspoon kosher salt  
⅓ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon sugar  
⅔ cup cooked, crumbled, and cooled pork breakfast sausage  
1 cup whole buttermilk, divided  
½ cup plus 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted and divided

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, chives, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and sugar; stir in sausage.
3. In a small bowl, combine ¾ cup buttermilk and ⅓ cup melted butter. Make a well in center of flour mixture; add buttermilk mixture, stirring until dry ingredients are moistened. Add remaining ¼ cup buttermilk, if needed. Spoon dough into wells of a 9-inch cast-iron wedge pan, mounding dough.
4. Bake until lightly browned, about 17 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Run a knife around edges of biscuits. Remove from pan. Brush with remaining 1 tablespoon melted butter.

BACON-CHEDDAR ANGEL BISCUITS
Makes about 14

The addition of two leaveners—baking powder and yeast—makes these tender, flaky biscuits as light as air.

¼ cup warm water (105° to 110°)  
2 teaspoons active dry yeast  
2½ cups all-purpose flour  
3 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
½ cup all-vegetable shortening  
1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided  
¼ cup crumbled cooked bacon, divided  
⅔ cup whole buttermilk  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives  
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Garnish: chopped fresh chives

1. In a small bowl, combine ½ cup warm water and yeast. Let stand until mixture is bubbly, about 5 minutes.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Using a pastry blender, cut in shortening until mixture is crumbly. Stir in ¼ cup cheese, ½ cup bacon, buttermilk, chives, and yeast mixture until a shaggy dough forms.
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
4. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1-inch thickness. Using a 2-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place biscuits in prepared skillet. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 45 minutes. Brush with egg wash.
5. Preheat oven to 400°.
6. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 17 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup cheese and remaining ¼ cup bacon. Garnish with chives, if desired.
FLUFFY DINNER ROLLS
Makes 12

Finished with a sprinkle of salt, these buttery beauties are the quintessential dinner roll.

¼ cup warm water (105° to 110°)
1 teaspoon active dry yeast
¾ cup warm whole buttermilk (105° to 110°)
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and divided
¼ cup sugar
4½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
2 large eggs
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
Garnish: coarse sea salt

1. In a small bowl, stir together ¼ cup warm water and yeast. Let stand until mixture is foamy, about 5 minutes. In another small bowl, whisk together buttermilk, 4 tablespoons melted butter, and sugar.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, beat yeast mixture, buttermilk mixture, 2¼ cups flour, eggs, and salt at medium-low speed until combined, about 2 minutes. Reduce mixer speed to low. Add remaining 2¼ cups flour, ½ cup at a time, beating until a smooth ball forms, about 4 minutes.
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and knead for 5 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1½ hours.
4. Punch down dough, and turn out onto a lightly floured surface. Divide dough into 12 equal pieces, and shape each piece into a ball. Place in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Cover and let rise until doubled in size, about 1½ hours.
5. Preheat oven to 350°.
6. Bake until golden brown, about 30 minutes, covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool for 10 minutes; brush with remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter. Sprinkle with sea salt, if desired.

Kitchen Tip

To prep ahead of time, shape the rolls and then refrigerate, covered, overnight. Save the last rise until before dinner by setting the skillet in a warm place to rise until the rolls have doubled their original size.
HOMEMADE DILL ROLLS
Makes 12

Packed with fresh dill, these rolls are delicious with any spring lunch.

¼ cup lukewarm water
1 (0.25-ounce) package active dry yeast
2 ½ cups bread flour
1 large egg
1 cup small-curd whole-milk cottage cheese
¼ cup chopped fresh dill
3 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
1½ teaspoons onion powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
Garnish: melted butter, sea salt

1. In a small bowl, stir together ¼ cup lukewarm water and yeast. Let stand until mixture is bubbly, about 5 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, combine flour, egg, cottage cheese, dill, sugar, butter, salt, onion powder, baking soda, and pepper. Add yeast mixture, and beat at medium speed until a dough forms. Reduce mixer speed to low, and beat until dough is smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes.
3. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1 hour and 30 minutes.
4. Lightly spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray. Divide dough into 12 equal portions. Roll each portion into a ball; place in prepared skillet. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
5. Preheat oven to 325°.
6. Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Brush rolls with melted butter, and sprinkle with sea salt, if desired.

SANDWICH BREAD
Makes 2 (8x4-inch) loaves

Making your own bread turns everyday sandwiches into something special.

1½ cups warm whole milk (105° to 110°), divided
2¼ teaspoons active dry yeast
½ cup sugar
¼ cup plus 2 teaspoons unsalted butter, melted and divided

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, stir together ¼ cup warm milk and yeast by hand. Let stand until mixture is foamy, about 5 minutes.
2. Add sugar, ¼ cup melted butter, eggs, salt, and remaining 1¼ cups warm milk, stirring to combine. With mixer on low speed, gradually add 5 cups flour, beating until smooth, about 2 minutes. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat until dough is stiff and slightly tacky, about 10 minutes, adding remaining 1 cup flour, if necessary.
3. On a lightly floured surface, knead dough for 3 minutes. Return dough to bowl; cover and let rise for 30 minutes.
4. Spray 2 (8x4-inch) cast-iron loaf pans with cooking spray.
5. Press down dough, and divide in half. Shape each portion into a 9-inch rectangle, and place in prepared pans. Brush top of loaves with remaining 2 teaspoons melted butter. Cover and let rise for 1 hour.
6. Preheat oven to 400°.
7. Bake for 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°, and bake for 20 minutes. Cover with foil, and bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 200°, about 20 minutes more. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
PARKER HOUSE ROLLS
Makes about 48

Melt-in-your-mouth tender and brushed with melted butter, these rolls won’t last long on your table.

1½ cups whole milk, divided
¼ cup sugar
2 teaspoons active dry yeast
4 to 4½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus more for brushing
2 large eggs
1 tablespoon kosher salt
½ cup plus 1 teaspoon unsalted butter, softened and cut into 48 cubes

1. In a small bowl, whisk together ½ cup milk, sugar, and yeast. Let stand until mixture is foamy, about 10 minutes. Stir in ½ cup flour.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, beat melted butter, eggs, and remaining 1 cup milk at low speed until combined. Add yeast mixture, beating to combine. Add 1 cup flour and salt; beat to combine. Gradually add remaining flour, 1 cup at a time, beating until dough comes together and begins to pull away from sides of bowl, 2 to 3 minutes. (Dough will be sticky but not unmanageable. If dough is too sticky, add more flour, ¼ cup at a time, until it comes together.)
3. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, 2 to 2½ hours.
4. On a lightly floured surface, turn out dough. Divide dough in half, and gently shape each half into a ball. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes.
5. Spray 2 (12-inch) cast-iron skillets with cooking spray. Roll half of dough into a 14x12-inch rectangle, about ¼ inch thick. Using a 2½-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Repeat with remaining dough.
6. Brush each circle with melted butter, and place one cube of softened butter on bottom half of each one. Fold circles over, and press to seal. Place in prepared skillets. Cover and let stand in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until puffed, about 30 minutes.
7. Preheat oven to 350°.
8. Brush rolls with melted butter, and bake until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Brush with additional melted butter while warm.
Satisfy all your salty, crunchy cravings with these simple, deep-fried classics.
GRITS-CRUSTED FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AND OKRA
POTATO CHIPS
Makes 8 to 10 servings

These addictively crunchy home-fried chips are more than worth the effort. All seasoning blends can be stored in an airtight container in the pantry for up to 2 months.

4 large russet potatoes, sliced ⅛ inch thick
¾ cup distilled white vinegar
Canola oil, for frying
1 teaspoon kosher salt or desired seasoning blend (recipes follow)

1. Rinse and drain potatoes; repeat until water runs clear, 3 to 4 times. In a large bowl, soak potatoes in vinegar and water to cover for at least 30 minutes or up to 2 hours. Drain; pat dry.
2. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 4 inches, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 300°.
3. Working in batches, fry potatoes, stirring frequently, until golden brown and crispy, 6 to 8 minutes. Place on a large rimmed baking sheet; sprinkle with salt or desired seasoning blend.

BARBECUE SEASONING
Makes about ½ cup

2 tablespoons smoked paprika
2 tablespoons firmly packed brown sugar
4 teaspoons onion powder
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 teaspoons garlic powder
1 teaspoon chili powder

1. In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients.

RANCH SEASONING
Makes about ½ cup

2 tablespoons buttermilk powder
2 tablespoons dried parsley
1 tablespoon dried chives
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 teaspoons dried dill
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons onion powder
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
½ teaspoon ground red pepper

1. In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients.

CHILI-LIME SEASONING
Makes about ½ cup

1 lime, zested
2 tablespoons sugar
4 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon ground red pepper
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper

1. In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients.
Kitchen Tips

- Rinsing the potato slices removes excess starch, ensuring the crispiest chip.
- Soaking in vinegar water controls the breakdown of pectin in the potato. This creates a sturdier chip that is less likely to crumble.
- Stirring the chips during the frying process prevents the chips from sticking together and helps them cook more evenly.
Kitchen Tip
Spray hands with cooking spray to help roll potato tots easily.
CHEESY POTATO TOTS
Makes about 6 servings

These homemade potato nuggets are crispy, cheesy perfection.

3½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
2 pounds russet potatoes, peeled
½ cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
1 teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon onion powder
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 cup vegetable oil

1. In a large Dutch oven, bring 3 teaspoons salt and 4 inches water to a boil over medium-high heat. Add potatoes; cook until just softened, 6 to 7 minutes. Drain, and let cool to room temperature; finely shred potatoes.
2. In a large bowl, stir together shredded potatoes, cheese, flour, thyme, garlic powder, onion powder, pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Scoop mixture by tablespoonfuls, and gently roll into potato tots.
3. In a large cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Working in batches, add potato tots to skillet; fry until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels.

FRIED CHICKEN WINGS WITH WARM SPICY HONEY
Makes 24

These wings are perfect for a summer picnic, or try serving them with buttermilk waffles for a spicy breakfast upgrade.

4 cups all-purpose flour
4 teaspoons kosher salt
1½ teaspoons ground black pepper
1½ teaspoons onion powder
2 cups whole buttermilk
24 chicken drummettes
Vegetable oil, for frying
Warm Spicy Honey (recipe follows)

1. In a large shallow dish, whisk together flour, salt, pepper, and onion powder. In a medium bowl, place buttermilk. Dredge chicken in flour mixture, shaking off excess. Dip in buttermilk, letting excess drip off. Dredge in flour mixture again, pressing to adhere. Place on a wire rack.
2. Fill a large deep cast-iron skillet halfway full with oil, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350°.
3. Working in batches (do not overcrowd skillet), fry chicken until golden brown and crisp, 10 to 12 minutes. (Adjust heat as necessary to maintain 350°.) Remove chicken using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Serve immediately with Warm Spicy Honey.

WARM SPICY HONEY
Makes about 1 cup

1 cup honey
2 teaspoons distilled white vinegar
¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
⅛ teaspoon ground red pepper
⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a small saucepan, heat all ingredients over medium-low heat, whisking occasionally, until warm, about 10 minutes.
FRIED CATFISH AND HUSH PUPPIES
Makes 6 servings

Dipped in buttermilk, dredged in cornmeal, and then fried to golden brown perfection—this is how we like our catfish. To serve everything hot, have the hush puppy batter ready to go and fry when the fish is done.

Catfish:
Vegetable oil, for frying
6 (4- to 6-ounce) catfish fillets
1½ cups whole buttermilk
1½ cups self-rising yellow cornmeal
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon ground red pepper

Tartar Sauce:
½ cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
1 teaspoon lemon zest
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
½ teaspoon kosher salt

Cheesy Hush Puppies (recipe follows), lemon wedges and coleslaw, to serve

1. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 3 inches, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 360°.
2. For catfish: Place catfish in a 13x9-inch baking dish. Pour buttermilk over fish, coating completely. Let stand for 5 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, combine cornmeal, garlic powder, salt, black pepper, and red pepper. Dredge catfish in cornmeal mixture, shaking off excess. Let stand for 5 minutes.
4. Working in batches, fry fish until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Let drain on a wire rack.
5. For tartar sauce: In a small bowl, stir together mayonnaise, chives, lemon zest and juice, and salt. Serve fish immediately with sauce, Cheesy Hush Puppies, lemon wedges, and coleslaw.

CHEESY HUSH PUPPIES
Makes about 24

Vegetable oil, for frying
1½ cups self-rising yellow cornmeal
¼ cup self-rising flour
¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
1 (8-ounce) package shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1½ tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1¼ cups whole buttermilk
1 large egg, lightly beaten

1. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 3 inches, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 360°.
2. In a large bowl, stir together cornmeal, flour, bell pepper, cheese, sugar, and salt. Add buttermilk and egg, stirring until moistened. Let stand for 10 minutes.
3. Using a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, drop batter into hot oil in batches. Fry, turning frequently, until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Let drain on a wire rack. Serve immediately.
RANCH-FRIED CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS

Makes 8

Super easy and extra crispy, this twist on traditional fried chicken will have you craving more.

1 (1-ounce) package ranch dressing mix
3 cups whole buttermilk, divided
8 small chicken drumsticks (about 2 pounds)
Vegetable oil, for frying
3 cups all-purpose flour
1½ tablespoons kosher salt
1 tablespoon ground black pepper
2 teaspoons onion powder
Garnish: chopped fresh chives, ground black pepper

1. In a large resealable plastic bag, combine dressing mix and 2 cups buttermilk. Seal bag, and shake until combined. Spoon ½ cup dressing into a small bowl; cover and refrigerate. Add chicken to bag; seal and refrigerate for 8 hours. Drain chicken, discarding marinade. Lightly pat chicken dry with paper towels.

2. Fill a large Dutch oven halfway full with oil, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350°.

3. In a shallow dish, stir together flour, salt, pepper, and onion powder. In a medium bowl, place remaining 1 cup buttermilk. Working in batches, dredge chicken in flour mixture, shaking off excess. Dip in buttermilk, letting excess drip off. Dredge in flour mixture again, pressing gently to adhere coating. Place chicken on a wire rack.

4. Working in batches, fry chicken, turning occasionally, until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 165°, about 12 minutes. Let drain on paper towels. Drizzle with reserved ½ cup dressing. Garnish with chives and pepper, if desired.

BEER-BATTERED ONION RINGS WITH HONEY MUSTARD

Makes about 8 servings

Adding beer to the batter creates a tempura-like crust on these addictively crunchy onion rings.

Vegetable oil, for frying
2½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
½ cup stone-ground yellow cornmeal
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 (12-ounce) can amber beer
1 large egg, lightly beaten
¼ cup cornstarch
2 large white onions, sliced into ¼-inch-thick rounds
Honey Mustard (recipe follows)
Garnish: kosher salt

1. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 4 inches, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 360°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with paper towels; top with a wire rack.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together 1½ cups flour, cornmeal, salt, garlic powder, baking powder, and baking soda. Whisk in beer and egg until a thick batter forms. In a medium bowl, whisk together cornstarch and remaining 1 cup flour.

3. Dredge onions in flour mixture to coat, shaking off excess. Dip onions in batter to completely cover. Working in batches, fry, turning halfway through, until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Let drain on prepared rack. Garnish with salt, if desired. Serve with Honey Mustard.

HONEY MUSTARD

Makes about ¾ cup

¾ cup whole–grain mustard
1½ tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon amber beer

1. In a medium bowl, stir together all ingredients. Store, refrigerated, in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.
GRITS-CRUSTED
FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AND OKRA

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Grits aren’t just for breakfast. Adding them to the breading mixture gives these fried favorites an extra crunch.

18 (⅛- to ⅛-inch-thick) green tomato slices (about 1⅛ pounds)
4 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
2 cups stone-ground grits
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon onion powder
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon ground red pepper
¾ cup whole buttermilk, divided
¾ pound small to medium fresh okra
Vegetable oil, for frying
Herb Buttermilk Sauce (recipe follows)

1. Place tomato slices on paper towel-lined wire rack. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. Let stand for 30 minutes. Pat tomatoes dry with a paper towel.
2. In the container of a blender, pulse grits 3 to 4 times. In a large shallow dish, whisk together grits, flour, onion powder, black pepper, red pepper, and remaining 3 teaspoons salt. Place half of grits mixture in a shallow dish. In another large shallow dish, place 1½ cups buttermilk.
3. Dredge tomato slices in grits mixture, shaking off excess. Dip in buttermilk, letting excess drip off. Dredge in grits mixture again, shaking off excess. Place on a wire rack. Repeat procedure with okra, remaining grits mixture, and remaining 1½ cups buttermilk.

4. Fill a large deep cast-iron skillet halfway full with oil, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 360°.
5. Working in batches (do not overcrowd skillet), fry tomatoes, turning occasionally, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. (Adjust heat as necessary to maintain 360°.) Remove tomatoes using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Repeat procedure with okra. Serve immediately with Herb Buttermilk Sauce.

HERB BUTTERMILK SAUCE
Makes about 1¾ cups

⅛ cup mayonnaise
⅛ cup whole buttermilk
2 tablespoons chopped green dill
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
1½ teaspoons distilled white vinegar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
⅛ teaspoon onion powder

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week.
FRIED BERRY HAND PIES
Makes 16

Fried until crisp and dusted with confectioners’ sugar, these miniature pies are absolutely irresistible.

3 cups fresh blueberries
3 cups fresh blackberries
1 1/3 cups firmly packed light brown sugar
1/4 cup unsalted butter
4 teaspoons cornstarch
2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
Peanut oil, for frying
2 (14.1-ounce) packages refrigerated piecrusts
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Garnish: confectioners’ sugar

1. In a medium cast-iron skillet, combine blueberries, blackberries, brown sugar, butter, cornstarch, cinnamon, and lemon juice. Cook over medium-high heat until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Let cool for 15 minutes.
2. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 3 inches, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350°.
3. On a lightly floured surface, unroll one piecrust. Unroll second piecrust, and place on top, gently pressing to adhere. Using a 3-inch round cutter, cut 8 rounds. Repeat with remaining piecrusts. Place about 1 tablespoon berry filling in center of each round. Brush edges of dough with egg wash. Fold dough over filling, and press edges to seal. Freeze for 10 minutes.
4. Fry 1 to 2 pies at a time until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Let drain on paper towels. Dust with confectioners’ sugar while still warm. Serve immediately.

FRIED PEANUT BUTTER, BANANA, AND CHOCOLATE HAND PIES
Makes 8

One bite of these mouthwatering hand pies will transport you right back to childhood.

1 (14.1-ounce) package refrigerated piecrusts
1/3 cup creamy peanut butter
2 tablespoons finely chopped semisweet chocolate
1 medium banana, thinly sliced
Vegetable oil, for frying
2 tablespoons sugar

1. On a lightly floured surface, roll each piecrust into a 12-inch circle. Using a 4-inch round cutter, cut 8 rounds from each crust, rerolling scraps as necessary.
2. In a small bowl, stir together peanut butter and chocolate. Place 3 banana slices, slightly overlapping, in center of 8 dough rounds. Top each with a heaping teaspoonful of peanut butter mixture. Moisten edges of dough with water. Top with remaining dough rounds. Crimp with a fork dipped in flour to seal.
3. Fill a cast-iron skillet halfway full with oil, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 360°. Working in batches (do not overcrowd skillet), fry pies, turning occasionally, until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Remove pies using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with sugar; serve immediately.
FRIED SHRIMP AND PIMIENTO CHEESE GRITS CAKES

Makes 12
With three of our best-loved foods wrapped up in one package, we can't get enough of these cheesy cakes.

1½ pounds jumbo shrimp, peeled, deveined, and cooked
4 cups water
4 cups chicken broth
4 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
2 teaspoons onion powder
2 teaspoons hot sauce
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
2 cups quick-cooking grits*
1½ cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1 (7-ounce) jar diced pimientos, drained
⅓ cup heavy whipping cream
1½ tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
Vegetable oil, for frying
1½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup plain yellow cornmeal
Pimiento Cheese (recipe follows), to serve

1. In a medium bowl, stir together all ingredients until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for up to 5 days.

PIMIENTO CHEESE

Makes about 3 cups

3 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
¾ cup mayonnaise
1 (7-ounce) jar diced pimientos, drained
1 teaspoon hot sauce
½ teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon onion powder
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1. In a medium bowl, stir together all ingredients until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for up to 5 days.
FRIED CHICKEN AND EGG BISCUITS
Makes 4

Buttery homemade biscuits stacked with crispy chicken, creamy pimiento cheese, and a fried egg? Count us in.

1 cup whole buttermilk, divided
1 tablespoon hot sauce
2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
8 chicken tenders
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed and divided
3 cups self-rising flour, divided
Vegetable oil, for frying
Pimiento Cheese (recipe on page 43)
4 fried eggs

1. In a large bowl, stir together ¼ cup buttermilk, hot sauce, and 1 teaspoon salt. Add chicken; cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 450°. In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, place 2 tablespoons cold butter; place skillet in oven to preheat.
3. In a large bowl, stir together 2 cups flour and ½ teaspoon salt. Using a pastry blender, cut in remaining ½ cup cold butter until mixture is crumbly. Stir in remaining ¾ cup buttermilk just until combined.
4. On a lightly floured surface, pat dough to ½-inch thickness. Cut dough into quarters, and stack quarters one on top of each other. Pat dough to ½-inch thickness; repeat procedure 3 times. Using a 4½-inch round cutter, cut 4 biscuits, and carefully place in hot skillet.
5. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool to room temperature; cut biscuits in half.
6. In a shallow dish, whisk together ¼ teaspoon salt and remaining 1 cup flour. Remove chicken from bowl, discarding buttermilk mixture. Dredge chicken in flour mixture, shaking off excess. Let chicken stand on a wire rack at room temperature for 30 minutes.
7. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, pour oil to a depth of 1 inch, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 365°.
8. Add chicken to hot oil, and fry until golden brown and a meat thermometer inserted in center registers 165°. 6 to 7 minutes. Remove chicken from oil, and let drain on paper towels.

COR N PONE
Makes about 12

Also known as hot water cornbread, corn pone is as simple and Southern as it gets. We added Cheddar cheese to this version for an extra note of sharp flavor.

2 cups plain yellow cornmeal
½ cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
2 teaspoons sugar
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
1¼ cups boiling water
2 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted
Vegetable oil, for frying

1. In a medium bowl, combine cornmeal, cheese, sugar, salt, and baking powder. Add 1¼ cups boiling water and melted butter, stirring until combined. (Mixture should be thick but not dry.)
2. In 12-inch cast-iron skillet, pour oil to a depth of ½ inch, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 375°.
3. Scoop heaping tablespoons of cornmeal mixture, and shape into flattened rounds. (Press with fingers to leave marks.) Fry in hot oil, turning once, until crisp and golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Serve hot.
FRIED PORK CUTLETS WITH BUTTERMILK-THYME GRAVY
Makes 6 servings

Cornmeal and grits join forces to give these golden-brown cutlets an applause-worthy crunchy crust.

1 cup stone-ground cornmeal
¼ cup quick-cooking grits
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper, plus more for sprinkling
1 cup whole buttermilk
6 boneless pork sirloin cutlets
4 to 6 tablespoons canola oil, divided

Buttermilk-Thyme Gravy (recipe follows)

1. In a shallow dish, stir together cornmeal, grits, garlic salt, ½ teaspoon kosher salt, and pepper. In another shallow dish, place buttermilk. Dip pork in buttermilk, letting excess drip off. Dredge in cornmeal mixture, shaking off excess.
2. In a large cast-iron skillet, heat 4 tablespoons oil over medium heat. Working in batches, fry pork, turning occasionally, until browned and crisp, 4 to 5 minutes per side. (Add remaining 2 tablespoons oil as needed.) Serve with Buttermilk-Thyme Gravy. Sprinkle with additional pepper.

BUTTERMILK-THYME GRAVY
Makes 2 cups

⅓ cup canola oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 cups whole buttermilk
2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme

1. In an 8-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic; cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add flour, and whisk to combine. Cook until browned and bubbly, about 3 minutes. Whisk in buttermilk and thyme; cook until thickened, about 3 minutes.
MAIN DISHES

Turn to your trusty cast-iron skillet for hearty and delicious main dishes that are sure to please every palate.
CHEESY MEATLOAF WITH CARAMELIZED ONIONS

Makes about 6 servings

Caramelized onions and chipotle purée add layers of flavor to our twist on this classic.

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1½ cups chopped yellow onion
2 tablespoons water
2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
½ cup bread crumbs
¼ cup whole milk
1 pound ground sirloin
½ pound ground pork
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
½ cup cubed Gouda cheese
½ cup cubed smoked Cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
¼ cup ketchup
1 tablespoon firmly packed light brown sugar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon chipotle purée (see Kitchen Tip)
½ cup shredded Gouda cheese
½ cup shredded smoked Cheddar cheese
Garnish: ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a medium skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned, about 3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add 2 tablespoons water and ¼ teaspoon salt; cook, stirring occasionally, until deep golden brown, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.
3. In a large bowl, combine bread crumbs and milk; let stand for 5 minutes. Add caramelized onions, beef, pork, eggs, cubed Gouda, cubed Cheddar, thyme, and remaining 1¾ teaspoons salt, gently stirring until well combined.
4. In a small bowl, stir together ketchup, brown sugar, Worcestershire, and chipotle purée until smooth. Add half of ketchup mixture to beef mixture, stirring to combine. Gently press beef mixture into a 8x4-inch cast-iron loaf pan.
5. Bake until a meat thermometer inserted in center registers 160°, about 1 hour and 20 minutes. Remove from oven. Carefully tilt pan over a bowl to drain; discard drippings. Top meatloaf with shredded Gouda and shredded Cheddar.
6. Bake until cheeses are melted, about 7 minutes more. Let cool for 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with pepper, if desired. Serve with remaining ketchup mixture.

Kitchen Tip

To make chipotle purée, place 1 (7-ounce) can chipotle peppers in adobo sauce in the container of a blender; blend until smooth. Freeze remaining purée in tablespoon dollops for future use.
CLASSIC TOMATO PIE

Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

Fresh summer tomatoes and basil add bright flavor to this savory pie. Salting the tomatoes before using helps draw out extra liquid that could result in a soggy pie.

½ (14.1-ounce) package refrigerated piecrusts
2 ½ pounds assorted heirloom tomatoes, sliced ¼ inch thick and seeded
2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
1 cup freshly grated Gruyère cheese
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
¾ cup mayonnaise
1 large egg, lightly beaten
½ cup fresh basil, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 cup chopped red onion

Garnish: fresh basil, chopped fresh thyme

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 12-inch circle. Transfer to a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, pressing into bottom and up sides; crimp as desired. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Place tomato slices on paper towels; sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.
4. In a medium bowl, stir together cheeses, mayonnaise, egg, basil, thyme, pepper, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Sprinkle onion over prepared crust; top with one-third of cheese mixture. Layer half of tomatoes in an overlapping pattern; top with one-third of cheese mixture. Repeat with remaining tomatoes and remaining cheese mixture.
5. Bake until golden brown and center is set, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool completely before cutting. Serve at room temperature. Garnish with basil and thyme, if desired.

SMOKED CHICKEN AND TARRAGON POT PIE

Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

Smoked chicken from a local barbecue shop not only makes this pot pie easy to put together, it adds a delicious depth of flavor.

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 cup (1-inch) peeled cubed russet potatoes
1 cup chopped fresh green beans
¼ cup fresh or frozen corn kernels
½ cup chopped carrot
½ cup chopped onion
¼ cup chopped green onion

4 ounces cream cheese, softened
1¼ cups chicken broth
1 cup half-and-half
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
3 cups pulled smoked chicken
1 (14.1-ounce) package refrigerated piecrusts
1 teaspoon water

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add potatoes, green beans, corn, carrot, onion, and green onion; cook until vegetables are just softened, 6 to 7 minutes. Stir in cream cheese until melted.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together broth, half-and-half, flour, tarragon, salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper; stir mixture into vegetables, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 3 minutes. Stir in chicken, and remove from heat.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough into a 12-inch circle. Transfer to a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, pressing into bottom and up sides. Spoon filling into prepared crust. On a lightly floured surface, roll remaining dough into a 12-inch circle. Place on top of filling, pressing edges to seal. Cut four slits in top of dough to release steam. Brush dough with 1 teaspoon water, and sprinkle with remaining ½ teaspoon pepper.
5. Bake until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly, about 45 minutes. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.
CHERRY COLA BARBECUE PORK

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Cherry-flavored Cheerwine has been a favorite in North Carolina since L.D. Peeler created it more than 100 years ago. Used as the braising liquid for a pork shoulder, it makes out-of-this-world pulled pork barbecue.

1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon chili powder
1½ teaspoons garlic powder
¾ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon ground coriander
1 (5-pound) pork shoulder or Boston butt
2 cups fresh cherries, pitted
2 (12-ounce) bottles cherry cola*
½ cup ketchup
¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
Hamburger buns, Pickled Red Onions (recipe follows), and pickle slices, to serve

1. In a small bowl, stir together salt, chili powder, garlic powder, pepper, and coriander. Season pork with spice mixture. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.

2. Preheat oven to 450°.

3. In a large Dutch oven, place pork and cherries.

4. Bake for 45 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325°. Add cola; cover with foil, and cut small vents in foil. Bake until pork is fork-tender and a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 185°, about 2½ hours more. Remove from Dutch oven, and let stand for 15 minutes. Using 2 forks, shred pork, discarding fat and bones; reserve cooking liquid.

5. In Dutch oven, bring cooking liquid, ketchup, brown sugar, Worcestershire, and mustard to a boil over high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 20 minutes. Add pork to sauce, tossing to coat. Serve on buns with Pickled Red Onions and pickle slices.

*We used Cheerwine.

PICKLED RED ONIONS

Makes about 2 cups

2 cups thinly sliced red onion
2 cups water
1 cup apple cider vinegar
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a small enamel-coated Dutch oven, bring all ingredients to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook for 1 minute; remove from heat, and let cool completely. Cover and refrigerate for up to 5 days.
GRILLED STEAK, POTATOES, AND SUMMER SQUASH
Makes 4 to 6 servings

Feta cheese adds a salty zip to this easy meal.

8 small red potatoes (about 1 pound)
4 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
2½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
2 medium yellow squash, halved lengthwise
2 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise
1½ teaspoons ground black pepper, divided
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
½ teaspoon lemon zest
1 small clove garlic, minced
1 (1½-pound) flank steak (about 1 inch thick)
¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

Garnish: chopped fresh parsley, fresh oregano

1. In a medium saucepan, bring potatoes and water to cover by 1 inch to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat, and simmer until tender, about 8 minutes. Drain, and let cool. Cut potatoes in half crosswise.

2. Brush a cast-iron grill pan with 1 tablespoon oil, and heat over medium-high heat.

3. In a large bowl, toss together potatoes, 1 tablespoon oil, and ½ teaspoon salt. Cook potatoes, cut side down, turning occasionally, until grill marks form, about 3 minutes. Remove from pan.

4. Lightly score cut side of squash and zucchini. Brush with 1 tablespoon oil, and sprinkle with ¾ teaspoon salt and ¾ teaspoon pepper. Cook, turning occasionally, until crisp-tender, about 8 minutes. Cut into 1½-inch pieces.

5. In a medium bowl, stir together potatoes, squash, zucchini, oregano, parsley, vinegar, zest, garlic, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

6. Brush grill pan with remaining 1 tablespoon oil, and heat over medium-high heat. Sprinkle steak with remaining 1 teaspoon salt and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper. Cook steak for 4 minutes per side for medium-rare or to desired degree of doneness. Let stand for 5 minutes before slicing; serve with potato mixture. Sprinkle with feta; garnish with parsley and oregano, if desired.

CHICKEN THIGHS WITH PEACHES AND GREEN TOMATOES
Makes 4 servings

We love the contrast of crispy chicken skin with sweet fruit in this flavorful supper.

4 (6-ounce) boneless chicken thighs
½ cup soy sauce
¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 fresh peaches, cut into wedges
2 green tomatoes, cut into wedges
¼ cup sliced red onion
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
2 tablespoons canola oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon honey
½ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a large resealable plastic bag, combine chicken, soy sauce, brown sugar, ginger, and garlic. Seal bag, tossing gently to combine. Refrigerate for 2 hours.

2. Preheat grill to high heat (400° to 450°). Place a 12-inch cast-iron skillet on grill to heat for 15 minutes. Spray skillet with nonflammable cooking spray.

3. Add peaches and tomatoes to skillet; cook, stirring occasionally, until just lightly charred, 1 to 2 minutes. In a medium bowl, stir together peaches, tomatoes, onion, cilantro, oil, lemon juice, honey, and salt until well combined.

4. Drain chicken, discarding marinade. Add chicken to skillet skin side down; cook until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 165°, about 5 minutes per side. Return to skillet, and serve immediately with peach mixture.
BARBECUE RIBS

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Generously seasoned with a traditional Southern barbecue rub, these saucy baby back ribs remind us of summers gone by.

¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 tablespoon chili powder
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 (2½- to 3-pound) rack baby back ribs, halved
3 large sweet onions, sliced

Chipotle Barbecue Sauce (recipe follows)

1. In a small bowl, combine brown sugar, chili powder, salt, cumin, and garlic powder. Rub ribs with mixture. Cover tightly with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 350°.
3. Heat a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat until hot. Add ribs, meat side down, and cook until browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove ribs from pan, and set aside. Add onion to pan; cook until wilted, 3 to 4 minutes. Place ribs, bone side down, on top of onion.
4. Bake, covered, for 2 hours.
5. Heat a cast-iron grill pan over medium-high heat. Add ribs, meat side down; cook until browned, 5 to 6 minutes per side, brushing with Chipotle Barbecue Sauce during last 2 minutes of cooking. Serve ribs with additional sauce and cooked onions.

CHIPOTLE BARBECUE SAUCE
Makes about 3 cups

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
½ cup chopped sweet onion
1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, minced
1 tablespoon adobo sauce (from can)
1 (18-ounce) bottle barbecue sauce

1. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion; sauté until tender, 4 to 5 minutes. Add chipotle pepper and adobo sauce; cook for 1 minute. Add barbecue sauce; cook over medium-low heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
ORANGE-GLAZED PORK CHOPS WITH GREEN BEANS AND TOMATOES
Make 4 servings

Orange marmalade gives the glaze a deep citrus flavor, balanced by fresh mint.

- ½ pound fresh French green beans, trimmed
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
- ⅓ cup orange marmalade
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 (6-ounce) bone-in center-cut pork chops
- 1 tablespoon canola oil

Garnish: fresh mint, flaked sea salt

1. Preheat grill to high heat (400°F to 450°F). Place a 12-inch cast-iron skillet on grill to heat for 15 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, toss together green beans, tomatoes, olive oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper. Add mixture to skillet; cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables start to blister, about 4 minutes. Remove from skillet.
3. In a small bowl, stir together marmalade, mint, soy sauce, and garlic. Sprinkle pork chops with remaining ½ teaspoon salt and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper.
4. Heat canola oil in skillet. Add pork chops to skillet; cook, basting frequently with marmalade mixture, until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 140°F, about 3 minutes per side. Serve immediately with vegetables. Garnish with mint and sea salt, if desired.

TACO PIE
Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

With layers of tortillas, beans, and spiced ground beef, this is sure to become a new family favorite.

- 1 pound ground beef
- ½ cup red enchilada sauce
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground chipotle chile pepper
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (16-ounce) can refried beans
- 1 (4-ounce) can spicy Hatch green chiles
- 8 (10-inch) flour tortillas
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar-Jack cheese blend, divided
- Pico de gallo and sour cream, to serve

Garnish: sliced avocado, sliced radish, torn fresh cilantro

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, cook beef over medium heat until browned and crumbly; drain. Transfer to a large bowl; stir in enchilada sauce, salt, cumin, chipotle pepper, chili powder, and black pepper. Wipe skillet clean.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together refried beans and chiles.
4. Cut three tortillas in half. Line sides of skillet with halved tortillas, rounded edges up. Place one tortilla in bottom of skillet. Spoon 2 cups beef filling onto tortilla, and sprinkle with ½ cup cheese. Top with another tortilla, and spread with 1 cup bean mixture. Repeat layers once. Top with remaining tortilla, and sprinkle with remaining 1 cup cheese.
5. Bake until hot and bubbly, about 20 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes. Top with avocado, radish, and cilantro, if desired. Serve with pico de gallo and sour cream.
CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS
Makes 8 servings

In this down-home and delicious dish, from-scratch dumplings are cooked in flavorful broth before the shredded chicken is stirred in. This gives the dumplings more room in the pot to evenly cook.

4 bone-in skin-on chicken breasts
4 bone-in skin-on chicken thighs
2 (32-ounce) cartons unsalted chicken broth
2½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
5 stalks celery, roughly chopped (about 2 cups)
4 medium carrots, roughly chopped (about 2 cups)
1 medium onion, roughly chopped (about 1½ cups)
2 cups all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
3 tablespoons all-vegetable shortening
¾ cup whole buttermilk
⅓ cup chopped fresh parsley
2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves

1. In a large Dutch oven, bring chicken, broth, and 2 teaspoons salt to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer until tender, about 40 minutes.
2. Remove chicken from broth; let stand until cool enough to handle, about 15 minutes. Shred chicken into bite-size pieces, discarding skin and bones.
3. Bring broth to a boil over high heat; stir in celery, carrot, and onion.
4. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Using a pastry blender or your fingers, cut in shortening until mixture is crumbly. Add buttermilk, parsley, and thyme, stirring with a fork until dry ingredients are moistened.
5. Turn out dough onto a heavily floured surface, and gently knead 4 or 5 times. Pat dough to ½-inch thickness. Using a pastry wheel, cut dough into 1½-inch pieces. Drop dumplings into boiling broth. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook until desired consistency is reached, 8 to 10 minutes. Gently stir in chicken. Serve immediately.
TURKEY TETRAZZINI
Makes 4 to 6 servings

Thanks to cast iron, taking this one-skillet meal from the stovetop straight to the oven means you can spend less time cleaning and more time going back for seconds.

½ pound linguini
5 cups cold water
2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
½ cup chopped sweet onion
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup chopped carrot
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 cups whole milk
½ cup heavy whipping cream
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
3 cups shredded cooked turkey
½ cup frozen peas
¼ cup panko (Japanese bread crumbs)

Garnish: chopped fresh parsley

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, bring linguini, 5 cups cold water, and 1 teaspoon salt to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Cook, stirring occasionally, until almost tender, about 7 minutes. Drain, and set aside.
3. Wipe skillet clean; add butter, and melt over medium heat. Add mushrooms, onion, celery, and carrot; cook until vegetables begin to soften, 5 to 7 minutes. Sprinkle with flour; cook for 1 minute, stirring frequently. Whisk in milk, cream, pepper, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt; bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture begins to thicken. Remove from heat; stir in cheese. Stir in linguini, turkey, and peas. Cover with foil.
4. Bake until heated through, about 20 minutes. Increase oven temperature to broil. Uncover and sprinkle with bread crumbs. Broil on middle rack of oven until bread crumbs are lightly browned, about 1 minute. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving. Garnish with parsley, if desired.

GARLIC CHICKEN WITH RED POTATOES
Makes 6 servings

Trust us—you’ll want plenty of crusty bread to sop up the pan juice from this savory supper.

1 pound baby red potatoes, halved
4 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
2 tablespoons unsalted butter

6 bone-in skin-on chicken thighs
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 small red onion, sliced
1 head garlic, halved
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
½ cup dry white wine
½ cup low-sodium chicken broth
1 tablespoon whole-grain mustard
½ cup shredded Asiago cheese

Garnish: fresh thyme, ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a Dutch oven, bring potatoes, 3 teaspoons salt, and water to cover to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook until slightly tender, about 10 minutes; drain.
3. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sprinkle both sides of chicken with pepper and remaining 1 teaspoon salt; add to skillet. Sear until golden brown, about 5 minutes per side. Remove from skillet.
4. Add onion and garlic halves to skillet; sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Remove garlic halves. Sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Remove garlic halves. Stir in flour and thyme; cook for 1 minute. Stir in wine, broth, and mustard; cook until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in cheese until melted. Add chicken, potatoes, and garlic halves to skillet.
5. Bake until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165°, 30 to 35 minutes. Garnish with thyme and pepper, if desired.
DEEP-DISH SUPREME PIZZA

Makes 6 to 8 servings

Loaded with all the best supreme toppings, this skillet pizza is as good as it gets.

Pizza Dough (recipe follows)

DEEP-DISH SUPREME PIZZA

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons yellow grits
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
1 pound Italian sausage, cooked and crumbled
6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 green bell pepper, seeded and sliced
1 cup sliced fresh baby portobello mushrooms
½ cup pepperoni slices
¼ cup sliced black olives
1½ cups pasta sauce
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
Garnish: chopped fresh oregano

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. Lightly punch down Pizza Dough. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface. Cover and let rest for 5 minutes.
4. Add sausage, bacon, onion, bell pepper, mushrooms, pepperoni, and olives. Spread with pasta sauce. Sprinkle with Parmesan, oregano, pepper, and remaining ½ cup mozzarella.
5. Bake until crust and cheese are golden brown, about 25 minutes. Let rest for 5 to 10 minutes before slicing. Garnish with oregano, if desired.

PIZZA DOUGH

Makes 1 (14-inch) crust

1½ cups warm water (105° to 110°)
1 (0.25-ounce) package active dry yeast
1 teaspoon sugar
3¼ cups all-purpose flour, divided
2 tablespoons plain yellow cornmeal
1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
2 teaspoons kosher salt

1. In a large bowl, stir together 1½ cups warm water, yeast, and sugar. Let stand until mixture is foamy, about 5 minutes.
2. Add 2 cups flour, cornmeal, 1 tablespoon oil, and salt; beat with a mixer at medium speed for 2 minutes. Add 1 cup flour, stirring with a spoon until a soft sticky dough forms.
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and knead until smooth and elastic, 5 to 6 minutes, using remaining ¼ cup flour as needed to keep dough from sticking to hands.
4. Lightly brush inside of a large bowl with remaining 2 teaspoons oil. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1 hour and 15 minutes.
SMOKED BRISKET SLOPPY JOES
Makes 4 to 6 servings

Who doesn’t love sloppy joes? Made with leftover brisket, this version is one your family will ask for again and again.

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
⅔ cup chopped onion
1½ cups tomato sauce
½ cup ketchup
3 tablespoons bread-and-butter pickle juice
2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon tomato paste
2 teaspoons yellow mustard
½ teaspoon onion powder
½ teaspoon hot sauce
4 cups chopped smoked brisket
½ cup chopped bread-and-butter pickles
Toasted hamburger buns and bread-and-butter pickle slices, to serve

1. In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook until lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Add tomato sauce, ketchup, pickle juice, brown sugar, Worcestershire, tomato paste, mustard, onion powder, and hot sauce. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer for 6 minutes. Stir in brisket and pickles. Cook until heated through, about 5 minutes. Serve on toasted buns with pickles.

SAUSAGE AND GREENS CORNBREAD PIZZA
Makes 4 to 6 servings

We took pizza to a deliciously Southern level with a cornbread crust and cheesy sausage and collard greens topping.

6 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
3 links mild Italian pork sausage, casings removed
¼ cup chopped onion
1¼ cups plain yellow cornmeal
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
1½ cups whole buttermilk
1 large egg
½ cup pizza sauce
2 cups chopped fresh turnip greens
4 ounces whole-milk mozzarella cheese, diced
½ cup shredded smoked Cheddar cheese
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat. Add sausage and onion; cook until sausage is browned, about 8 minutes. Remove sausage mixture using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels.
3. Add 2 tablespoons oil to skillet. Place skillet in oven until oil is hot, about 5 minutes.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda. In a small bowl, whisk together buttermilk, egg, and remaining 2 tablespoons oil. Make a well in center of dry ingredients; stir in buttermilk mixture until combined. Slowly pour batter into hot oil in skillet.
5. Bake until top of cornbread begins to feel set, about 6 minutes. Spread pizza sauce onto cornbread. Top with turnip greens, sausage mixture, cheeses, and red pepper. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 15 minutes more. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.
Whether packed with cheese or overflowing with veggies, these savory sides are the missing piece to any Southern supper.
PERFECT COLLARD GREENS

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Once a dish born out of hard times, the combination of greens, ham hock, onion, and just a touch of vinegar is a prize to the palate of any Southerner.

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 large sweet onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, smashed
1 smoked ham hock
¾ cup bourbon
½ cup apple cider vinegar
8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
2 bay leaves
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
⅛ to ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper, to taste
2 pounds collard greens, stemmed and roughly chopped
Cornbread, to serve

1. In a large Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic; cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add ham hock; cook, turning occasionally, until browned on all sides. Stir in bourbon and vinegar; cook for 1 minute, scraping browned bits from bottom of pot with a wooden spoon. Add broth, bay leaves, salt, black pepper, and red pepper; bring to a boil.

2. Reduce heat to medium. Add collard greens in batches. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. Discard bay leaves. Shred ham hock, and stir into greens. Serve with cornbread.

Kitchen Tips

• Using bourbon as part of your cooking liquid adds a subtle smokiness and sweetness, while the vinegar gives an acidic brightness to cut through the richness of the greens.

• Greens can be served with or without the cooking liquid, called potlikker. Save any leftover potlikker to cook grits, add to soups, or use anywhere broth is called for.

• You can omit the ham hock and substitute vegetable broth for a vegetarian option.
FIELD PEA AND CHARD SAUTÉ
Makes 6 to 8 servings

Dozens of varieties of field peas are adored in the South—Big Boy, Red Ripper, and purple hull to name a few. We took classic black-eyed peas and lady peas and paired them with Swiss chard and a rich seasoning of bacon for a hearty summer staple.

6 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
1 small yellow onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
3 cups fresh black-eyed peas
3 cups fresh lady peas
3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
3 cups chopped Swiss chard leaves (about 1 bunch)
1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
Garnish: crushed red pepper

1. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp, about 12 minutes. Remove bacon using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels, reserving drippings in skillet.
2. Add onion to skillet; cook until tender, about 6 minutes. Add garlic; cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in peas, broth, salt, and black pepper, and cook until peas are tender, about 30 minutes.
3. Working in batches, stir in Swiss chard, cream, and red pepper. Cook until greens are wilted and sauce is slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Top with bacon, and garnish with red pepper, if desired.

BROCCOLI-RICE CASSEROLE
Makes about 6 servings

This easy-to-prepare side is hearty and comforting, saving you time without sacrificing flavor.

5 cups roughly chopped fresh broccoli florets
1 1/2 cups converted rice*, cooked according to package directions
2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 tablespoon Creole mustard
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 cup fresh bread crumbs, toasted
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Fill a medium saucepan with water, and bring to a boil. Add broccoli, and cook until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Drain.
3. In a large bowl, combine broccoli, cooked rice, 1 cup Cheddar, sour cream, mayonnaise, mustard, salt, onion powder, garlic powder, and pepper. Spoon mixture into a 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Loosely cover with foil.
4. Bake until bubbly, 25 to 30 minutes. Sprinkle with bread crumbs, Parmesan, and remaining 1 cup Cheddar. Bake, uncovered, until cheese is melted, about 8 minutes more.

*We used Uncle Ben’s Converted Rice.
LOADED MAC AND CHEESE

Makes 10 to 12 servings

We love how the super-cheesy sauce clings to every nook and cranny of the cavatappi pasta in this crowd-pleasing dish. Can’t find cavatappi? The same amount of ziti or classic elbow macaroni will work.

¼ cup unsalted butter
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 clove garlic, minced
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
½ teaspoon dry mustard
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
4 cups whole milk
1 cup sour cream
4 cups shredded Colby-Jack cheese blend, divided
1 pound cavatappi pasta, cooked according to package directions
4 tablespoons chopped fresh chives, divided
½ cup panko (Japanese bread crumbs)
4 slices thick-cut bacon, cooked and crumbled
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in flour, garlic, salt, Worcestershire, mustard, and pepper; cook for 2 minutes. Whisk in milk and sour cream until smooth; bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 4 minutes. Whisk in 3½ cups cheese until melted. Stir in cooked pasta and 2 tablespoons chives until combined.
3. In a small bowl, stir together bread crumbs, bacon, melted butter, remaining ½ cup cheese, and remaining 2 tablespoons chives. Sprinkle over pasta mixture.
4. Bake until golden brown and bubbly, 15 to 20 minutes.
Kitchen Tip
Be careful not to boil the squash too long—you want it to hold its shape when you fold in the pimiento cheese.
PIMIENTO CHEESE SQUASH CASSEROLE
Makes about 8 servings

Ritz crackers, crumbled and mixed with Cheddar cheese, make a crunchy topping for this tasty casserole.

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
- 10 cups sliced yellow squash (about 3 pounds)
- 6 cups water
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 2/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 (7-ounce) jar diced pimientos, drained
- 1/3 cup crushed buttery round crackers

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Coat a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with butter.
2. In a large Dutch oven, bring squash, 6 cups water, onion, and 1 teaspoon salt to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until almost tender, about 7 minutes. Drain.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together 1 cup cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, pepper, egg, and remaining ¾ teaspoon salt. Add squash mixture and pimientos; stir well. Pour into prepared skillet. Sprinkle with crushed crackers and remaining 1 cup cheese.
4. Bake until mixture is bubbly and cheese is melted, about 25 minutes.

SUMMER SUCCOTASH WITH FRESH TOMATOES
Makes about 10 servings

This traditional Southern favorite makes the most of your garden’s summer bounty.

- 2 pounds shelled fresh lima beans
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 3 cups water
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 4 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
- 3 cups fresh corn kernels
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

1. In a large Dutch oven, bring beans, broth, 3 cups water, and 1 1/2 teaspoons salt to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat, and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain, reserving 1 cup cooking liquid.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove bacon using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels, reserving drippings in skillet.
3. Add corn, onion, and garlic to skillet; cook until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add beans, pepper, reserved 1 cup cooking liquid, and remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons salt. Cover and cook over medium-low heat for 10 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and vinegar; cook until tomatoes begin to soften, about 8 minutes. Sprinkle with chives and bacon. Garnish with pepper, if desired.
HOME-STYLE CREAMED CORN
Makes 6 to 8 servings

This down-home dish is bursting with fresh corn flavor and a rich texture.

6 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
8 ears fresh yellow corn, kernels cut off and cobs reserved
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
Garnish: chopped fresh chives

1. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, about 10 minutes. Remove bacon using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels, reserving drippings in skillet.
2. Increase heat to medium-high. Add corn kernels; cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Stir in cream, salt, and pepper.
3. Using the back of a knife, scrape milk and remaining pulp from corn cobs into skillet. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 12 minutes.
4. Remove from heat, and stir in chives. Cover and let stand for 2 minutes; stir in bacon before serving. Garnish with chives, if desired.

Kitchen Tip
Scraping the cobs releases the vegetable’s liquid, known as corn milk. This liquid is full of starches that help thicken the creamed corn and add flavor. We recommend using the sweetest varieties of corn available, such as Silver Queen and Ambrosia.
BLACK-EYED PEAS
Makes 8 to 10 servings

Ham hock adds smoky flavor to these tender summer peas.

1½ pounds fresh black-eyed peas
1 smoked ham hock
4 cups water
1 cup unsalted chicken broth
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper

1. In a medium Dutch oven, bring all ingredients to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium; simmer, stirring occasionally, until peas are tender, 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes. For added flavor, remove and chop meat from ham hock, and stir into the beans before serving.

BAKED BEANS WITH COLA AND PEACHES
Makes about 8 servings

With fresh fruit, cola, and hot sauce, these baked beans are a little bit hot and a little bit sweet.

6 slices thick-cut bacon
1 cup chopped onion
½ cup chopped celery
1 large clove garlic, minced
1 (15.5-ounce) can navy beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15.5-ounce) can pinto beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15.5-ounce) can dark red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15.5-ounce) can light red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
2 cups (¼-inch-thick) peeled sliced fresh peaches, halved crosswise
1½ cups ketchup
1 (12-ounce) bottle cola
¼ cup mustard
1½ teaspoons smoked paprika
½ teaspoon hot sauce
½ teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until almost crisp. Remove bacon, and let drain on paper towels, reserving drippings in skillet.
3. Add onion, celery, and garlic to skillet; cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Add beans and peaches.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together ketchup, cola, mustard, paprika, hot sauce, salt, and pepper. Pour ketchup mixture over beans mixture, stirring until coated. Arrange bacon slices on top.
5. Bake until bubbly, about 50 minutes, occasionally spooning liquid over bacon and beans. Let stand for 20 minutes before serving.
ROASTED POTATO AND GREEN BEAN SALAD

Makes about 6 servings

We gave your typical potato salad an upgrade by roasting the base ingredients and tossing them with a tangy mustard vinaigrette.

1½ pounds red new potatoes, halved
1½ pounds yellow new potatoes, halved
2 tablespoons canola oil
¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
½ teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
1 pound haricots verts, halved crosswise
3 tablespoons stone-ground mustard
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, toss together potatoes, oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper.
3. Bake for 10 minutes; stir. Add haricots verts. Bake, stirring occasionally, until potatoes and beans are tender, about 25 minutes more. Remove from oven. Add mustard, vinegar, thyme, remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper; gently toss until coated. Serve warm or at room temperature.
CHARRED CORN AND POBLANO SALAD
Makes about 6 servings

This salad is also a delicious topping for seafood, grilled chicken, or pork.

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
- 1 cup coarsely chopped red onion
- 1 cup coarsely chopped seeded poblano pepper
- 4 cups fresh corn kernels (from about 8 ears corn)
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ cup sliced radish

1. Brush a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with 1 tablespoon oil. Heat over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium. Add onion and poblano; cook, stirring frequently, until mixture begins to turn dark brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from skillet.
2. Brush skillet with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Add corn; cook, stirring frequently, until corn begins to turn dark brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Add garlic; cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat.
3. Stir in onion mixture, tomatoes, cilantro, lime juice, salt, and pepper. Top with radish just before serving.

ULTIMATE BAKED GRITS
Makes 4 to 6 servings

If grits are an art form—and we firmly believe they are—these cheesy baked grits are a most delicious masterpiece.

- 4 cups whole milk
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup old-fashioned grits (not instant)
- 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- ¾ cup freshly grated Gruyère cheese
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a large saucepan, bring milk to a boil over medium-high heat. Add butter, stirring until melted. Gradually add grits, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add cream cheese, stirring until melted. Remove from heat; sprinkle with salt and pepper.
3. With a mixer at medium speed, beat mixture for 2 minutes. Pour into a 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Pour melted butter over top. Sprinkle with cheeses.
4. Bake for 35 minutes. Increase oven temperature to broil. Broil until lightly browned, about 1 minute.

Kitchen Tip

These extra-cheesy grits are also delicious with shredded sharp Cheddar cheese.
SOUTHERN SWEETS

These mouthwatering, easy-to-make skillet treats will delight any dessert lover.
Pineapple Upside-Down Rum Cakes

Makes 7

Dark rum and pecans add an extra hit of Southern flavor to these classic cakes.

Topping:
- ¾ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons dark rum
- 7 (¼-inch-thick) fresh pineapple rings
- ½ cup chopped pecans

Cake:
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup whole milk
- 1 tablespoon dark rum
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Syrup:
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup dark rum

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. For topping: In a small saucepan, heat brown sugar and butter over medium heat until sugar is dissolved and butter is melted. Add rum, and bring to a boil. Divide mixture among 7 wells of a cast-iron mini cake pan. Place a pineapple ring in each well, and sprinkle with pecans.
3. For cake: In a large bowl, beat butter with a mixer at medium speed until creamy. With mixer on low speed, gradually add granulated sugar. Increase mixer speed to high, and beat until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add egg, beating well.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. In another small bowl, whisk together milk, rum, and vanilla. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined. Increase mixer speed to high, and beat for 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Gently spoon batter onto topping, taking care to keep pineapple rings centered.
5. Bake until cakes are golden brown and spring back when lightly touched in center, about 20 minutes. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Run a thin knife around edges of each well. Carefully invert pan onto a serving plate. Replace any glaze that sticks to pan.
6. For syrup: In a small saucepan, bring granulated sugar, ¼ cup water, and rum to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, and simmer for 15 minutes. Serve cakes warm or at room temperature with warm rum syrup.
STRAWBERRY SKILLET CAKE
Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

This simple and stunning cake makes an easy weeknight dessert.

½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1¼ cups sugar, divided
2 large eggs
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
1⅓ cups all-purpose flour
1¼ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
½ cup sour cream
1 pound fresh strawberries, halved

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 9-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter and 1 cup sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with sour cream, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in strawberries. Spread batter in prepared skillet. Sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup sugar.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

COFFEE-BOURBON SKILLET COOKIE
Makes 8 to 10 servings

Packing a one-two punch of coffee and bourbon, this skillet cookie is sure to wake you up.

3 tablespoons bourbon
2 teaspoons espresso powder
⅔ cup unsalted butter, softened
1¼ cups firmly packed light brown sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 large egg
1⅓ cups all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon kosher salt
2 (4-ounce) bars bittersweet chocolate, chopped and divided
¾ cup toasted pecans, chopped
Coffee ice cream, to serve
Garnish: toasted pecans, chocolate-coated espresso beans

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together bourbon and espresso powder until espresso is dissolved. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, beat butter, brown sugar, and vanilla with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, beating well.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with flour mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until combined after each addition. Fold in chocolate and pecans. Spread into prepared pan.
5. Bake until golden brown, about 40 minutes, loosely covering with foil during last 5 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Sprinkle with remaining 4 ounces chocolate. Let cool on a wire rack for 30 minutes. Sprinkle with toasted pecans and espresso beans, if desired. Serve with ice cream.
DOUBLE-BERRY COBBLER WITH ALMOND DROP BISCUITS

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Serve this biscuit-topped cobbler straight from the pan to keep it warm and bubbly.

3 cups fresh blueberries
3 cups fresh blackberries
1¼ cups sugar, divided
1 cup all-purpose flour, divided
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
¼ teaspoon almond extract
½ cup almond flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¾ teaspoon baking powder
6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
½ cup whole buttermilk
¼ cup sliced almonds
Vanilla ice cream, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a large bowl, stir together blueberries, blackberries, 1 cup sugar, ¼ cup all-purpose flour, lemon juice, and almond extract. Spoon berry mixture into a large enamel-coated cast-iron skillet or braiser.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together almond flour, salt, baking powder, remaining ¼ cup sugar, and remaining ¾ cup all-purpose flour. Using a pastry blender, cut in cold butter until mixture is crumbly. Add buttermilk, stirring until combined. Drop dough by heaping spoonfuls onto berry mixture. Sprinkle with almonds.
4. Bake until topping is golden brown and filling is bubbly, 40 to 50 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes. Serve with ice cream.

Kitchen Tip

Frozen whole berries work well if fresh are not available.
Baking time may increase by 5 to 10 minutes.
CHOCOLATE-COFFEE CHESS PIE
Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

With a sweet vanilla wafer crust and silky coffee-chocolate filling, this twist on chess pie was a favorite among our tasters.

Crust:
1. (11-ounce) box vanilla wafers, finely ground
2/3 cup unsalted butter, melted
1/3 cup granulated sugar

Filling:
3/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons plain cornmeal
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup bittersweet chocolate morsels
1/2 cup unsalted butter, cubed
1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
4 teaspoons espresso powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 large eggs

Garnish: unsweetened cocoa powder

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.
2. For crust: In a large bowl, toss together ground vanilla wafers, melted butter, and granulated sugar until moistened. Press mixture into bottom and up sides of prepared skillet.
3. For filling: In a large bowl, combine brown sugar, flour, cornmeal, and salt. Set aside.
4. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, microwave chocolate morsels, butter, and cream on medium in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth (about 2 minutes total). Stir in espresso powder and vanilla. Let cool slightly. Add chocolate mixture to brown sugar mixture, stirring until combined. Add eggs, one at a time, whisking just until combined after each addition. Spoon filling into prepared crust.
5. Bake until firm to the touch and puffed around the edges, about 35 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Refrigerate until chilled. Garnish with cocoa, if desired.

BLUEBERRY-PEACH COBBLER
Makes about 8 servings

Fresh peaches and blueberries melt together beneath a layer of buttery crumble.

6 cups sliced peeled fresh peaches (about 8 medium peaches)
1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries
1/2 cup plus 1 teaspoon sugar, divided

1/4 cup bourbon
2 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
Vanilla ice cream, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. In a large bowl, combine peaches, blueberries, 1/2 cup sugar, bourbon, cornstarch, and cinnamon. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, 1/4 cup sugar, baking powder, and salt. Using a pastry blender, cut in cold butter until mixture is crumbly. Add cream, stirring gently just until a dough forms.
3. Spoon fruit mixture into a 10-inch cast-iron skillet; crumble dough over top. Sprinkle with remaining 1 teaspoon sugar.
4. Bake until top is golden brown and filling is bubbly, about 45 minutes. Serve with ice cream.
BLUEBERRY-LEMON SWEET ROLLS

Makes 12

Studded with blueberries and drizzled with a tart lemon glaze, these sweet rolls will brighten up any breakfast table.

Dough:

- ½ cup whole milk
- ½ cup unsalted butter, cubed
- ½ cup warm water (105° to 110°)
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package active dry yeast
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Filling:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ½ cup blueberry preserves
- ½ cup fresh blueberries

Glaze:

- 3 cups confectioners’ sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. For dough: In a small saucepan, heat milk over medium heat, stirring frequently, just until bubbles form around edges of pan (do not boil). Remove from heat. Add butter; let cool to lukewarm.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, stir together ⅛ cup warm water and yeast. Let stand until mixture is foamy, about 5 minutes.

3. With mixer on medium speed, add milk mixture, 2 cups flour, granulated sugar, sour cream, egg, salt, and vanilla to yeast mixture; beat for 1 minute. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Add remaining 1½ cups flour; beat at medium speed for 3 minutes. (Dough will be sticky.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

4. Lightly punch down dough using floured hands. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 16x12-inch rectangle.

5. For filling: Brush dough with melted butter; sprinkle with granulated sugar. Spread preserves onto dough, and sprinkle with blueberries. Starting with one long side, roll up dough, jelly roll style; pinch seam to seal. Cut into 12 rolls.

6. Spray a 12-inch enamel-coated cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour. Place rolls in prepared skillet. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 40 minutes.

7. Preheat oven to 350°.

8. Bake until golden brown, about 35 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for 1 hour.

9. For glaze: In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners’ sugar, lemon zest and juice, and salt. Drizzle over rolls.
ZUCCHINI BREAD WITH BUTTERMILK-LEMON GLAZE
Makes 1 (8x4-inch) loaf

Fresh lemon and buttermilk give this quick bread bright flavor.

2  cups all-purpose flour
¼  cup sugar
½  cup chopped toasted pecans
2  teaspoons baking powder
½  teaspoon baking soda
½  teaspoon ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1  cup shredded zucchini
¾  cup whole milk
½  cup unsalted butter, melted
2  teaspoons lemon zest
1  large egg
⅓  cup confectioners’ sugar, sifted
2  teaspoons whole buttermilk
1  teaspoon fresh lemon juice

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray an 8x4-inch cast-iron loaf pan with baking spray with flour.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, pecans, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg, and salt. Stir in zucchini. In a small bowl, combine milk, melted butter, zest, and egg. Pour milk mixture over flour mixture; stir just until moistened. Spoon batter into prepared pan.
3. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 50 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
4. In a small bowl, combine confectioners’ sugar, buttermilk, and lemon juice. Drizzle over cooled bread.

PEACH SHORTCAKES WITH BUTTERMILK WHIPPED CREAM
Makes 8 servings

Buttermilk adds a sweet tang to the whipped cream, making this classic dessert irresistible.

Filling:
2  cups sliced peeled fresh peaches
½  cup sugar
2  teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Shortcakes:
5  tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and divided
2  cups all-purpose flour
6  tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons sugar, divided
2½  teaspoons baking powder
½  teaspoon kosher salt
½  cup whole milk
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
⅓  cup finely chopped peeled fresh peaches

Buttermilk Whipped Cream (recipe follows)

1. For filling: In a medium bowl, gently stir together sliced peaches, sugar, and lemon juice. Let stand for 1 hour.
2. For shortcakes: Preheat oven to 375°. Brush a cast-iron wedge pan with 1 tablespoon melted butter. Place pan in oven until hot, about 5 minutes.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, 6 tablespoons sugar, baking powder, and salt. In a small bowl, whisk together milk, vanilla, and remaining 4 tablespoons melted butter; stir in chopped peaches. Stir milk mixture into flour mixture until dry ingredients are moistened.
4. Turn out dough onto a floured surface, and knead 4 to 5 times just until dough comes together. Pat dough into an 8-inch circle. Cut into 8 wedges. Place dough in prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining 2 teaspoons sugar.
5. Bake until lightly browned, about 25 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Run a knife around edges of shortcakes; gently remove from pan. Let cool on a wire rack. Cut shortcakes in half, and fill with sliced peach mixture and Buttermilk Whipped Cream. Serve immediately.

BUTTERMILK WHIPPED CREAM
Makes about 3 cups

1½  cups heavy whipping cream, chilled
½  cup whole buttermilk, chilled
¼  cup sugar

1. In a large bowl, beat all ingredients with a mixer at high speed until stiff peaks form. Serve immediately, or refrigerate for up to 1 hour.
HUMMINGBIRD CAKE
Makes 1 (10-inch) cake

Hummingbird cake, whose roots can be traced to Jamaica, is said to be so sweet with fruit it will attract hummingbirds.

Cake:
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
⅓ cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1 cup vegetable oil
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
1¾ cups crushed pineapple, undrained
⅛ cup mashed banana
2 cups all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ teaspoon baking soda
¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¾ cup pecan halves, toasted and finely chopped

Frosting:
1 cup unsalted butter
4 cups confectioners’ sugar
⅛ teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ cup whole milk

Garnish: toasted pecans

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray.
2. For cake: In a large bowl, beat sugars and eggs with a mixer at medium speed until pale and thick, about 3 minutes. Add oil in a slow, steady stream, beating until combined. Stir in vanilla. Fold in pineapple and mashed banana.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking soda, and cinnamon. Gradually add flour mixture to egg mixture, stirring just until combined. Fold in pecans. Spread batter in prepared skillet.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool completely.
5. For frosting: In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Cook until butter turns a medium-brown color and has a nutty aroma, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat; strain. Let cool to room temperature. Refrigerate until butter holds its shape but is still soft, about 20 to 30 minutes.
6. In a large bowl, beat browned butter, confectioners’ sugar, and vanilla with a mixer at medium speed until smooth. Stir in milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, until a spreadable consistency is reached. Spread frosting on top of cake. Garnish with pecans, if desired.
Kitchen Tip

Be sure to give your carton of buttermilk a good shake before measuring and adding it to your recipes. It can settle and separate over time.
**CHOCOLATE MAYONNAISE CAKE WITH COLA FROSTING**

Makes 1 (10-inch) cake

*Mayonnaise keeps this cake ultra-moist while cola gives the frosting a melt-in-your-mouth texture.*

**Cake:**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda

**Frosting:**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Garnish:** chopped toasted pecans

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.
2. For cake: In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugars, cocoa, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Make a well in center of flour mixture; add 1 cup water, mayonnaise, and vanilla, and beat with a mixer at low speed until smooth. Pour batter into prepared pan.
3. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 35 minutes. Let cool completely in pan.
4. For frosting: In a medium bowl, combine confectioners’ sugar, cocoa, and salt.
5. In a small saucepan, bring butter and cola to a boil over medium heat. Pour butter mixture over sugar mixture; add vanilla, and beat with a mixer at medium speed until smooth. Pour frosting over cake. Sprinkle with pecans, if desired. Let stand until frosting is set before slicing.
COCONUT-LEMON BUNDT CAKE

Makes 1 (15-cup) Bundt cake

A blanket of zesty lemon frosting brightens up this dense coconut cake.

Cake:
¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups granulated sugar
2 teaspoons lemon zest
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon coconut extract
3 large eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1¼ cups whole buttermilk
½ cup sweetened flaked coconut

Frosting:
¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
¼ teaspoon lemon zest
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups confectioners’ sugar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
3 tablespoons whole milk

Garnish: sweetened flaked coconut, lemon zest

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 15-cup cast-iron Bundt pan with baking spray with flour.
2. For cake: In a large bowl, beat butter, granulated sugar, zest, and extracts with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in coconut. Spoon batter into prepared pan, smoothing top with a spatula. Run a knife through batter to break up any air pockets.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 5 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Run a knife around edges of pan. Invert onto a wire rack, and let cool completely.
5. For frosting: In a medium bowl, beat butter, zest, and vanilla with a mixer at medium speed until creamy. Add confectioners’ sugar and lemon juice, beating until combined. Add milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, until a spreadable consistency is reached. Spread frosting onto cake. Garnish with coconut and zest, if desired.
To see if the jam has thickened, place a small dot of jam on a cold plate, and place in the freezer. Remove from freezer after 2 minutes, and run your finger through it. If the jam runs, it needs to cook a bit longer.
BLACKBERRY JAM BARS
Makes 16

These easy crumble bars come together quickly and can be made with the jam of your choice.

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup old-fashioned oats
¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1½ cups Blackberry Jam (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Spray a 10-inch square cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.
2. In a large bowl, toss together flour, oats, melted butter, sugars, baking powder, salt, and zest until moistened and crumbly. Press two-thirds of oats mixture into bottom of prepared skillet. Spread Blackberry Jam onto crust. Sprinkle with remaining oats mixture.
3. Bake until jam is bubbly and topping is golden brown, about 35 minutes, loosely covering with foil during last 5 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

BLACKBERRY JAM
Makes about 2¼ cups

2 pounds fresh blackberries
2 cups sugar
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
½ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a large glass or ceramic bowl, combine all ingredients. Let stand at room temperature, stirring occasionally, until blackberries have released their juices and most of sugar is dissolved, about 1 hour.
2. Transfer blackberry mixture to an enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; mash with a potato masher or the back of a wooden spoon. Reduce heat until mixture is gently boiling. Cook, stirring frequently, until thickened, about 50 minutes. Remove from heat. Let cool for 30 minutes. Spoon into jars. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.

BUTTERMILK POUND CAKE
Makes 1 (8x4-inch) loaf

The tang of buttermilk adds flavor and tenderness to classic pound cake.

¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups sugar
3 large eggs, room temperature
1½ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
½ teaspoon kosher salt
½ cup whole buttermilk

1. Spray a 8x4-inch cast-iron loaf pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, and spray pan again.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together flour and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Spoon batter into prepared pan.
4. Place pan in a cold oven, and bake at 300° until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 20 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
BANANA COCONUT ICEBOX PIE

Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

Banana pudding or coconut cream pie? With this delicious treat, you don’t have to choose.

Crust:
3 cups vanilla wafer crumbs
¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and divided
¼ cup sugar

Filling:
1 (3.4-ounce) box banana cream instant pudding mix
1½ cups heavy whipping cream
½ cup whole milk
½ teaspoon coconut extract
3 medium bananas, sliced

Topping:
1½ cups heavy whipping cream
¼ cup sugar
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Garnish: vanilla wafers, sliced banana, toasted sweetened flaked coconut

1. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.
2. For crust: In a large bowl, toss together vanilla wafer crumbs, ¾ cup melted butter, and sugar until moistened. Add remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter, if necessary. Using the bottom of a measuring cup, press mixture into bottom and up sides of prepared skillet. Freeze for 15 minutes.
3. For filling: In a large bowl, whisk together pudding mix, cream, milk, and coconut extract. Beat with a mixer at low speed until mixture begins to thicken, about 2 minutes. Arrange banana slices in bottom of prepared crust; spread pudding mixture onto bananas.
4. For topping: In a large bowl, beat cream, sugar, and vanilla with a mixer at high speed just until soft peaks form. Gently spread onto pudding mixture. Garnish with vanilla wafers around edge of pie, if desired. Loosely cover and freeze until firm, at least 6 hours.
5. Thaw in refrigerator until softened, about 1 hour, or at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. Garnish with banana slices and coconut, if desired. Cut with a sharp knife dipped in hot water.
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