



A Question of Taste

By Hilary Keating Callaghan

Treasure those end-of-the-season tomatoes

It seems so long in coming. For weeks, anxious shoppers sniff the fruit labeled "vine-ripened", hoping it is the real thing, and fret about how late they are in coming. Then, suddenly, as if overnight - the Michigan tomatoes are in the markets, heralding their arrival with a rich tomato fragrance that no synthetic tomato can match.

All through the hot summer red, ripe tomatoes are eaten out of hand, still warm from the garden, sliced into sandwiches, stuffed with salads, combined with chilies in fresh hot sauce to serve on tortillas or eggs, stewed into thick sauces for pasta, baked in cheese tarts - and generally celebrated and enjoyed as the most popular summer vegetable (or fruit, depending on whether you're referring to its legal or botanical status).

Just as abruptly as it begins, however, the harvest ends. The first frost leaves the vines full of green or partially-ripe tomatoes. Those which are partially-ripe can complete the process on a sunny windowsill.

Totally green tomatoes can be slowly ripened in one of two ways. The first method is to wrap each tomato separately in newspaper and place in an

open box, stacking about three layers deep. Kept in a warm, dark place, the tomatoes will gradually ripen.

The second method is to pull up the entire tomato plant by the roots and suspend it upside down in an attic or basement until the fruit ripens. Although the crop caught by a frost can be salvaged in these ways, there is a penalty to be paid. These tomatoes will have neither the flavor nor vitamin content of those ripened on the vine in the summer sun.

RATHER THAN attempting to coax under-ripe tomatoes into a pale version of their fully ripened counterparts, why not enjoy green tomatoes as distinct vegetables with their own unique character?

I have a friend, Don Robinson, who goes so far as to suggest growing your own tomatoes so that you can eat them green. He logically points out that you can obtain good, ripe tomatoes from the store during the summer.

You can't, however, buy green tomatoes. Who's going to buy a green tomato when there are beautiful red, ripe tomatoes right next to it? Actually, Don would - but then he probably takes a different approach to food than most

people. He isn't bound by other people's recipes or a set meal plan but cooks as the spirit moves him, creating wonderfully imaginative dishes from whatever is at hand.

The green tomato-mushroom sauce is his own creation and was intended as a steak sauce. It would also be marvelous on eggs or even on sautéed eggplant.

The Parmesan-fried tomatoes are the creation of Don's wife, Karen, also an imaginative cook. (I admire this kind of cook. My first impulse is usually to pull out a cookbook.) This recipe was conceived when one of the children went "grocery shopping" in the garden this summer, loading her shopping cart with green tomatoes. (She's apparently going to follow in her father's footsteps.) Wonderfully cheesy, this makes a delicious side dish.

THE GREEN TOMATO Rellenos is from the "Moosewood Cookbook." ("My" contribution to this set of recipes. I told you my impulse was to consult a cookbook.)

This is ideal for anyone who finds the idea of Chiles Rellenos appealing but who finds the authentic version too

fiery. It took me a couple of years to try this dish. I kept waiting for someone to give me their unwanted green tomatoes after a frost. Apparently those gardeners are too cagey for that.

Don Robinson isn't the only one to recognize that green tomatoes are much more than a poor relation of red tomatoes. They are intriguing and rewarding challenge to the creative cook (and at least rewarding to the uninspired cook with a few good cookbooks).

GREEN TOMATO RELLENOS
8 medium (3" diameter) firm, green tomatoes
¾ cup coarse bread crumbs (rye or onion bread are especially good)
¾ cup grated mild white cheese
2 tsp. grated onion
2 medium cloves crushed garlic
1 tsp. ground cumin
Several dashes of cayenne
Salt and pepper to taste

The Batter:
3 large eggs, separated
1 tsp. water
3 tsp. flour
¼ tsp. salt

Hollow out the tomatoes, using a grapefruit knife and the various ends of a teaspoon to create a cavity about the size and shape of a healthy golfball. Save the insides for filling. Parboil the tomatoes, or roast them under a broiler, turning them, so that all sides get equal treatment. Cook until the tomato is tender (not mushy) and the skin is puckering. A fork should be insertable without too much resistance. Cool the tomatoes, and remove the skins carefully with a sharp paring knife.

Combine the minced green tomato insides with the remaining ingredients (except for the batter ingredients). Stuff the tomatoes delicately. Lightly dust the stuffed tomatoes with sifted flour.

To make the batter, beat the egg whites until they form soft peaks. Beat the yolks with the water, flour, and salt until thick and creamy. Fold the yolks into the whites.

You can either pan-fry or deep-fry your Tomato Rellenos. In both cases you coat the stuffed tomato with the egg batter, and in both cases the tomatoes should be served shortly after frying. (Have a 300-degree oven pre-lit to keep them warm until all are fried.)

If you pan-fry, you'll have a fluffy omelette-type coating around the tomato. If you deep-fry, you'll have a puffy, crispy fritter.

To Pan-fry: Heat several table-spoonful of butter or oil in a large, heavy skillet. Spoon some batter in and place a tomato on top. Fry over medium heat about five minutes, then spoon more batter on top and turn it. Fry until evenly coated and browned.

To Deep-fry: It is important that the oil be hot enough when the tomatoes go in. Start heating a 2½-to-3-inch pool of safflower, soy or peanut oil (don't use corn oil - it tends to froth) about 10 minutes ahead of time. When you're ready to fry, test the temperature of the oil by flicking in a drop of the batter. The batter must sizzle and puff up immediately upon contact, or the oil isn't hot enough. If you have a kitchen thermometer, the mercury should hit 360 degrees.

Use a large spoon to dunk each tomato into the batter and lift it out, bringing a coating of batter with it. Drop the whole spoonful into the hot oil and fry until puffy and brown. Drain well on a pile of paper towels, and serve warm until ready to serve. Serves four.



Byrd's Kitchen

by Vivian Byrd

Tempting apple desserts

This year's apple harvest is coming in, and if you're looking for recipes which include "an apple a day" (we all remember the reason for that one), you might look to a long-time favorite recipe, Apple Brown Betty.

This tempting dessert combines the most compatible ingredients - apples, cinnamon, graham cracker crumbs, raisins and a little lemon peel.

Other fruits can be substituted for the apples. For instance, peaches, cherries, cranberries, a combination of apple and apricot, apricot alone, prunes or pineapple. Peaches, cherries or cranberries can be substituted in the recipe below, with all other information remaining the same.

However, when using prunes or apricots, the fruit should be stewed, drained and sweetened. The amount of sugar should be cut from the ¾ cup called for below to two tablespoons, and the ¾ cup of prunes or apricot juice (whichever fruit is being used) should be substituted for the lemon juice and water. The recipe changes additionally when using pineapple, and complete instructions are included below.

APPLE BROWN BETTY

Serves 5

1 cup graham cracker crumbs, or 1 cup dry bread crumbs
¼ cup melted butter
2½ cups peeled, diced or sliced apples
¾ cup packed brown sugar

1 tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. nutmeg
¼ tsp. ground cloves
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. grated lemon rind
1 tsp. vanilla
3 tbsp. lemon juice
4 tbsp. water
¼ cup raisins or currants

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine crumbs and butter. Sift together the brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves and salt. Add the grated lemon rind and vanilla.

Line the bottom of the baking dish with one third of the crumb mixture. Layer half of the apples on top of the crumb mixture. Sprinkle with one tablespoon of the lemon juice and two tablespoons of water. Add another layer of one third of the crumb mixture, then add the raisins. Add the remaining apples and sprinkle them with sugar mixture, two tablespoons of lemon juice and two tablespoons of water. Place the last third of the crumb mixture on top.

Cover the dish and bake about 40 minutes, until the apples are nearly tender. Remove cover, increase heat to 400 degrees and let the pudding brown for 15 minutes. Serve hot with cream, ice cream, or hard sauce.

PINEAPPLE BROWN BETTY

¼ cup butter
¾ cup sugar

5 egg yolks
¼ cup dry bread crumbs
1 cup drained crushed pineapple
1 tbsp. lemon juice
3 egg whites

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Cream the butter and sugar together until light. Beat in the egg yolks, bread crumbs, pineapple and lemon juice. Whip the egg whites until stiff and fold into the mixture. Pour into a baking dish. Set the baking dish in a pan of hot water and bake for about 30 minutes. Serve with cream or whipped cream.

CANNERS TAKE NOTE: Lois Thieleke is a home economist with the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service who specializes in food preservation and food safety.

She warns that pickle products and relishes should be packed in canning jars, a long knife or spatula inserted to insure removal of any trapped air, the jars sealed and processed in a boiling water bath, 212 degrees, for 15 minutes to insure a good seal. They should then be stored in a cool, dry, dark place.

Persons with questions about canning procedures or particular problems can call the Food Preservation Hotline, 858-0904.

Correspondence is welcomed and should be addressed to: Vivian Byrd, PO Box 1024, Birmingham, Mich. 48012.

Holiday treat

Here's a Chocolate Mousse Pie that will make any day a holiday. It's easy to prepare, but it should chill for at least 2 hours.

½ cup butter or margarine
¾ cup sugar
2 squares unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
2 eggs
1 container (4 oz.) frozen, whipped topping, thawed
1 baked 9-inch pie shell, cooled

Cream butter. Gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add chocolate. Add eggs, one at a time, beating at high speed for five minutes after each addition. Fold in whipped topping. Spoon into pie shell. Chill until firm, about 2 hours; or freeze until firm, about 4 hours. Garnish with additional whipped topping, if desired.



"IF YOU'RE NOT BUYING BOB EVANS SAUSAGE, YOU MIGHT BE GETTING JUST LEFTOVERS"

Some sausage makers don't put the best cuts of pork into their sausage like we do at Bob Evans Farms.

They take the hams, and sell them as ham. They take the loins, and sell them as pork chops. Then they make sausage with what's left over - the pork trimmings.

Well at Bob Evans Farms, we don't settle for just leftovers. In fact, we include all the choice fresh hams and tenderloins in every pound of sausage we make.

That's why Bob Evans Sausage is tastier than a lot of other sausage. And why it cooks up plump and tender every time.

So try Bob Evans Farms Sausage. It's so meaty and delicious, you'll never have leftovers again.

Bob Evans FARMS®
WE DO IT RIGHT.
OR WE DON'T DO IT.™



© 1980 Bob Evans Farms, Inc.

Ruth McDaniel

Some recipes from Wisconsin

Dear Friends,

I never leave Wisconsin without bringing at least a couple of recipes from my German friends. Here are a couple of super-easy dishes, made with bacon, I got the last time I visited Milwaukee. The soup is very inexpensive to make and tastes so good on a cold day. The liver and onion and bacon is a new version I'd never had before, but it's really good.

HILDA'S BACON SOUP

Hilda says her grandma used to make this during the Depression. It made a "stick to the ribs" meal with very little meat.
6 lg. carrots
¼ cup chopped onion
1 can peas

½ lb. bacon
3 large potatoes
1 tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper

Cube carrots and potatoes. Add salt and enough water to cover. Add onions. Cook until tender. Add peas, juice and all. Cube bacon and fry crisp and add to soup. Hilda says she adds a couple of bouillon cubes instead of salt for a more meaty flavor.

LIVER, BACON AND ONIONS - GERMAN STYLE

6 slices bacon
¼ cup flour
1 tsp. salt
1½ tsp. sugar
1 lb. liver, sliced thin
2 tbsp. chopped onion
3 tbsp. vinegar

Dash of pepper

Cook bacon until crisp. Remove from frying pan and crumble into pieces. Mix flour, salt and pepper. Dredge liver in this mixture. Brown slowly on both sides in bacon drippings. Remove liver to hot platter. Add onions, vinegar and sugar to drippings. Bring to a boil and cook 1 minute. Pour over liver and sprinkle with crumbled bacon. Serves 4.

My book, "From Homemaker to Money-maker the Easy Way" has easy-to-follow instructions for making your own mixes plus a plan I guarantee will cut your food bills by ¼ and more. For information write to Ruth McDaniel, Homemaker Book, C. O. E. Newspapers, 461 S. Main, Plymouth, MI 48170.