

It's traditional

Serve a baked ham for Easter

It's the family traditions that make holidays so eagerly anticipated and so long remembered. Special Easter customs may include decorating eggs, hiding baskets, visiting relatives, baking Easter breads and attending church services. For most families, the Easter celebration also means a gala feast centered around an impressive baked ham.

You may be able to trace your family's tradition of serving ham for Easter back for generations to the custom of the Easter ham has actually been around for many centuries. Ham was served in pagan times for the huge feasts that were held to herald the arrival of spring. Since fresh meats were not available at that time of year, they served cured ham. This spring feasting was continued in the Christian era and soon became associated with Easter.

This year, give the Easter menu a refreshing flavor lift by pairing the ham with Glazed Pineapple Wedges. This novel accompaniment is most attrac-

tive for chunks of pineapple are served in their own shell. The pineapple picks up sweet accents as it broils with a sprinkling of brown sugar over the top.

GLAZED BAKED HAM

4 to 6-lb. boneless "fully-cooked" smoked ham half
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 tsp. orange juice

Place ham on a rack in an open roasting pan. Insert roast meat thermometer so bulb is centered in the thickest part. Do not add water. Do not cover. Roast in a slow oven (325°) until thermometer registers 130° to 140° (allow approximately 18 to 25 minutes per pound). Combine brown sugar and orange juice; brush over ham 20 minutes before end of cooking time.

GLAZED PINEAPPLE WEDGES

1 fresh pineapple
2 tbsp. brown sugar

Cut pineapple lengthwise in half. Cut one portion lengthwise in half to form 2 wedges. (Cover and refrigerate remaining pineapple for later use.) Remove core from each pineapple wedge. Cut the pineapple away from skin, leaving a 1/4-inch shell. Cut pineapple crosswise into 1/2-inch slices. Push every other slice toward opposite edge of shell. Place on rack in broiler pan so surface of fruit is 6 inches from heat. Broil 10 minutes. Remove; sprinkle brown sugar over surface of pineapple and continue broiling 5 minutes. 4 servings.

Start the Easter feast off on a springy note with cream of asparagus soup. Then serve the ham and pineapple with new potatoes with parsley and minted carrots and peas. The salad will be picture pretty when lit with shimmering strawberry gelatin mold decorated with yogurt and fresh strawberries. Then fill the bread basket with warm dinner rolls and serve cream de menthe parfaits to end the meal on a cool refreshing note.



For an easy yet elegant holiday meal, serve the Easter ham with a sweet glaze and accompany it with broiled pineapple wedges.

New ways to fix potatoes

The popularity of baked potatoes is clearly illustrated by the number of fast-food restaurants specializing in baked potatoes with a wide variety of toppings. When you bake potatoes at home, choose Michigan Russet Burbanks, which are excellent for baking and frying.

Our state's farmers harvested more than 850-million pounds of potatoes last year. The Michigan Department of Agriculture values the crop at \$58 million, and reports that Michigan ranked 11th among the states in production.

Although baked potatoes are probably the leading choice of most diners, French fries are a close second. Because potatoes are such a versatile food, there are many good recipes for preparation. Besides scalloped potatoes, another favorite, here's a formula for baked potato balls which can be prepared ahead. It's especially nice if you're expecting a crowd for dinner and want to avoid a last-minute rush in the kitchen.

PREPARE mashed potatoes using your favorite recipe. Season with salt, pepper and butter. When cool, shape into balls of uniform size, roll in crushed cornflakes and place in a shallow greased baking pan. Cover the pan and refrigerate until needed, up to 24 hours. Then bake at 375 degrees about 20 minutes.

If you prefer fried potato balls, combine mashed potatoes with beaten egg yolk, grated Parmesan cheese, a pinch of nutmeg and 1/4 teaspoon baking powder for each cup of potatoes. Roll in flour, shake off excess, roll in beaten egg white and then in fine dry bread crumbs. Fry in hot oil until lightly browned, drain well on paper toweling before serving.

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