



It's not so difficult to jazz up pancakes

I received a request for jazzed-up pancakes — not from a reader — from a colleague at one of our subscribing papers who likes to dabble in sour dough.

He likes sour-dough pancakes and promises to share some of his recipes in the future. He doesn't like pancakes made from a mix.

There are ways to jazz up pancakes, whether you use a mix or prepare them from scratch. When mixing the batter, add a favorite food such as ham cubes, nuts, strawberries, bananas or chopped apples.

APPLE PANCAKES
3 big sour apples, peeled, cored and sliced
1/2 cup lemon juice
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. sugar
1 1/2 cups cold milk
4 eggs
1/2 lb. butter or margarine

Marinate apples in lemon juice. Combine flour, salt and sugar; stir in milk and make smooth paste. Add eggs, one at a time, beat briskly; drain apples and stir into batter.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in skillet

and spoon in batter, making pancakes 4 inches in diameter. Cook until golden brown, adding butter as needed. Yields 20 thin pancakes. Serve with sugar and cinnamon.

CABBAGE PANCAKES

1/4 cup butter or margarine
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 cups finely chopped cabbage
3/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
4 eggs
1 1/2 cups half and half
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup grated Gruyere cheese

Melt 4 tablespoons butter in skillet, add garlic, cabbage, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Sauté cabbage on medium heat until limp, about 10 minutes, frequently stirring; set cool. In mixing bowl, beat eggs, blend with half and half, flour and rest of salt and pepper, let stand 15 minutes; fold in cheese and stir in cabbage. Grease skillet with 1 tablespoon butter, allow pan to get hot and spoon in batter, making pancakes 4 inches in diameter. Cook until golden brown, adding butter as needed. Yields 18 pancakes. Serve with sour cream.

Abundant apples are fine fare for modern microwave cooking

Johnny Appleseed, the pioneer who became a legendary figure in American history, traveled for 40 years in Ohio and Indiana during the 1800s carrying apple seeds with him wherever he went. He planted them in thinly settled areas and as a result of his dedication and foresight, apples are available in abundant types and quantities.

Try these two delightful apple recipes from a microwave oven cookbook. One features apples baked in a lightly spiced molasses syrup. The second recipe is for Dutch Apple Cake, which cooks in only 14 1/2 minutes and is an ideal dessert for blustery fall days.

DUTCH APPLE CAKE

Total cooking time:
14 minutes, 30 seconds

Wheat germ
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 medium cooking apples
1 egg
3/4 tsp. vanilla

1/4 cup cooking oil
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
3/4 cup finely chopped walnuts
Powdered Sugar Icing (recipe below)

Grease a 9-inch microwave tube dish. Sprinkle inside of dish with wheat germ to coat. Stir together flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. In mixer bowl combine egg and vanilla. Beat on HIGH speed for 2 minutes. Gradually add oil, beating till thick. Gradually add oil, beating till thick. Gradually add oil, beating till thick. Gradually add oil, beating till thick. Gradually add oil, beating till thick.

Cook for 13 minutes at MEDIUM, giving dish a quarter turn twice. Cook for 1 1/2 minutes at HIGH till cake tests done, giving dish a half turn once. Cool on counter top for 10 minutes. Remove from pan. Cool thoroughly on rack. Drizzle with Powdered Sugar Icing. Makes 12 servings.

Powdered Sugar Icing: Stir together 1 cup sifted powdered sugar, 1/4 teaspoon vanilla, and enough milk (about 1 1/2 tablespoons) to make of drizzling consistency.

SPICY MOLASSES BAKED APPLES

Total cooking time: 6 minutes

1/2 cup water
1/4 cup light molasses
2 tsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
4 large baking apples

In small bowl combine water, molasses, sugar, lemon juice, cinnamon, and nutmeg; set aside. Core apples and peel 1/2 of the way down. In 1 1/2-quart casserole place apples; pour molasses mixture over. Place in microwave oven.

Cook apple mixture for 3 minutes at HIGH. Turn apples over and spoon

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

Cakes rise higher in the microwave oven, so fill the pans just half full. When using conventional recipes, decrease ingredients by 1/4-1/2 (decrease liquid slightly more than other ingredients) to make the right amount of batter. Or make the conventional recipe and bake extra batter as cupcakes.

To enhance the color of light-colored cakes, coat the inside of the dish with wheat germ instead of flour. Other good coatings are graham cracker crumbs or finely ground nuts. If the cake is to be frosted or is deep in color, use granulated sugar.

Let cakes stand 10-15 minutes on the counter top to complete cooking. Then place on a wire rack to cool completely.

Mexican pie adds zest to your menu

Stretch your grocery budget while adding zest to the dinner menu with Mexican Pie, a tasty entree created from leftover roast.

To prepare this savory yet economical fare all you need is a little imagination and a few basic ingredients. An onion, some leftover beef or pork, zucchini, beans, tomato sauce and cornmeal are the fundamentals for an entree with the full flavor that's made Mexican food the fastest-growing ethnic cuisine.

In addition to saving money by using leftovers, this recipe calls for Butter Flavor Crisco which is sodium and cholesterol free.

To complete the south-of-the-border theme when serving Mexican Pie, grace the table with brightly colored red and green napkins and place mats.

1 can (1 lb.) kidney beans, drained
1 can corn, drained
1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
1 cup chopped, ripe olives
1 tsp. chili powder
2 cups cold water
3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. Butter Flavor Crisco
Paprika (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 375 degree.
2. Melt 1/4 cup shortening in large oven-proof frying pan. Stir in onion and zucchini; saute 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat.

3. Add next seven ingredients to frying pan; mix well and set aside.
4. Mix next three ingredients in small saucepan. Cook until thick, stirring constantly. Stir in 1 tablespoon shortening. Spread cornmeal topping over meat mixture. Sprinkle with paprika if desired.

5. Bake at 375 degree for 1 hour. Let stand 5-10 minutes before serving. Serves 6.

MEXICAN PIE

1/4 cup Butter Flavor Crisco
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 medium zucchini, chopped
2 cups leftover roast (pork or beef)
1 can (3 oz.) chopped green chiles

Prepare chicken as directed on the package.

In 4-cup glass measure, combine onion and water. Cover with plastic wrap. Microwave at HIGH 2 to 3 minutes, or until tender-crisp. Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, basil and garlic powder. Microwave at HIGH 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve sauce with hot chicken. Makes 5 servings.



GIVE... for all the good it can do.

New oven? Don't panic

If one glance at the front of your new microwave oven puts you in a panic because you can't find the "start" button, check the following guidelines below.

Always read the oven manufacturer's guidelines for operating the oven before microwaving any food. Every oven operates differently so read the manual included with your microwave oven.

Microwave the simple foods first such as coffee, sweet rolls, etc. First day disasters with long, involved recipes can discourage any new cook.

Set a goal to use your microwave at least four times per day, always trying a different food even if you are only reheating leftovers. You'll quickly learn that sizes, shapes and moisture contents of food affect timings.

Because the microwave oven is easy to operate, once you've learned, show all family members how to properly use the oven. You don't have to be an experienced chef to be a good microwave cook. Practice makes perfect. Keep a notebook by the microwave and write down timings for foods you cook most often. It is a good reminder for you or the next person who uses the oven.

Invest in a few microwave cooking classes. It's time and money well

spent to get the greatest use of your microwave. Many microwave dealers offer free cooking classes where you purchased your oven.

As your confidence level increases try this easy to understand microwave recipe below, prepared by the Banquet Foods Test Kitchens.

CACCIATORE SAUCE FOR FRIED CHICKEN

1 pkg. (32 oz.) frozen prepared fully cooked fried chicken
1 medium onion, thinly sliced (about 3/4 cup)
1/2 cup water
1 can (16 oz.) tomato tomatoes
1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste
1/2 tsp. oregano leaves
1/2 tsp. crushed basil leaves
1/2 tsp. garlic powder



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