

Ways to perk up morning meals

AP — Eating Well magazine's Richard Sax has two entertaining and beautiful ideas for breakfasts and brunches: Potato and Smoked Fish Frittata and Toasted Cornmeal-Apple Muffin Wedges.

In the frittata recipe, whole eggs and egg whites replace the traditional egg mixture. It's especially important to cook this pancake-style omelet slowly and to avoid overcooking, since protein-rich egg white coagulates at a lower temperature than yolks or whole eggs.

For the Toasted Cornmeal-Apple Muffin Wedges, use one tart Granny Smith apple and one sweet McIntosh apple. You can also use berries or chunks of pears.

POTATO AND SMOKED FISH FRITTATA

4 new potatoes (about 12 ounces), unpeeled and scrubbed
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 medium onion, cut in silvers
3 scallions, trimmed and sliced
6 ounces smoked fish (turkey, trout or whitefish), skin and bones removed, flaked
3 large eggs plus 3 egg whites
3 tablespoons low-fat milk
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a saucepan, cover potatoes with cold, salted water. Cover, bring to a boil, and boil 15 to 20 minutes, or until just tender. Drain, cool in cold water, peel and slice.

Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a 10-inch non-stick ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add onion and scallions; cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions begin to soften, about 5 to 6 minutes.

Add the potatoes to the skillet, spreading them gently to cover the bottom of the pan. Add remaining 1 teaspoon oil. Toss briefly and saute on medium heat for 3 to 5 minutes, or until they are lightly browned and crisp. Scatter the smoked fish over the potatoes.

Preheat the broiler and place the rack so that the top of the skillet will be about 1 inch from the flame.

Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, egg whites, milk, salt and pepper. Reduce the heat to low. Carefully pour the egg mixture over the potatoes and fish, covering them evenly. Cover the pan and cook until the egg mixture has set around the edges but the center is still fairly liquid, usually 6 to 10 minutes. (Adjust the heat if necessary; the mixture should sizzle gently but steadily as the egg cooks.)

Place the skillet under the preheated broiler and cook just until the surface is lightly golden, about 1 to 2 minutes. Watch carefully to pre-

In the frittata recipe, whole eggs and egg whites replace the traditional egg mixture.

vent overcooking, or the egg mixture will toughen. Cut the frittata into wedges and serve hot or warm, passing the pepper mill at the table. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 137 cal., 12 g pro., 6 g fat, 9 g carb., 185 mg sodium; 107 mg chol.

TOASTED CORNMEAL-APPLE MUFFIN WEDGES

1 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup light brown sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup non-fat or low-fat yogurt
1/4 cup low-fat milk
2 large eggs plus 1 egg white
2 tablespoons vegetable oil plus extra for greasing pan
2 large apples, peeled, cored and cut into chunks
1/2 cup currants or raisins
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch nutmeg

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly oil a 9-inch round cake pan; set aside. Place dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl and whisk to combine. In a small bowl, combine yogurt and milk. Whisk in eggs, egg white and oil and set aside.

Toss apples with currants or raisins, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add to the dry ingredients and toss to coat the fruit. Make a well in the center of the mixture and pour in the yogurt mixture all at once. With a rubber spatula, mix until moistened but still lumpy; do not overmix. Scrape into the cake pan and spread gently out to the edges, leaving the top lumpy.

Bake in a 375-degree oven until the cake is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 40 to 45 minutes. Cool in the pan on a rack.

Using a serrated knife, cut the cake into 6 large wedges. Split each wedge in half horizontally. Toast in a toaster oven or under a preheated broiler, cut side up. Serve hot. Makes 6 servings.

Note: The cake can be stored, wrapped in plastic, at room temperature for up to 24 hours or in the freezer for up to one month.

Nutrition information per serving: 314 cal., 9 g pro., 7 g fat, 62 g carb., 451 mg sodium, 72 mg chol.

Miniature desserts a treat for one

"Before you eat a miniature, you fall in love with it. After all," says Flo Braker, "it's all yours. You don't have to share it with anyone." Braker believes in the proverb, "Good things come in small packages."

These words represent the philosophy of Braker, master baker of perfect, bite-size desserts. Her techniques and recipes for creating miniatures are showcased in her latest book, "Sweet Miniatures: The Art of Making Bite-Size Desserts" (William Morrow & Co.; June 20, 1991; \$25, hardcover).

This comprehensive volume contains her recipes for Sweet Cheese Puffs, Drei Augen and Dutch Mini-cakes as well as new recipes for Creamy Ginger Squares, Chocolate Shadows, Scheherazade Tartlets and 110 other tempting recipes.

During Braker's career as a baking teacher, caterer, food columnist and cookbook author, miniatures have become her trademark. Her passion is creating these scaled-down desserts, such as Harlequin Stars, Maple Japonais, Chocolate Tulips and Romeo Tartlets, to deliver intense tastes of apricot, maple, chocolate or even amaretto.

She has perfected other gems, such as Apricot Medals, Pecan Diamonds, Tiffany Rings and Jewel Fruit Pyramids, though miniature in size, to satisfy the palate just as a large slice of dessert would.

BRAKER DIVIDES her miniatures into three categories: Miniature Cookies, Miniature Pastries and Miniature Cakes. For each of these three types of recipes, she discusses the most crucial techniques needed to create them successfully. She analyzes the various methods for mixing cookie doughs, their uses and comparative advan-

tages. She sheds light on the secrets of rolling pastry doughs and of cutting full-sized cakes into miniature shapes.

"Sweet Miniatures" contains an entire chapter on preparing the tiny desserts ahead, with helpful advice on storing, freezing and serving. Braker's step-by-step directions are for both the beginning baker and seasoned professional. She includes a section on Making Miniatures Ahead, 1 to 100 Dozen, and there is a miniature planning chart, cross-referencing her recipes by category, size and texture.

The cookbook also offers countless ideas for variations on the basic themes. For example, the recipe for Lemon Macaroon Triangles, which yields a tender cookie with an almond-flavored topping and tangy lemon filling, can be followed exactly, or the baker can add a mixture of mascarpone and cream cheese, the result resembling the popular Italian dessert, Tiramisu.

BRAKER NEVER runs out of innovative suggestions for baking the best possible miniatures, but in "Sweet Miniatures," her ultimate advice is to experiment: "The best reward for me would be if this book inspired you to invent your own memorable miniatures."

Braker, once a professional caterer, lives in Palo Alto, Calif. Along with years of trial and error baking in her kitchen, she attended the Ecole LeNore in France and the Richmond Professional School in Switzerland. She has been teaching baking techniques across the country for 15 years. The baker columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle, Braker also has authored the cookbook "The Simple Art of Perfect Baking."



Flo Braker is the author of "Sweet Miniatures."

Mint julep is cool summer refreshment

AP — Mint juleps, a refreshing warm-weather drink, are traditionally served in sterling silver julep cups, filled with crushed ice, or 8-to 10-ounce glasses.

MINT JULEPS
1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1 bunch fresh mint sprigs (2 ounces or about 2 cups lightly packed)
Crushed ice
Kentucky bourbon

Combine sugar and water; boil for 5 minutes without stirring. Cool. Place mint in a jar with a lid, add syrup. Refrigerate overnight. Remove mint. Keep syrup refrigerated.

This will keep several weeks and individual juleps may be made as desired.

For each serving, fill an 8-ounce glass with crushed ice. Add 1 tablespoon syrup, 1 tablespoon water and 2 ounces (1/2 cup) bourbon. Stir gently until glass is cooled and insert straw and garnish with a sprig of mint. (Recipe from: "Kentucky Derby Museum Cookbook" The Kentucky Derby Museum, Louisville, Ky. \$22.)

MINT JULEP
Confectioners' sugar
2 1/2 ounces whiskey
Fresh mint sprigs
Dissolve 1 teaspoon confectioners'

sugar with 2 teaspoons water in a silver mug. Fill with finely shaved ice and 2 1/2 ounces whiskey. Stir until mug is heavily frosted; add more ice if necessary. (Do not hold mug while stirring.)

Decorate with 5 or 6 sprigs of fresh mint so that the tops are about 2 inches above the rim of the mug. (The mint is intended for odor, not taste.) Makes 1 serving.

(Recipe from: "Jack Daniel's The Spirit of Tennessee Cookbook" by Pat Mitchemore and Lynn Tolley. Rutledge Hill Press, Nashville, Tenn. \$19.95.)

MINT ICE TEA JULEPS

2 cups boiling water
2 mint tea bags
4 teaspoons sugar
Crushed ice
4 ounces bourbon Fresh mint

Four two cups boiling water over two mint tea bags. Steep for 5 minutes. Remove tea bags. Stir in 4 teaspoons sugar. Allow tea to cool. Fill 4 tall glasses with crushed ice. Measure 1 ounce bourbon and 1/4 cup cooled tea over ice in each glass. If necessary, add ice to fill glass. Garnish with fresh mint and serve with straws. Makes 4 servings. (Recipe from: Bigelow Tea)

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