

Fresh grated Parmesan, Asiago cheese enhances flavor

See Larry Jones' column on Taste front.

HOT ARTICHOKE SPREAD

1 cup fresh grated Parmesan or Asiago cheese
1 cup mayonnaise (not salad dressing)
1 can artichoke hearts (not the marinated variety)
Combine all ingredients and mix well. Place in a small ovenproof casserole and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Pop under broiler till golden. Serve with crackers, bread-

cubes, corn chips or fresh vegetables. (Grate in a small onion for different flavor)

PARMESAN BAKED CHICKEN

3 lbs. chicken thighs and drumsticks
2 cups milk
1/2 cup plain breadcrumbs
1/2 cup fresh grated Parmesan or Asiago cheese
1 egg, beaten
3 tablespoons olive oil
Place chicken in a bowl with milk and refrigerate at least one hour.

Combine breadcrumbs with parmesan cheese. Pat chicken dry, then dip in beaten egg and coat well in breadcrumb and Parmesan cheese mixture. Place skin side up on a lightly oiled pan and drizzle with olive oil. Bake at 350 degrees for 60 minutes. Serves 4-6.
Chef's note: you want to taste the cheese here, so don't try to mask the flavor with tons of herbs, salt and pepper.

BAKED TOMATOES FLORENTINE
4 strips cooked bacon, diced

4 medium tomatoes
1 package (10 oz.) frozen spinach, thawed
3/4 cup fresh grated Parmesan or Asiago cheese
1/2 cup breadcrumbs

Chop bacon, set aside. Slice tops off tomatoes and scoop out centers. Squeeze as much of the water out of spinach as possible. Place spinach in a bowl. Scoop out center of tomatoes and place in bowl with spinach and remaining ingredients. Mix well.
Stuff tomato shells with mixture

and bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Serves 4.
Chef's suggestion: Try this with some finely chopped seafood instead of the bacon or with simple steamed and chopped vegetables for a vegetarian treat!

CAESAR SALAD DRESSING

1 clove garlic, finely diced
2 anchovies (optional)
1 coddled egg
the juice of 1/2 lemon
dash tabasco
dash Worcestershire
1/4 cup wine vinegar

1/2 cup imported Italian olive oil
1/2 cup fresh grated Parmesan or Asiago cheese

Mash garlic with anchovies. Add the egg and beat. Add the juice of the lemon and beat until well mixed. Stir in tabasco, Worcestershire and vinegar. Mix well. While beating, slowly add the olive oil in a slow, steady stream. Just before serving, add grated cheese. Mix well and toss with fresh greens and homemade croutons, if desired. This dressing is great with all greens.

Start rolling, find the cookie cutters, grease baking sheets

See related story on Taste front.

OATMEAL GINGERBREAD COOKIES

Cookies
1 cup (2 sticks) margarine or butter, softened
3/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 cup molasses
3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups Quaker oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked)

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
Decorations
Prepared frosting
Assorted candies
For cookies, beat margarine and sugar until creamy. Add molasses and egg; beat well. Add combined flour, oats, spices, baking soda and salt; mix well. Chill 2 hours. Heat oven to 350 F. On floured

surface, roll dough out to 1/4-inch thickness for a chewy cookie or 1/8-inch thickness for a crisp cookie. Cut with 5-inch gingerbread man or woman cookie cutter. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet 8 to 10 minutes. Cool 1 minute on cookie sheet; remove to wire rack. Cool completely. For decorations, frost and decorate with candies as desired. Store loosely covered at room temperature. Yield about 20 five-inch cookies.
To make cookies into hanging ornaments, cut hole near top of cookie

with drinking straw before baking. Repeat immediately after baking if hole closes.

CHOCOLATE COOKIES

4 egg whites
2 1/2 cups confectioner's sugar
1/2 cup cocoa powder
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon powdered instant coffee
1 tablespoon water
Scant cup of whole walnuts, very finely chopped

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line a baking sheet with baking parchment. Using an electric beater, whisk the egg whites until frothy. Add the sugar, cocoa, flour, coffee, and water to the bowl and beat first at a slow speed and then at a higher speed for a few minutes until the mixture thickens.

Fold in the walnuts. Place tablespoons of the mixture on the prepared baking sheet leaving a 1 inch space between each spoonful. Bake for 15 minutes. The top will be firm and cracked, but the inside still soft. Lift off the cookies and place them on a rack to cool. Yield: 18 cookies.

From: "The Chocolate Cookbook," by Patricia Lousada. (HarperCollins Publishers, hard-cover, \$7).

held electric mixer set at high speed, beat the butter until creamy, about 1 minute. Add the sugar and continue beating until the mixture is light in color and texture, about 2 additional minutes. Beat in the yolk and vanilla.

Sift the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt onto a sheet of waxed paper. Using a wooden spoon, work the dry ingredients into the creamed mixture to form a stiff dough. Scrape the dough onto another sheet of waxed paper and form into a thick log about 8 inches long. Wrap the log in waxed paper, and refrigerate until chilled and firm, about 1 hour.

Using a sharp knife, cut the chilled dough into 24 slices, each 5/16 inch thick. Arrange the slices about 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. Flatten the edges slightly with a fork, and tap each with a walnut half.

Bake until golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheets for 2 minutes, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely. The cookies will keep, stored in an airtight container, at room temperature, for 3 days. Makes 24 cookies.

From: "An Edible Christmas: A Treasury of Recipes for the Holiday Season" by Irena Chalmers. (William Morrow & Co., \$23 hard-cover).

Italian basil and onion mashed potatoes 'splendid'

See related story about "The Splendid Table," on Taste front.

PATATE MISCHE
Basil and onion mashed potatoes
5 pounds small red skin potatoes
1 to 1 1/2 cups milk
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 large onions, minced
2 cups minced Italian parsley
2 large cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup fresh minced basil leaves
1/2 cup water
salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
olive oil

1 cup (4 ounces) fresh grated Parmesan-Rossini cheese
Scrub the potatoes and place them in a 6-quart pot with enough cold water to cover. Put the lid in place and set the pot over high heat. Bring the water to a lively bubble. Adjust the heat so that the potatoes do not boil over and keep the pot partially covered.
Cook potatoes 15-20 minutes or until easily pierced with a fork. Meanwhile, pour 1 cup of the milk, the butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil into a bowl. While the potatoes are cooking, heat the remaining three tablespoons of oil in a 12-inch skillet over high heat. Add the onions and all but 2 tablespoons of the parsley. Turn the heat to medi-

um low and cover. Cook 15 minutes or until the onions are soft and clear. Stir occasionally. Uncover and cook over medium high heat, stirring frequently for 8 minutes or until the onions are golden brown. Then stir in the garlic and basil and cook another minute. Add the water and scrape up any bits left in the skillet. Season with salt and pepper. Turn into a large bowl. When the potatoes are tender, drain and peel them. Pass the hot potatoes through a coarse blade of a food mill set over a large bowl or mash them with a potato masher. Blend the potatoes with the ingredients in the bottom of the bowl. Season to taste. If the potatoes seem dry, add more milk. The mixture should be

like very thick whipped cream, but not so loose that it will not hold a high mound on a spoon.

Lightly oil a shallow 2 1/2 quart baking dish. Spread half the potato mixture over the bottom of the dish. Top with half the cheese and then spread the remaining potatoes over this. Sprinkle with the rest of the cheese.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly cover the potatoes with aluminum foil and bake 30 minutes or until hot in the center. Just before serving, sprinkle with remaining parsley. Serve hot.

Recipe reprinted with permission of Lynne Rossetto Kasper from "The Splendid Table," (Copyright 1992 William Morrow.)

CINNAMON CRISPS

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar
1 large egg yolk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
24 walnut halves
Preheat the oven to 375 F. Butter 2 baking sheets.
In a medium bowl, using a hand-

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