

Stuffed peppers still have family appeal

So many foods have nostalgic appeal — Mom's best recipes or Saturday night supper favorites. Many we remember because we just enjoyed eating them.

Stuffed peppers, for example, are a nostalgic favorite. The whole family loved them — especially Mom, since they were easy to make with convenient, economical ground beef. Guess what? The same holds true today.

Easy Beef Stuffed Peppers are super simple. Mom probably used green peppers, but today we have many colors from which to choose — we can even use a combination to add a colorful contemporary touch to this tried and true favorite.

Stuff the peppers with a mixture of lean ground beef, onion, rice, ketchup and oregano. As an added timesaver, you don't have to precook the beef or rice.

Place the peppers in a baking dish, top with a tasty blend of Italian-style stewed tomatoes, ketchup and oregano — and bake.

That's it! No attention needed until they come out of the oven. Remember to completely cook all dishes made with ground beef.

To ensure doneness, ground beef mixtures should be cooked

until the beef is no longer pink and a thermometer inserted in the filling registers 160 degrees F.

Complement this home-style family meal with crusty rolls, a tossed green salad and warm apple crisp topped with vanilla yogurt. Since the oven's already on for the peppers, bake the apple crisp at the same time.

EASY BEEF STUFFED PEPPERS

Preparation and cooking time: 1 hour and 45 minutes

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 4 medium green, red or yellow bell peppers
- 3/4 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup uncooked rice
- 2 tablespoons ketchup, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Topping:

- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) Italian-style stewed tomatoes, undrained
- 1 tablespoon ketchup
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano leaves

Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut tops off bell peppers; remove seeds and membrane. In large bowl, combine ground beef, onion, rice, ketchup, oregano, salt and pepper, mixing lightly but thoroughly. Spoon an equal amount of meat mixture into each bell pepper. Place in 8 x 8-inch baking dish. 3. Combine topping ingredients; spoon over stuffed peppers. Cover baking dish tightly with foil. Bake in 350-degree oven 1-1/2 hours to medium (160 degrees F) doneness or until beef mixture is cooked.* Makes 4 servings (serving size: 1/4 of recipe).

Nutrition information per serving: 373 calories; 29 g protein; 29 g carbohydrate; 16g fat; 4.4 mg iron; 81.7 mg sodium; 84 mg cholesterol. (Complete nutritional available on request.)

*Due to the natural nitrate content of certain ingredients such as onions, celery and bell peppers often used to make meatloaf, meatloaf may be pink even if a 160-degree F internal temperature is reached. Always check the temperature with a meat thermometer or instant-read thermometer to be sure it reaches 160 degrees F.

Recipe and information from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.



NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

Nostalgic favorite: Peppers stuffed with seasoned ground beef remain a family favorite. These Easy Stuffed peppers are extra simple to prepare.

Spring Seafood Pasta incorporates all food groups

See related story on Taste front. Recipe from Peggy Martinelli-Everts, registered dietitian and director of clinical operations for HDS Services in Farmington Hills.

Here's a recipe that incorporates all the food groups into one dish. It's easy to prepare and tastes great. Best of all, a 1-1/2 cup serving provides just 348 calories and 6 grams of fat. You can get creative with this recipe, too. For variety, use seasonal

vegetables. Instead of using crab meat, you can also substitute white tuna or boneless, skinless chicken breast for a different flavor.

SPRING SEAFOOD PASTA

- Makes 8 servings.
- 6 cups uncooked rotini pasta
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 green onions
- 3 cups fresh broccoli florets
- 1 red pepper

- 12 ounces asparagus (about 1 bunch)
- 8 ounces fresh mushrooms
- 2 cups fresh pea pods
- 6 tablespoons fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 pound imitation crab meat
- 4 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- Juice from 1/2 of a small orange

Cook and drain pasta according to package directions and reserve

covered, to keep pasta warm. Mince green pepper. Chop all other vegetables into bite-size pieces. In a large frying pan or wok, saute onions in olive oil over medium heat. Add the rest of the vegetables and cook al dente (cooked through but still firm),

tossing frequently. Add mayonnaise, imitation crab meat and Parmesan. Toss with noodles over fire to heat thoroughly and squeeze orange juice over top. Serve immediately.

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 348
Protein: 17 grams
Fat: 6 grams
Sodium: 450
Carbohydrates: 54

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COOKING CALENDAR

NUTRITION HEALTH FAIR
Free event 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Thursday, March 20 at Grifone
Hospital, 1101 W. University
Drive, Rochester, (810) 652-

5630. Sample a variety of healthful food, participate in games, contests and win prizes. Staff from the hospital's Food and Nutrition Services department.

Fitness Institute, Cardiac and Pulmonary... Rehabilitation department; and Weight Management Center will be on hand to answer questions.

Meet Waterford Crystal's Master Artisan John Moloney

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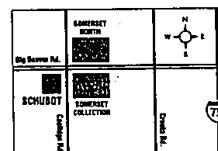
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