

# Leftovers freshen in microwave

By VIVIAN BYRD

Kris Hill loves her microwave.

"I love vegetables," she said. "Vegetables prepared in the microwave are fantastic. They steam themselves, then come out crisp and tasty, and at the same time, retain their color."

The microwave is helpful for people who, for whatever reason, cannot, or prefer not to, plan ahead. Most leftovers lose their stigma when reheated in a microwave, emerging with a fresh, recently prepared appearance and taste.

"At our house, there are days when everyone's schedule is different, with dinner spread out over the evening and no two people sitting down at the same time."

"Now that I have the microwave, even on that kind of day, I cook only once. Each dinner can then be reheated when needed. It eliminates the frustration that situation can generate."

The Beverly Hills resident successfully juggles multiple roles. She is married to Steve Hill, who works for Shamrock Broadcasting, mother of Patrick, 8, and Jacqueline, 5, and holds a part-time job three or four days a week at Pappagallo in Birmingham.

SHE ALSO ENJOYS entertaining and finds the microwave a valuable tool in preparing appetizers, dips and other side dishes. She still prepares main courses in the regular oven.

"I have experimented with main courses but they don't turn out quite the way I want. For instance, a chicken dish I tried did not have the deep-flavor aroma that it has when cooked in a conventional oven. I would like to have some good main dish recipes to try," she said.

Experimentation has lead Mrs. Hill to seek individual and larger dishes which work well in the microwave. A microwave muffin pan also works for individual servings, particularly for souffles.

Individual servings of vegetables cook up easily in plastic sandwich bags or custard cups. Disenchanted with a hard-to-clean microwave bacon pan, she began cooking bacon on a paper plate. The bacon is layered two pieces per layer, the slices curved around the outer edge of the plate with a paper towel between layers to absorb cooked-out fat. Using only outer edges of the plate avoids the necessity for turning the plate partway through the cooking time. One minute per slice on the high heat setting turns out crisp brown bacon.

HORS D'OEUVRES are lined around the edge of a paper plate or serving dish (non-metal). Again, to avoid turning during the cooking cycle, a Pyrex (clear glass designed for oven use) dish shaped like a bundt pan allows for even cooking.

Below are some recipes Mrs. Hill uses frequently. If you have favorite microwave recipes you would be willing to share, we would like to print some of them in a future column. Please mail to me at the address below.

## BRAN MUFFINS

This recipe can be mixed together then kept in the refrigerator in a closed container for up to six weeks and used as needed.

6 cups 100 percent bran cereal  
2 cups boiling water  
1 cup vegetable oil  
3 cups sugar  
4 eggs, slightly beaten  
1 quart buttermilk  
5 cups flour  
5 tsp. soda  
2 tsp. salt

Pour water in bran. Stir until it mashes. Mix with remaining ingredients. Microwave on high heat for one minute per muffin, or bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes in a conventional oven. Raisins or nuts can be added immediately before cooking, if desired.

## CRABMEAT PUFFS

Beat until stiff 2 egg whites and then add 1 cup of mayonnaise. Mix lightly and add 3 tablespoons grated onion, 1 1/2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce, 3/4 lb. fresh crab meat, or same amount frozen crab meat, thoroughly drained, salt and pepper to taste. Spoon mixture onto bread rounds, place around edges of paper plate and microwave on high for one minute per bread round. Sprinkle tops with paprika for color.

Bread Rounds: Remove crusts from thin sliced bread, then cut into quarters, or use cookie cutter to cut into rounds.

Conventional Oven: Bake at 350 degrees until warmed through, approximately 15 minutes. Bread will be crisper when done in a conventional oven.

## MOCK OMELET

Use the end of a stick of butter to butter the inside of an individual dish such as a custard dish. Lightly beat one or two eggs. Put pat of cold butter in center of eggs as microwave cooks from the outer edges toward center. Can also put other items in center such as leftover crumbled bacon, diced ham, onion, green pepper or vegetables. Put in microwave for one minute per egg on high heat.

## MUSHROOM CUPS

Wash fresh mushrooms and remove stems. For each mushroom, grate about one tablespoon of cheese (Swiss, cheddar or to your taste), and 1/4 teaspoon grated onion. Add enough mayonnaise to hold ingredients together. Fill the mushroom caps. Sprinkle with dill weed (or your favorite herb or seasoning) on top and line up around outer edges of a paper plate. Microwave for two minutes on high heat.

## LUNCHEON EGG DISH

1 10-oz. pkg. frozen spinach, thawed and drained (or cauliflower, thawed, drained and cut into smaller pieces) or fresh cauliflower cut into small pieces or fresh peacocks, cut into small pieces  
1/2 cup mayonnaise  
1 stick (5 oz.) mellow natural cheddar cheese  
1 tbsp. grated onion  
4 eggs, lightly beaten  
Salt and pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients together. Place in one quart Pyrex bundt-style pan and microwave for eight minutes. Turn out on platter (will be in circular mold shape), decorate with parsley and serve.

Letters should be addressed to Vivian Byrd, P.O. Box 1024, Birmingham 48012.



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