



pilot light

Greg
Melikov

Tamales from scratch are great if you like work

When one of my wife's sisters flew in from Texas for a visit, she brought two bags of masa in her suitcase.

"We're going to make tamales," Linda said.

"What do you mean, WE?" I asked. "You don't make them that often when we come to Texas. It's too much like work."

Masa is stoneground corn mixed with lime that Mexicans use for tamales, tortillas and many dishes. It is dried

corn kernels cooked until the skins loosen. When the skins are removed, the corn is called nixtamal, which is ground to make masa. Instant masa is dried corn flour. It is mixed with water to make regular masa.

Anita and her sister weren't discouraged by my lack of spirit and proceeded. They prepared a pork filling, but there are several cuts of beef and poultry that will appeal to taste buds as well as the pocketbook: rump or chuck

roast, turkey parts or chicken.

They couldn't find any packages of dry corn husks for tamale wrappers so foil was substituted.

I must admit I don't have the patience to prepare the masa, wrappers and filling, then assemble the tamales. I'd rather go to the supermarket and pluck a can or two of tamales off the shelf. But I don't just eat and heat them.

For example, I use the tamales — broken up after I dispose of the

wrappers — when I fix the Mexican variation of an Italian favorite, Eggplant Parmigiana.

The other bag of masa still sits in the refrigerator.

If some of you out there insisted, I'd try my hand at making tamales from scratch. But I must warn you that I have a lady man's recipe up my sleeve.

EGGPLANT MONTEREY
1 eggplant, cut crosswise into 12 1/2-inch slices

Salt and black pepper
1 cup fine dry plain bread crumbs
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup cooking oil
2 cups tamale sauce
1 pkg. (8 oz.) Monterey Jack cheese, cut in 12 slices

Season eggplant on both sides with salt and pepper to taste. Coat with bread crumbs, dip in egg, dredge again in bread crumbs, place in large plate and refrigerate 30 minutes. In large skillet, fry eggplant on both sides in hot oil on medium heat to golden brown and drain on paper toweling. Spoon one-third tamale sauce into greased 2-quart casserole; layer in six eggplant slices, top with one-third sauce and 6 cheese slices. Repeat layering. Bake in

350-degree oven 25 minutes, when bubbly. Serves 8.

TAMALE SAUCE

1 onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 tsp. olive oil
1 can (14 1/2 oz.) tomatoes in chili gravy
1 cup water
1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
1/4 tsp. dry basil
1/4 tsp. dry oregano
1/4 tsp. hot sauce

In saucepan, lightly brown onion and garlic in hot oil on medium heat. Add tomatoes and water, cover and cook 5 minutes. Mash tomatoes with fork, stir in remaining ingredients and cook uncovered until bubbly. Yields about 2 cups.

Don't throw the rice at wedding, give it with an appliance as a gift

Fashions in wedding gifts change just as clothing fashions do. One category of gifts the bride is finding more often in those silver and white wrapped packages is the small appliances. Each of these appliances makes daily living easier for the busy new homemaker. But there is one problem... the tendency to use each appliance for only one or two tasks.

Take the toaster oven for example. It does toast and melt cheese sandwiches superbly. But for the newly married couple, that compact little appliance can also cook a meal for two, such as this recipe for Cumberland Lamb Chops and Rice, a two-serving recipe perfect for the bride and groom. It is easy to prepare in the toaster oven and is absolutely delicious.

Rice is a must in the bride's pantry. Because it is so inexpensive, less than four cents per half-cup serving, it can be included on even the strictest budget. In addition, a half-cup serving of rice contains only 81 calories. Many a dish that can be heated or grilled in the toaster oven can be served over rice. In fact, why not include a box of rice with each small appliance given as a gift?

CUMBERLAND LAMB CHOPS AND RICE

2 loin or rib lamb chops, 1-inch thick (about 1 lb.)

Salt
Ground black pepper
1/4 cup chutney
1/4 tsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. prepared brown mustard
1/4 tsp. horseradish
1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
1 cup hot cooked rice

Sprinkle chops with salt and pepper. Combine chutney, lemon juice, mustard, and horseradish. Preheat broiler of toaster oven. Broil chops 4 inches from heat, about 8 minutes per side. After broil-

ing first side, turn over and spoon 1 tablespoon chutney mixture on each chop. Broil chops until done. Mix remaining chutney mixture and green pepper into rice. Heat through. Serve chops with beds of fluffy rice mixture. Makes 2 servings.

Each serving provides: 379 calories; not recommended for diabetic diets.

Rice salads are popular these days and a food processor makes the preparation of this recipe a snap. Just about any meat, seafood, vegetable or fruit can be chopped or shredded in the processor, then tossed with rice, seasoned and mixed with a dressing for a quick meal.

SPEEDY SALMON RICE SALAD

3 cups cooked rice, cooled
1 small onion, cut in half
2 medium sweet pickles, cut in half
1 medium carrot
2 ribs celery
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 tbsp. sweet pickle juice
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 can (15 1/2 oz.) salmon, drained

Spoon rice into large mixing bowl. Insert steel cutting blade into food processor container. Add onion and pickles; process until finely chopped. Add to rice. Replace cutting blade with shredding disc; process carrot. Replace shredding disc with slicing disc; process celery. Add carrots and celery to rice mixture. Blend mayonnaise, pickle juice, and seasonings; toss with rice mixture. Place salmon in center of serving dish; surround with rice salad. Makes 6 servings.

Each serving provides: 430 calories using sweet pickles, 419 using artificially sweetened pickles, 2 meat exchanges, 1 1/2 bread exchanges, 4 1/2 fat exchanges, 1/4 vegetable exchange.



Cooked in a toaster oven and creatively seasoned, Cumberland lamb chops with rice will make even the newest cook seem like a pro. This meal is nutritious, too.

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Whether eaten hot or cold, lobster is the taste choice

There are those who like their South African rock lobster cold in an appetizer or a salad.

Some people prefer it hot, whether simply plain broiled or prepared in an infinite number of main dish entrees.

Here is a choice. Both are main dishes. One is lighter, both in calories and presentation. That's the cold salad. It can be prepared in advance and served with a flourish.

The other is a very easy hot entree that can be put on the table in less than half an hour. Both dishes are designed to serve four, but can be halved if the occasion calls for an intimate dinner for two.

SHERBET SOUTH AFRICAN

ROCK LOBSTER

4 (4 oz each) frozen South African rock lobster tails
1/4 cup seasoned bread crumbs
1/4 cup mayonnaise
3 tbsp. oil
2 tsp. cherry wine
1/4 tsp. salt

Drop frozen rock lobster tails into boiling salted water. When water boils, boil for 5 minutes. Drain immediately and drench with cold water. With scissors, remove underside membrane and pull out meat in one piece. Cut meat in half lengthwise and arrange on foil-lined broiling tray. Blend remaining ingredients and spread over tails. Broil about 4 inches from source of heat for 3 to 5 minutes. Serve over hot scalloped potatoes or over rice. Yield: 4 servings.

4 (4 oz each) frozen South African rock lobster tails

1/4 cup minced celery
1/4 cup shredded carrots
1/4 cup chopped water chestnuts, drained
1/4 cup minced onion
Low-calorie mayonnaise

Drop frozen rock lobster tails into boiling salted water. When water boils, boil for 5 minutes. Drain immediately and drench with cold water. With scissors, cut away underside membrane and pull out meat in one piece. Reserve shells. Slice meat crosswise into medallions. Combine vegetables in a bowl with enough mayonnaise to coat. At serving time, divide vegetables among shells and top with rock lobster medallions. Serve shells on a bed of lettuce. If desired, with lemon slices. Yield: 4 servings.

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