



Italian Bean and Sausage Soup may be made quickly in the microwave oven. Canned beans, Italian sausage and colorful vegetables combine for an easily prepared meal-in-a-bowl.

Quick-fix soups feature beans

The microwave oven is today's kitchen essential. Now in nearly 70 percent of American homes, it's no longer just a gadget for reheating. Today's time-pressed cooks find it irreplaceable for streamlining long-cooking favorites.

Soups that once took hours to simmer now reach the table in minutes. By combining convenience foods with microwave speed, these full-flavored favorites can be ready to serve in short order.

The following quick-to-fix soups team fresh, frozen and canned ingredients with vivid seasonings for simmered-all-day flavor.

ITALIAN BEAN AND SAUSAGE SOUP

- 3/4 lb. Italian sausage, casing removed, finely crumbled
- 2 cups beef broth
- 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 1/2 oz. can tomatoes, cut into pieces
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into 1 inch strips
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 1/2 oz. can pork and beans
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Place sausage in 3-quart microwaveable casserole; cover with waxed paper. Microwave at High for 3 minutes, stirring halfway through cooking. Drain drippings; set sausage aside. Using same casserole, combine beef broth, tomatoes, green pepper, onion, garlic and Italian seasoning. Cover, microwave at High for 15-17 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. Add reserved sausage and beans. Microwave at High for 4-5 minutes, or until vegetables are tender; add parsley. Serve with grated parmesan cheese, if desired.

Eight 1 cup servings.

CHEESY BEAN AND VEGETABLE CHOWDER

- 3 cups frozen vegetable medley of broccoli, cauliflower and carrots
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 cups milk
- 1 1/2 oz. can pork and beans, drained
- 1/2 lb. pasteurized process cheese

Light hand is needed for muffins

AP — The secret of tender muffins is a light hand with the mixing spoon. Stir the muffin batter just until the dry ingredients are moistened. The batter should appear slightly lumpy.

HAZELNUT MUFFINS

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped hazelnuts (filberts) or pecans, toasted
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 beaten egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup cooking oil

In a large mixing bowl stir together flour, 1/2 cup of the nuts, sugar, baking powder and salt. Make a well in center. In a small mixing bowl combine egg, milk and oil; add all at once to dry ingredients, stirring just until moistened. Grease muffin cups or line with paper bake cups; fill two-thirds full. Sprinkle with remaining nuts. Bake in a 400° oven 18-20 minutes or until golden. Makes 12.

Nutrition information per serving: 214 calories, 4 grams protein, 21 grams carbohydrates, 13 grams fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 154 mg sodium. U.S. RDA: 11 percent thiamine.

spread, cubed
Combine vegetables, seasonings and milk in a 2-quart microwaveable

casserole; cover. Microwave at High 7 minutes, stirring once after 4 minutes. Stir in beans and cheese. Microwave at High for 5-6 minutes or

until vegetables are tender. Stir half-way through cooking and again before serving.
Six 1 cup servings

Amaretto's touch accents dessert

AP — Bake this light, sophisticated dessert while you and your guests enjoy appetizers. The apples will be the perfect serving temperature by dessert time.

- ### AMARETTO APPLES WITH MERINGUE
- 4 medium cooking apples
 - 1/2 cup Amaretto
 - 1/4 cup water
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - 3 inches stick cinnamon
 - 1/4 teaspoon finely shredded lemon peel
 - 3 tablespoons sugar

Peel, core and thinly slice apples. In a medium saucepan combine Amaretto, water, lemon juice and cinnamon. Bring to boiling. Add apples and return to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer 8

to 10 minutes or until apples are just tender, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; let apples stand in cooking liquid for 15 minutes. Remove cinnamon stick.

Meanwhile, in a small mixer bowl beat egg whites with electric mixer on medium speed until soft peaks form (tips curl). Gradually add 1 tablespoon of the cooking liquid, lemon peel and sugar. Beat on high speed until stiff peaks form (tips stand straight). Spoon apple slices and cooking liquid into six 6-ounce custard cups. Top with egg white mixture. Bake in a 325-degree oven about 10 minutes or until meringue is light brown. Serve warm. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 124 cal., 2 g pro., 30 g carbo., 25 mg sodium.

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