

Hanukkah meal can be quick and healthy

Hanukkah commemorates the Temple's dedication after its destruction by the Syrians. This century-old celebration begins Friday and continues for eight days.

Along with lighting the menorah and other traditions, the meal takes a prominent place in the holiday. Linda Rosenberg, committee chairman of the Galilee chapter of B'nai B'rith Women who produced the cookbook "Galilee Gourmet Book II," recommends potato latkes in a blender for Hanukkah meals.

"It's a dandy and it's very easy to do," she said. "Drain them well on paper toweling because there's a lot of oil and people are so concerned now."

Rosenberg suggests serving the latkes with sour cream or apple sauce.

POTATO LATKES IN BLENDER

1 small onion
3 cups diced potatoes
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup egg (or 2 small eggs)
salt and pepper to taste

Chef Larry shares family meal

There's nothing like a pot of hot, homemade soup to bring the family together. Here's my favorite recipe for:

CHEESE CHOWDER

1/2 cup finely chopped onion
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/4 cup flour
2 cups milk
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
1/4 cup finely diced carrot
1/4 cup finely diced celery
dash salt and paprika
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Cook onion in butter or margarine until tender. Blend in flour; add remaining ingredients except cheese. Cook and stir until thick and bubbly. Reduce heat; add cheese; stir to melt. Simmer 5 minutes before serving.

And what would a good homemade soup be without a recipe for:

EASY BAKE BREAD

1 package active dry yeast
1/2 cup warm water
1/4 cup hot water
1/2 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons salt
3 tablespoons shortening
2 cups whole wheat flour
3 cups white flour

Dissolve dry yeast in warm water. Set aside. Combine hot water, sugar, salt and shortening; cool to lukewarm. Stir in whole wheat flour and 1 cup of the white flour. Stir in dissolved yeast. Add enough of the remaining flour to make a stiff dough. Turn out onto a lightly floured board and knead until smooth, about 10 minutes. Place in a lightly greased bowl, turning over once to grease the surface. Cover and allow to rise in a warm place for 1 1/2 hours. Punch down. Cut into 2 portions and shape into balls. Let rest 10 minutes. Shape balls into loaves and place in a lightly greased bread pan. Cover and allow to rise in a warm place for 1 hour. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour.

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SHRIMP COOKED BONE OUT AS PICTURE

Blend all ingredients together in blender or only until the last piece of potato has gone through blender blades. Pan fry on both sides in hot oil. Keep warm in oven until ready to serve.

Weight Watchers International has compiled several traditional recipes that keep calories low while keeping tradition intact.

CHEDDAR BOW TIES

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 pound cheddar cheese, shredded
1 teaspoon double-acting baking powder
1/4 cup granulated sugar

4 tablespoons margarine
2 eggs
2 tablespoons spicy brown mustard
1 egg white, lightly beaten

In medium mixing bowl combine flour, cheese and baking powder; stir well and set aside.

Using mixer on high speed, in large mixing bowl beat 1 at a time, and beat until thoroughly blended. Stir in mustard, add flour mixture and stir until mixture forms soft dough.

Preheat oven to 375. Divide dough in half and shape each half into a ball. Roll 1 dough ball into a rectangle about 1/4 inch thick; cut into 24 1/2 x 1-inch strips. Spray baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray; twist each strip of dough in center forming a bow tie and arrange on sprayed sheet. Using half of the egg white, brush each bow tie with an equal amount of egg white and bake until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer to wire rack and let cool.

Repeat procedure using remaining dough and egg white, making 24 more bow ties.

Makes 12 servings, 4 bow ties each.

Each serving provides: 4 protein exchange; 1 bread exchange; 1 fat exchange; 20 optional calories.

Preheat oven to 350. Spray 9-inch oval baking dish or quiche dish with non-stick cooking spray; add noodles, apricots, sugar and 2 teaspoons margarine and set aside.

In blender, process eggs, nectar, cheese and vanilla on medium speed until smooth; pour over noodle mixture. In small mixing bowl combine graham cracker crumbs, almonds and remaining margarine; sprinkle over noodle mixture. Bake until mixture is set, about 20 minutes.

Makes 4 servings.

Each serving provides: 1 protein exchange; 1 1/2 bread exchanges; 1 fat exchange; 14 fruit exchanges; 40 optional calories.

ALMOND-NOODLE KUGEL (PUD-DING)

2 cups cooked wide noodles
12 dried apricot halves, chopped
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 tablespoon margarine, melted, divided
3 eggs
1/2 cup apricot nectar
3 tablespoons whipped cream cheese
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 graham crackers (2 1/4 inch squares) made into crumbs
1/2 ounce whole almonds, toasted and ground

Preheat oven to 350. Spray 9-inch

oval baking dish or quiche dish with non-stick cooking spray; add noodles, apricots, sugar and 2 teaspoons margarine and set aside.

In blender, process eggs, nectar, cheese and vanilla on medium speed until smooth; pour over noodle mixture. In small mixing bowl combine graham cracker crumbs, almonds and remaining margarine; sprinkle over noodle mixture. Bake until mixture is set, about 20 minutes.

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Hors d'oeuvres make great New Year's dishes

Continued from Page 1

Helen and John Madias of Farmington Hills also draw on ethnic heritage for holiday entertaining. Both of Greek parentage, the Madiases traditionally welcome New Year's guests with slices of St. Basil or Vasilopita, a rich offering filled with nuts and a gold coin representing future good health and prosperity.

The guest receiving the slice of bread with the coin is assured special good luck, according to Helen, who said that during the holiday season, "My table is always set with delicious treats, fruits and nuts that

spell prosperity and good luck in the new year."

IRENE AND DAVID CAMERON of Livonia normally spend New Year's Eve with a dozen or so couples from their church, each of whom contributes to a potluck dinner. The traditionally begins with appetizers.

Irene, co-ordinator of media relations for the United Dairy Industry of Michigan, prefers easy-to-prepare finger food.

"I'm a career woman and I like to serve appetizers that are quick and delicious, something that is fast to fix, yet wonderfully flavorful.

You're less frazzled if you can do things easily," she said.

Easy ideas that are "heavenly" include meatballs simmered in a blend of chili sauce mixed with grape juice, mushroom caps filled with broiled sausage, and a cheese sauce seasoned with bacon bits and horseradish that, when packaged in special containers, is tasty enough for gift giving.

Since the early 1940s, Alice and Stanley Hemback of Livonia also have forged holiday tradition with the same group of friends, four other couples who have been friends since the women graduated together from Detroit's Marygrove College in 1942.

The group hosts an annual progressive dinner, beginning with appetizers that Alice said are simple. "Things like meatballs, hot dogs wrapped in pastry, cheese balls and vegetables."

WHETHER ENTERTAINING a few or a multitude on New Year's Eve, the objective of any gathering is that it be a memorable evening of warmth and goodwill.

With 20 years' experience under her belt, Cindy Leonard offers a variety of helpful hints to assure a successful experience.

Leonard always has on hand additional drink glasses for guests who

"mislay theirs." Heating trays in the kitchen keep hot appetizers warm until the exact moment of serving. Serving trays are made more festive with sprigs of greens, ivy or ferns, combined with flowers and tied with colorful ribbons.

She uses parsley as a base for finger foods that tend to roll or are greasy. Items requiring broiling may be partly broiled earlier in the day, set aside and completed just prior to serving. Hollowed vegetables such as red or green bell peppers and cabbage are great for use as serving bowls for dips.

And to all, a happy new year!

Continued from Page 1

Butter, set aside in warm place and let raise for 4 hours until doubled in size. Punch down and coat with remaining butter. Wrap a coin in foil and insert into dough. Shape dough into a ball, set aside in warm place and let raise for 1 hour. Brush top with beaten egg, sprinkle with sesame seeds and almonds. Decorate top with mixed nuts in shells. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes or until golden.

SHRIMP BUTTER

from Irene Cameron of Livonia
from 6-ounce cans of shrimp
1 tablespoon minced onion
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 1/2 sticks butter
4 tablespoons mayonnaise
salt to taste
one 8-ounce package cream cheese

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix until smooth consistency. Serve on crackers of choice or with fresh vegetables.

LOBSTER DIP

from Pat Ginn of West Bloomfield
2 tablespoons chopped green onion
2 tablespoons chopped green pepper
2 tablespoons butter
10-ounce can mushroom soup
1/2 cup cream
1 tablespoon cornstarch
2 tablespoons sherry
2 egg yolks
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
two 5 1/2-ounce cans lobster
1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Saute onion and green pepper in butter for 5 minutes. In separate saucepan, mix soup, cream, cornstarch, sherry, yolks and nutmeg. Heat slowly until mixture starts to thicken. Add onion and green pepper and continue cooking until thick. Add cheese and lobster chunks, stirring well until cheese melts. Transfer to chafing dish and keep warm over low flame, uncovered. Makes 3 1/2 cups. Serve with a

variety of crackers.

MUSHROOM TARTS

from Cindy Leonard of Birmingham
Tart
10 tablespoons butter, in pieces
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup sour cream
1 egg, slightly beaten

Filling
4 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons finely chopped shallots
1/2 pound finely chopped mushrooms
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup whipping cream
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
parsley sprigs, optional

In food processor combine butter, flour and salt. Process just until butter breaks into small pieces. Do not overmix. Add sour cream and egg. Mix well. Wrap in wax paper and chill. Press into 48 miniature muffin cups. Bake in preheated 400-degree oven 12-15 minutes or until golden.

In heavy skillet melt butter. Add shallots. Cook 4 minutes, stirring constantly. Shallots should not brown. Blend in mushrooms. Cook until all moisture evaporates, about 10-15 minutes. Sprinkle flour over mixture. Mix well. Stirring constantly, add cream and bring to boil. When mixture thickens, reduce heat and simmer 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cool.

Fill each tart with mixture. Bake in preheated 350-degree oven 10

minutes. Garnish with small sprigs of parsley, if desired. Serve immediately.

Tarts may be filled, frozen and baked frozen in preheated 400-degree oven in 12 minutes.

Shortcut Method for Tart

24 slices soft commercial white bread, rolled to flatten
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

Cut 3-inch rounds from each slice of bread. Butter bread generously on both sides. Carefully fit into miniature muffin tins. Fill cups with mushroom filling. Bake in preheated 350-degree oven 10 minutes. Broil 1 minute to crisp. Serve immediately. Baked tarts may be frozen. Bake frozen in preheated 400-degree oven 12 minutes.

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