

Winning recipes your 'Passport to Spain'

See related story on Taste front.

MAJORCAN MUSHROOM TAPAS WITH GARLIC-STREUSEL

1 Bay English Muffin, blended into crumbs (1 cup)
2 1/2 teaspoons olive oil
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup coarsely chopped almonds

Combine crumbs, oil, garlic, pepper and almonds in large skillet over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly until crumbs and almonds are light golden brown. Spread in dish; set aside to cool.

1/2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme leaves
5 Bays English Muffins, split and lightly toasted
1 1/2 cups mascarpone cheese, room temperature
Thyme leaves (optional)

Using same skillet, wipe clean; add oil, heating to medium. Sauté shallots and garlic until soft, about 2 minutes. Add mushrooms, sherry and salt; sauté until mushrooms are tender, about 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in thyme and continue to cook until most of liquid evaporates. Spread each muffin "tapa" with cheese. Top cheese evenly with mushroom mixture; place "tapas" on baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees until hot, about 5 minutes. Spoon Almond-Garlic Streusel over mushrooms. Garnish with thyme, if desired. Makes 10 appetizers.

Recipe submitted by Mary Louise Lever of Rome, Ga., first place winner in the Bay English Muffins "Passport to Spain" contest.

LAGUNA TUNA HORS D'OEUVRES

6 Bays English Muffins, split and lightly toasted

1/4 cup prepared horseradish sauce
Laguna Tuna filling (recipe follows)
5 Roma tomatoes, seeded, diced
2 ripe avocados, thinly sliced
12 thin slices provolone cheese
Chopped green onions

Spread muffins with horseradish sauce, then with tuna filling. Arrange tomato pieces over tuna. Top with 2 avocado slices; cover with 1 slice of cheese. Place muffins on cookie sheet. Broil in preheated broiler until cheese melts and filling is warm, about 2 to 3 minutes. Cut into quarters. Garnish with green onions. Serve immediately. Makes 48 hors d'oeuvres.

LAGUNA TUNA FILLING

1 can (9 1/2 ounces) water-packed solid white tuna, drained, flaked
1 small Vidalia onion, chopped
1/4 cup mayonnaise
Salt to taste
White pepper, to taste
In small bowl, combine ingredients. Set aside.

Recipe submitted by Barbara Batdorf, runner-up Bay English Muffins Recipe Contest.

TEXAS LONE STARS

6 Bays English Muffins, split and lightly toasted
Cheesy chicken mixture (recipe follows)

4 large red peppers, seeded, cut into 48, 1 1/2-inch stars
Spread muffin halves generously with Cheesy Chicken mixture. Bake at 375 degrees for 5 to 7 minutes. Cut muffins into quarters. Garnish each quarter with red pepper star. Serve immediately. Makes 48 hors d'oeuvres.

CHEESY CHICKEN MIXTURE

1 whole boneless, skinless, chicken breast, poached and diced
12 ounces light cream cheese, softened
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
5 green onions, chopped
2 fresh jalapenos, seeded, minced
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon chili powder
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
Hot pepper sauce, to taste
In large bowl, combine all ingredients thoroughly.

Recipe submitted by Janet Jackson, runner-up in the Bay English Recipe Contest.

Cooks from page 1B

She entered the contest with the encouragement of her sister who lives in Connecticut. "I've always read cookbooks as if they were novels," said Jackson. "I learned how to cook after I got married and moved here. I missed all of the foods from home, and wasn't familiar with the restaurants around here. So I taught myself how to cook."

Batdorf, an educational sales representative for Paramount Communications, has worked as an art teacher, art consultant for a gallery, and professional model.

"I love to cook," she said. "I enjoy baking the most — breads, desserts and muffins. I'm famous in my circle of friends for my blueberry muffins."

Like Jackson, Batdorf loves to read cookbooks. She has some that belonged to her grandmother.

"I buy Bay English Muffins," and decided to enter the contest," said Batdorf.

Both women make a point of familiarizing themselves with local specialty markets. They

don't mind taking a little extra time to find the freshest produce available.

"If I want to eat corn on the cob, I'll buy it that day," said Batdorf. "I want it to be fresh."

Batdorf and Jackson said they were thrilled and surprised that their recipes were winners in a national recipe contest. They pass along these tips for people who want to enter their favorite recipes in cooking contests.

■ Have a theme to your dish. Follow the contest rules, and make sure your dish fits the theme.

■ If you had another chance to enter, Batdorf said she might have used the word "tapa" to describe her dish. Tapa is a Spanish appetizer, and the Bays contest theme was "Passport to Spain."

■ Try to use simple ingredients that everyone is familiar with, and has on hand.

■ Be sure to measure everything, and be specific about the steps involved in making your dish.

See recipes inside.

Batches from page 1B

If you are on a sodium restricted diet, be extremely careful to use only low sodium canned products. Most canned tomato products have a high sodium level. These are the items to watch out for!

Sykes grocery shops at Meijer. She likes their brand of canned products, and says they have a wide selection of low sodium

canned goods. She swears there is no difference in the taste.

Her original spaghetti recipe called for ground beef. By replacing beef with ground turkey we lowered the fat per serving from 8 grams to 1 gram.

Learn how to cut the fat from your favorite recipe. Send recipes for consideration in this column to Keely Wygonuk, Taste Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. Be sure to include your name, hometown, and a daytime telephone number.

For a complimentary issue of the "Laura's Fat Free Kitchen" newsletter, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to H.W. Publications, P.O. Box 9924, Livonia 48151-1324. Subscription price is \$12 a year.

Fresh picked herbal delights

See Larry Jones' Taste Buds column on Taste front.

If you are really enjoying the taste of fresh herbs and wish to learn more about them, check out "Rothdale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Herbs" (copyright 1992, Rothdale Press, \$20). It's available at most bookstores and culinary shops and can also be borrowed from your local library.

Looking for a great recipe for bread using just 4 ingredients and some of your garden's fresh basil? Look no more!

QUICK BASIL BEER BREAD

3 cups self-rising flour
3 tablespoons sugar
12 ounces warm beer
1/2 cup chopped basil

Mix all ingredients together and pour into a well greased loaf pan. Place in an unheated oven. Set temperature at 350 degrees and bake for 60 minutes. Remove from the pan and cool on a wire rack. Makes 1 loaf.

SUMMER HERB SALAD DRESSING

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 small clove garlic, crushed
1 1/2 teaspoons fresh grated lemon peel
1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
1/4 cup good olive oil
Fresh ground black pepper to taste
1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
1/2 cup fresh chopped parsley

Combine all ingredients except parsley in a salad dressing bottle. Shake well to mix. Refrigerate and allow to mellow for at least 2 hours. About 1/2 hour before serving, add parsley. Shake well before using. Pour over your favorite salad. Makes a little over 1 cup dressing.

FRESH HERB GARDEN PESTO

6 tablespoons good olive oil

3 tablespoons herb flavored vinegar

3 tablespoons pine nuts or blanched almonds or walnuts

2 large cloves garlic, chopped

1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 1/2 cups fresh basil leaves

1/4 cup chives, chopped

1/2 cup fresh oregano leaves

1 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor in the order given. Blend or process until smooth, stopping to scrape down the sides. This can be refrigerated, covered for up to one week, if desired but is best if used as soon as possible.

Grate over fresh cooked and drained pasta or slathered on crusty bread and popped under a broiler for a few minutes to heat through. Makes about 2 1/2 cups.

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GRILLED SALAD BURGERS

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 cup onion, chopped
1 tomato, washed, cored, sliced

Remove tomato and cucumber mixture from refrigerator and drain well. Whisk divide mixture as a topping for the burgers. Cover with lettuce top. Serves 6.

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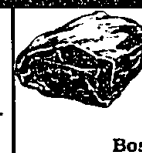
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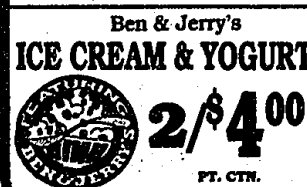
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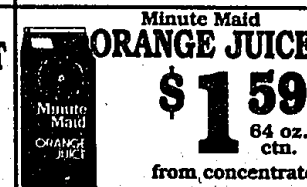
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