

Like a utility infielder, hot dogs are versatile

Try these recipes on your Opening Day

All recipes compliments of the National Hot Dog & Sausage Council. See related story on Taste front.

CHEESY HOT DOG POCKETS

- 1/2 cup hot dogs, cubed
- 1/2 pound sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2-ounce jar stuffed green olives, chopped
- 1/2 cup frozen diced onions
- 1/2 cup chili sauce
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 2 hard boiled eggs, chopped
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 4 pita rounds

Heavy duty aluminum foil

Cut hot dogs into fourths lengthwise, then slice into 1/4-inch cubes. Combine with olives, eggs, mustard, mayonnaise, chili sauce and cheese, mixing well. Cut pita rounds in half. Open pocket and fill with approximately 1/3 cup filling — be generous. Wrap individually in foil and refrigerate.

When grill is hot, place foil-wrapped sandwiches on grill and heat for 10 minutes. Uncover and continue heating until pita bread is crisp and filling is hot — 10-15 minutes more, depending on desired crispness.

POLYNESIAN KABOBS ON RICE

- 2 Polish sausages (or any other pre-cooked sausage)
- 4 green peppers
- 2 cups pineapple, cubed
- 1 cup sweet and sour sauce
- 4 servings rice

Cut sausages into eighths. On a skewer alternate chunks of pineapple and green peppers with the sausage. Place on grill four to six inches from coals from flame until heated thoroughly. Baste with the sweet and sour sauce. Serve over rice. Serves 4.

SAUSAGE STIR FRY

- 1/2 pound Polish sausage or your favorite type
- 2 cups broccoli, chopped
- 2 cups carrots (sliced)
- 3 cups cooked rice

Slice sausage, carrots and broccoli. Cook rice according to package, making enough for three cups. Spray pan with cooking spray, add sausage and saute. Add vegetables, stir and cover to let simmer for five to seven minutes until vegetables are tender. Serve over a generous portion of cooked rice and enjoy.

FRANKLY THE BEST BAKED BEANS

- 1 1/2 tablespoons, yellow mustard
- 1/3 cup ketchup (For spicier beans, use barbecue sauce.)
- 1/4 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon, onion powder
- 2 (16 ounce) cans of baked beans (dark brown, small beans work best)
- 1 package hot dogs

Mix all ingredients together in an oven-proof, 2 quart casserole dish. Bake at 350° F for 20-25 minutes. Serves 8-10.

SAUSAGE AND BLACK BEAN TAMALE PIE WITH CHEDDAR CRUST

- 1 pound pork sausage links, casings removed
- 2/3 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 16-ounce can black beans, drained
- 1 1/2 cups medium hot picante sauce
- 1 8 1/2 ounce package corn muffin mix
- 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided
- 1/4 cup half and half
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 pint sour cream
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup sliced black olives

Heat oven to 375° F. Grease 10-inch glass pie plate. In a large, 12-inch skillet, crumble the pork sausage and brown. Drain excess fat. Add onions and green pepper and continue cooking until vegetables are crisp-tender. Stir in drained black beans and the picante sauce. Set aside. In a medium bowl, combine corn muffin mix, one cup of the cheddar cheese, the half and half and the egg. Stir just until moistened. Press mixture on bottom and up sides of the greased pie plate. Spoon sausage mixture into crust. Bake 25 minutes or until mixture is set.

Remove from oven; sprinkle with remaining cup of cheddar cheese. Bake five minutes or until cheese is melted. Allow to stand five minutes. Cut into six wedges and serve with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkle of fresh cilantro and black olives. Makes six servings.

Council hint: Recipe also would work well with cajun style bratwurst and chorizo. This recipe from Eleanor Freulich of Rochester won third place in the 1996 National Sausage Month Award-Winning Recipes.

WHAT'S COOKING

Send items for consideration in Cooking Class Calendar to Ken Abramczyk, Observer Newspapers, 38251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, or e-mail kabramczyk@aol.com, homecomm.net

Vegetarian Cooking — Lenore Yellsove Baum, author of "Lenore's Natural Cuisine, Your Essential Guide to Wholesome Vegetarian Cooking," conducts vegetarian cooking classes at Lenore's Natural Cuisine, 22899 Inkster, Farmington Hills. Baum has scheduled a session on tofu, Wednesday, April 12, 6-9 p.m., and pressure cooking, 6-9 p.m., Monday, April 17. Baum also teaches a beginning cooking series each week from 6-9 p.m. on Wednesdays in May, starting

May 3. Call (248) 478-4455.

Wines of Livermore — The Ritz-Carlton in Dearborn will host a wine-maker dinner featuring the wines of Livermore Valley in central California on Wednesday, April 12. A reception begins at 6:30 p.m. featuring hors d'oeuvres and wines. A three-course dinner begins at 7 p.m. The cost is \$89 per person inclusive of tax and gratuity. Call (313) 441-2120.

The Larger — The Tree House, 22906 Mooney St., in Farmington, currently has Wednesday classes at 7-9 p.m. about how to live longer and get well through nutrition and exercise. Call (248) 473-0624 for information.

Easter Eggs — Learn how to make panoramic Easter eggs with sugar, royal icing and an egg mold with Audrey Edwards at a three-hour class set for 11 a.m. Saturday, April 15, at Kitchen Glamor in Great Oaks Mall at Walton and Livernois in Rochester. Call (800) 641-1252 for information.

Appetizers — Mary Spencer will instruct a session on how to prepare a wild mushroom enchilada, curried pates and Thai spring rolls. Sessions at Kitchen Glamor stores are 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 2, at the Novi Town Center; and Thursday, May 4, at the Great Oaks Mall, Walton and Livernois in Rochester. Call 1-800-641-1252.

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