

Rhubarb Buttermilk Bread

Makes one 9 x 5-inch loaf.

Ingredients:

Topping:

¼ cup all-purpose flour
2 Tablespoons brown sugar
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 Tablespoons butter, cubed
¼ cup chopped pecans

Batter:

1½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup sugar
1½ teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
2 large eggs
½ cup buttermilk
6 Tablespoons butter, melted
Zest of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon vanilla
¾ cup chopped rhubarb

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan.

Prepare the Topping:

In a medium bowl stir together flour, brown sugar, and nutmeg. With a fork, mix butter into flour mixture until mixture is about the size of peas. Add pecans and set aside.

Prepare the Batter:

1. In a medium bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
2. In a separate bowl, combine eggs, buttermilk, melted butter, lemon zest, and vanilla. Add to the dry ingredients and stir to combine. Stir in the rhubarb until it is well blended into the batter.

Assemble the Bread:

1. Pour the batter into pan. Use a spatula to evenly distribute the batter in the pan.
2. Sprinkle the topping evenly over the batter.
3. Bake for 1 hour or until the top is golden and a knife inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean.
4. Cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes before serving.



Zucchini Tart with Sausage

Yields 4 servings

Ingredients:

½ pound Italian sausage
2 small zucchini, about one pound
1 sheet puff pastry, thawed
3 Tablespoons Dijon mustard

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat; add sausage and cook until browned.
3. Add zucchini and two tablespoons water. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 4 minutes or until zucchini softens.
4. Unfold pastry sheet. On a lightly floured surface, roll pastry to remove folds. Prick all over with a fork, leaving a ½-inch border. Spread mustard over the dough, avoiding the border. Top with sausage and zucchini mixture. Bake until pastry is golden brown, about 20 minutes.



Note: Sausage and zucchini can be made ahead and refrigerated for up to 2 days.

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Cooking Tomatoes

Summer is here and most of us can't wait for a fresh tomato, hot off the vine. After all, it is the most commonly grown vegetable in the United States.

While raw tomatoes are great and should be enjoyed, studies show that cooking increases the antioxidant power of tomatoes. Cooked tomatoes have an increased amount of lycopene that can be absorbed by the body.

Cornell researchers found that when tomatoes were heated to 88°C for 2, 15, and 30 minutes, the lycopene content increased with increasing temperature.

Lycopene is a form of vitamin A and is what gives tomatoes their red color. Antioxidants, such as lycopene, protect the body from cell and tissue damage.

With these findings, we have reasons to feel good about eating cooked fruits and vegetables.



Eggplant with Tomatoes

Yields 2 - 3 servings

Ingredients:

1 eggplant, about 1 pound
2 cups chopped tomatoes
1 cup chopped onions
¼ cup olive oil, divided
1 -2 Tablespoons parsley
Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

1. Cut eggplant into cubes. Place in a large bowl. Add salt and allow to sit for about 20 minutes.
2. Sauté onions in one tablespoon of olive oil. Cook until translucent. Add tomatoes, parsley, salt and pepper.
3. Add water to cover the eggplant. Remove eggplant; place in a towel and squeeze dry.
4. In another pan, sauté the eggplant in the remaining oil. Once the eggplant has started to soften, add the tomato mixture. Simmer for about 20 minutes.

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