

BAKED PASTAS

pastitsio << see photo, page 89

SERVES 8 ■ PREP TIME: 50 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES

This is the ultimate Greek comfort food, a hearty casserole of cinnamon-spiked ground lamb baked with penne and a Parmesan cheese sauce.

for the pasta:

coarse salt and ground pepper

1 pound penne, cooked
and drained (see page 94)

2 pounds ground lamb

2 medium onions, diced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine

1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon

*for the Parmesan Cheese Sauce
(opposite):*

6 tablespoons butter

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour
(spooned and leveled)

3 cups milk

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper
(optional)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup Parmesan cheese

1 Preheat oven to 375°. Cook pasta, and drain; reserve. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, over medium heat, cook lamb, breaking apart pieces with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, 6 to 8 minutes. Add onions; cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 5 minutes.

2 Transfer to a colander; drain fat, and discard. Return lamb to pan; add wine. Cook over medium heat until almost all liquid has evaporated, about 5 minutes.

3 Stir in tomato paste, cinnamon, and 2 cups water; simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened, 15 to 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

4 Make Parmesan Cheese Sauce while mixture is simmering.

5 Add pasta to lamb mixture; transfer to a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Pour sauce over the top, smoothing with the back of a spoon until level. Bake until browned in spots, 35 to 40 minutes. Remove from oven; let cool 15 minutes before serving.

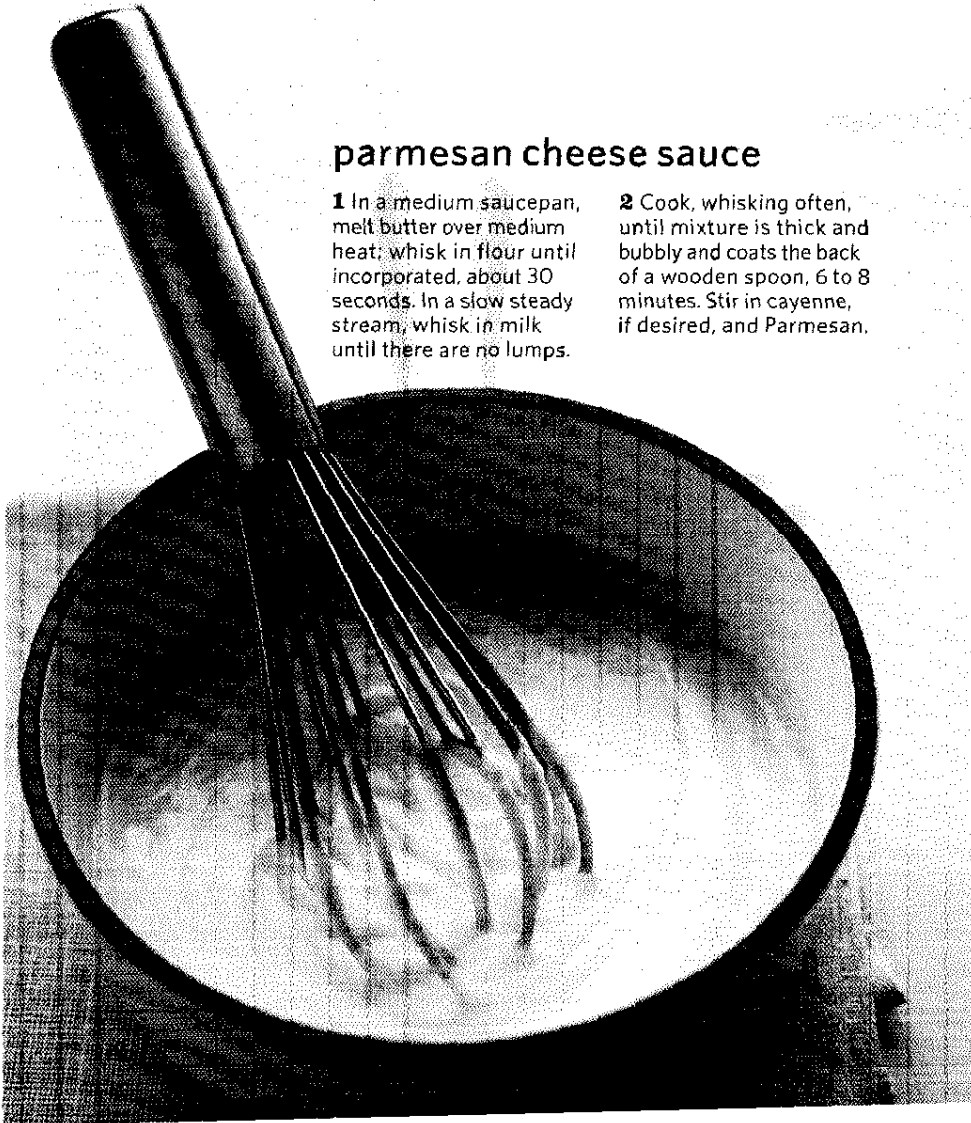
note

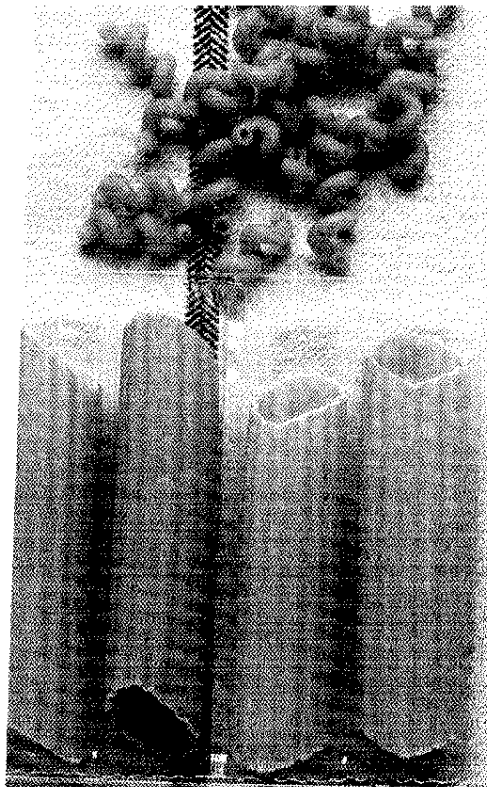
Our Parmesan Cheese Sauce is a variation on the classic white sauce known as béchamel, made from butter, flour, and milk. Béchamel is also used as a base in our Macaroni and Cheese (page 92).

parmesan cheese sauce

1 In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat; whisk in flour until incorporated, about 30 seconds. In a slow steady stream, whisk in milk until there are no lumps.

2 Cook, whisking often, until mixture is thick and bubbly and coats the back of a wooden spoon, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in cayenne, if desired, and Parmesan.





preparing pasta

GETTING STARTED

Use a large enough pot: For each pound of pasta, you will need at least four quarts of water. Add at least two tablespoons of coarse salt after the water comes to a boil.

PREVENTING STICKING

Enough water and frequent stirring will keep pasta from sticking. Do not add oil to the water—this prevents sauces from clinging to the pasta. Always cook uncovered.

WHEN IS IT DONE?

Pasta should be al dente (firm to the bite). If undercooked, it will have a chalky core and floury taste; if overcooked, it will be limp and soggy. When cooking pasta for baking later, it is especially important that it is al dente as it will continue to cook in the oven. Start tasting the pasta two to three minutes before the end of the cooking time given on the package.

DRAINING

Before draining the pasta, reserve one to two cups of the cooking water; it contains starch from the pasta that can add body to sauces. After draining, shake the colander a few times. Do not rinse (unless you want it to cool).

RESERVING, COOLING, AND DRYING

To reserve pasta for a few minutes, drain, and toss with a little olive oil. To cool pasta for salad or manicotti, run under cold water while draining. To dry, spread pasta on a sheet pan, and pat with paper towels.



BAKED PASTAS

HANDY FREEZER STORAGE
If you don't want to tie up your baking pans in the freezer, line them with plastic wrap before filling. Once food has frozen, lift out, remove plastic wrap, and transfer to resealable freezer bags (label and date); place in freezer. When ready to bake, remove from plastic bag and place in pan to reheat.

freezing baked pasta

These pasta dishes freeze well without the need for a special recipe.

FREEZING
Always cool food before freezing. Divide into two 8-inch square freezer-to-oven baking dishes. To avoid freezer burn, wrap tightly in plastic. Label and date, and freeze up to three months.

When ready to eat, remove from the freezer, remove plastic cover with foil. Bake at 375° until hot in center, about 1 hour; remove foil. Ricotta Manicotti (page 100) is ready to serve at this point. For the other three dishes, continue baking until a golden crust forms, about 15 minutes.

For more information, visit us at www.RobtCyn.com or call 623-933-7177.

BAKED PASTAS



manicotti how-to

- 1** Fill a sturdy plastic bag (freezer bags work best) with ricotta filling.
- 2** Snip the tip off one corner of bag.
- 3** Squeeze filling through the corner hole into the cooked pasta shell.

ricotta manicotti with tomato sauce

<< see photo, page 99

SERVES 6 ■ PREP TIME: 45 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES

Our version of this beloved Italian-American dish is straightforward and delicious. Freeze any remaining sauce, and use within the next two months.

- coarse salt and ground pepper
- 1 package (8 ounces) manicotti, cooked, drained, and cooled (see page 94)
- 2 containers (15 ounces each) part-skim ricotta cheese
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1½ cups shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 ounce dried mushrooms, such as shiitake (optional), soaked and drained (see note below), and finely chopped
- 4 cups Basic Tomato Sauce (see opposite)

- 1 Cook pasta, drain, and cool. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 375°. In a large bowl, whisk together ricotta, eggs, thyme, oregano, and 1 cup Parmesan. Season with 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Stir in mushrooms, if desired.
- 2 Using a plastic bag for filling (see page 98), stuff cooled pasta shells (about 3 tablespoons ricotta mixture in each).
- 3 Coat bottom of a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with 2 cups tomato sauce. Line up manicotti in baking dish, and cover with 2 cups sauce. Sprinkle with remaining ½ cup shredded Parmesan. Bake until bubbly, about 30 minutes.

■ per serving: 490 calories; 20.6 grams fat; 32.5 grams protein; 44.5 grams carbohydrates; 3.1 grams fiber

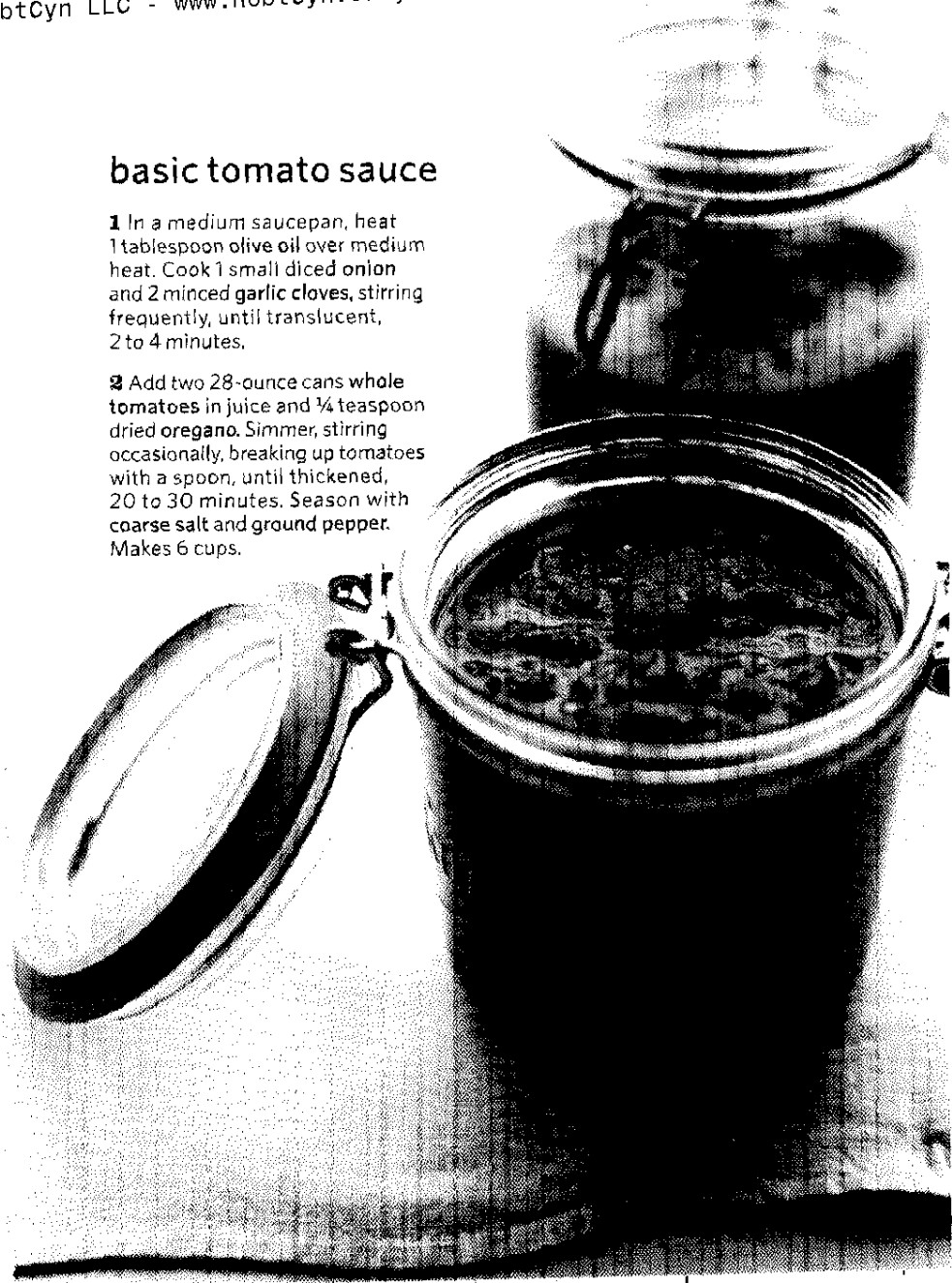


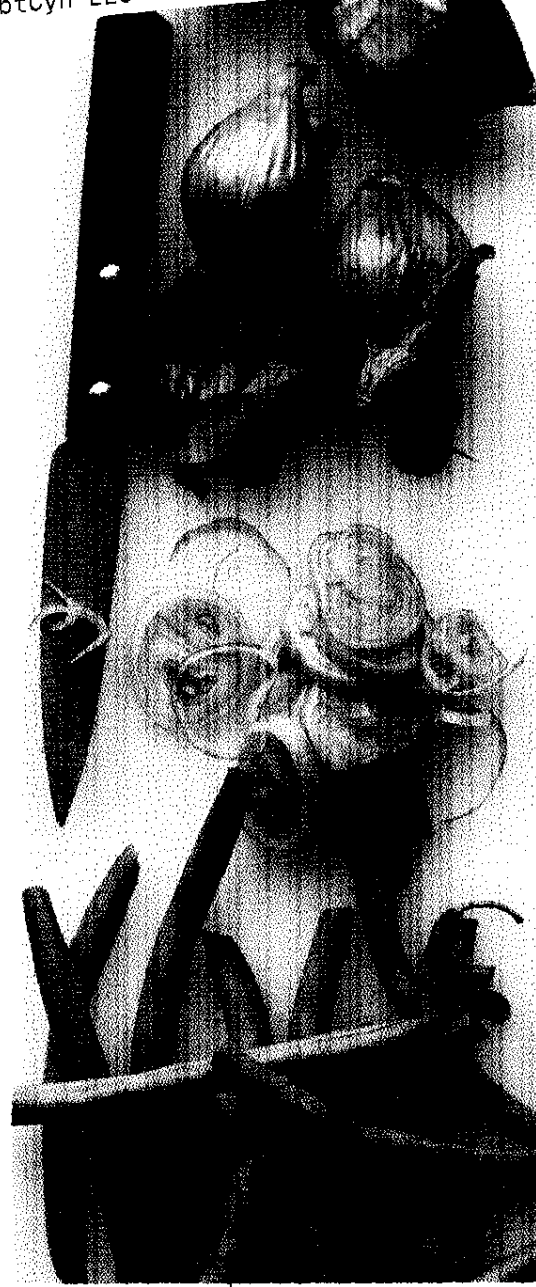
SOAKING DRIED MUSHROOMS
 Cover mushrooms with warm water, soak 20 minutes or until soft. Lift from liquid, rinse under cool water, pat dry.

basic tomato sauce

1 In a medium saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat. Cook 1 small diced onion and 2 minced garlic cloves, stirring frequently, until translucent, 2 to 4 minutes.

2 Add two 28-ounce cans whole tomatoes in juice and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dried oregano. Simmer, stirring occasionally, breaking up tomatoes with a spoon, until thickened, 20 to 30 minutes. Season with coarse salt and ground pepper. Makes 6 cups.





green beans with caramelized shallots

<< see photo, page 115

SERVES 4

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 6 shallots, peeled
and thinly sliced into rings
- coarse salt and ground pepper
- 1 pound green beans, trimmed

1 In a medium saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, melt 2 tablespoons butter over medium heat; swirl to coat bottom of pan. Add shallots; cover. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Set aside.

2 Meanwhile, in a large pot of boiling salted water, cook green beans until fork-tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Drain; return to pot. Toss with remaining tablespoon butter. Season with salt and pepper.

3 Transfer green beans to a serving dish; top with caramelized shallots.

per serving: 139 calories; 8.7 grams fat;
3.6 grams protein; 15.2 grams carbohydrates;
3.9 grams fiber

FOOD FACTS

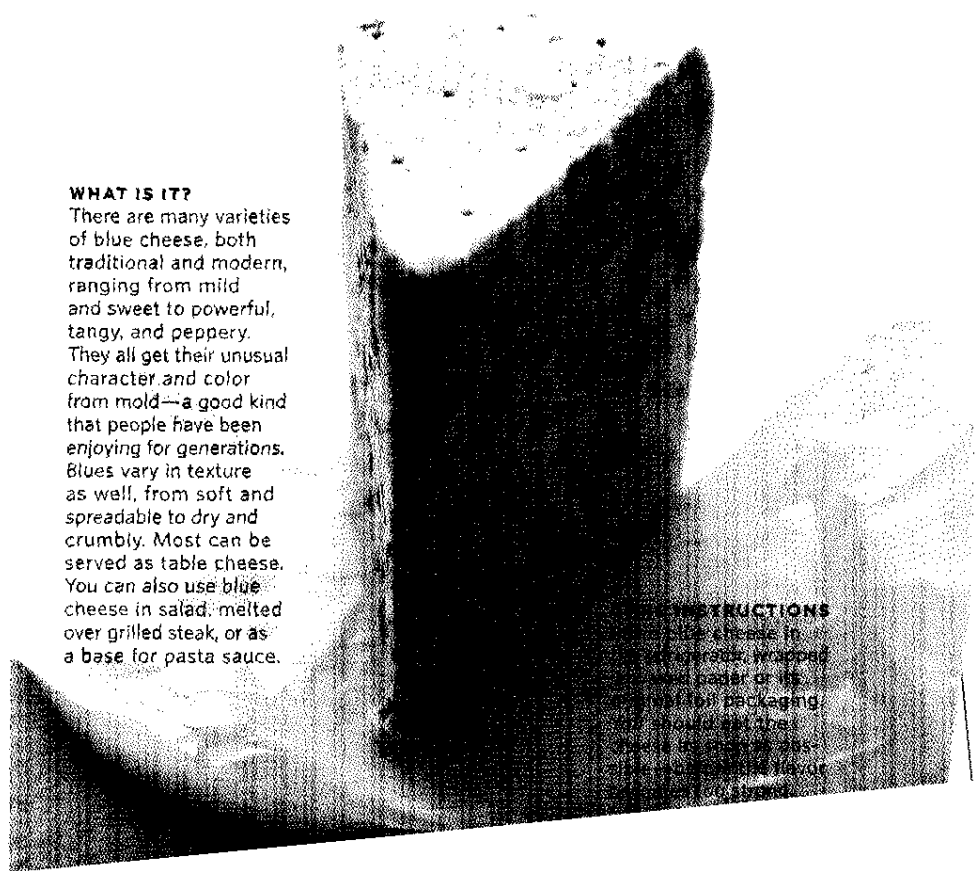
BLUE CHEESE *With its pungent, distinctive flavor, it is as irresistible on its own as it is paired with fruit, toasted nuts, and crusty bread.*

WHAT IS IT?

There are many varieties of blue cheese, both traditional and modern, ranging from mild and sweet to powerful, tangy, and peppery. They all get their unusual character and color from mold—a good kind that people have been enjoying for generations. Blues vary in texture as well, from soft and spreadable to dry and crumbly. Most can be served as table cheese. You can also use blue cheese in salad, melted over grilled steak, or as a base for pasta sauce.

INSTRUCTIONS

...cheese to ... wrapped ... paper or its ... packaging ... the ...



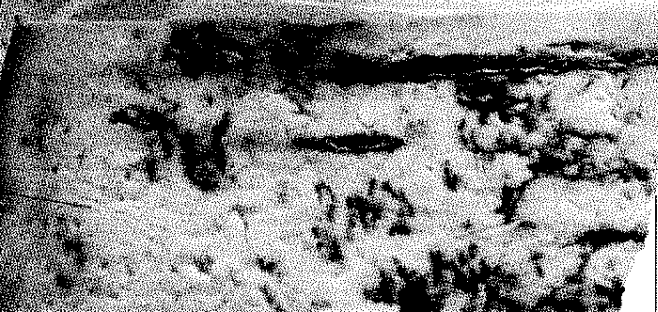
danish blue

MOIST AND MILD
Ivory in color, with
pockets of dark veins,
this cow's-milk cheese
is moist and buttery. It's
also the mildest of the
blues, a good choice if
you or your guests
are new to blue cheese.



gorgonzola

SWEET OR SHARP
One of Italy's great
cheeses, gorgonzola
is soft and
creamy when young and
firm and aged.





roquefort

SWEET AND COMPLEX

This classic blue is made from sheep's milk and aged in limestone caves in southwestern France. It is white with clusters of blue-green veins and a creamy, crumbly texture. A top-notch Roquefort is both sweet and tangy, and very smooth.

stils

salmon cakes

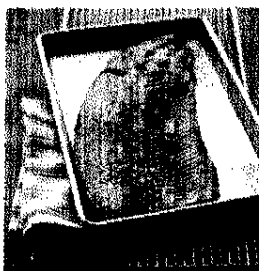
SERVES 8 ■ **PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES** ■ **TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES**

If you make this recipe often, you might want to experiment with additional flavorings and serve something a little different every time.

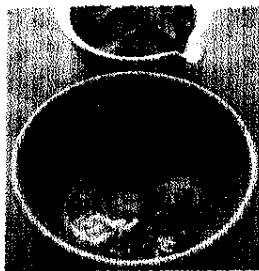
WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 2 pounds skinless salmon fillet
- coarse salt and ground pepper
- ½ cup thinly sliced scallions
- ½ cup plain dried breadcrumbs
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ cup light mayonnaise
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Lemon-Herb Sauce (opposite)
- one additional flavoring (opposite; optional)

WHAT TO DO



1 Preheat oven to 400°. Place fish on a rimmed baking sheet; season with salt and pepper. Roast until cooked.



2 In a large bowl, combine scallions, breadcrumbs and parsley.



3 Form mixture into patties.

fig spread

MAKES 1¾ CUPS
PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES

- 1 package (10 ounces) dried Calimyrna figs, stemmed and cut into ¼-inch pieces (about 1¾ cups)
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 In a medium saucepan, combine figs with sugar and 1½ cups water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, until most of liquid has evaporated and figs are easily pierced with the tip of a sharp paring knife, about 20 minutes.

2 Transfer mixture to a food processor; add lemon juice. Purée until smooth (add up to ¼ cup additional water, if needed, to thin to desired consistency). Store in refrigerator for up to 2



prosciutto and fig
spread sandwich

SERVES 1 ■ PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES

Also known as a Delmonico steak, rib-eye is a well-marbled and extremely tender cut of beef with a pronounced meaty flavor.

SHOPPING LIST

- chili powder
- ground coriander
- Dijon mustard
- olive oil
- red-wine vinegar
- coarse salt and ground pepper
- 1 rib-eye steak (8 ounces)
- small head leaf lettuce
- 4 radishes
- small red onion

1 Make salad dressing: In a medium bowl, stir together $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon chili powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground coriander, mustard, 2 teaspoons olive oil, and vinegar. Season with salt and pepper; set aside.

2 Prepare steak: Rub meat with remaining chili powder and coriander; season with salt and pepper. In a small skillet, heat remaining teaspoon oil over medium-high. Cook steak, turning it over halfway through, until browned and cooked to medium-rare, about 4 minutes.

3 Assemble: Add lettuce, radishes, and onion to bowl with dressing; toss to coat. *Plating*



TYPES OF MUSHROOMS

The most common varieties of cultivated mushrooms include (page 60, top to bottom) shiitake (intense mushroom taste), white (mild), portobello (meaty), and cremini (similar to white, with a fuller flavor).

BUYING

Look for firm, smooth, and dry caps. Avoid damp, pitted, or dried-out mushrooms.

STORING

Refrigerate loose mushrooms (unrinsed) in a paper bag, and containers of mushrooms in their original package. Use within a few days of purchase.

CLEANING

Do not soak mushrooms — they will absorb water rapidly and turn mushy when you cook them. You can clean tough spots with a stiff brush without wetting them, or quickly rinse them under a fine stream of cold water. Dry thoroughly on paper towels.

PREPARING

Mushrooms can be sliced, cubed, or sautéed. They are also used in soups, stews, and casseroles. For more information, see page 60.

macaroni and cheese

SERVES 8 ■ PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR

If you like, use just one type of cheddar or mix with another melting cheese, such as pepper Jack, Muenster, Swiss, or mozzarella.

- coarse salt and ground pepper
- 1 pound elbow pasta, cooked and drained (see page 94)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion, chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour (spooned and leveled)
- 4 cups milk
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (5 ounces) shredded yellow cheddar cheese
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (5 ounces) shredded white cheddar cheese
- 8 ounces ham, diced into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces
- 2 slices white sandwich bread

1 Preheat oven to 375°. Cook pasta, and drain; reserve. Meanwhile, in a 5-quart heavy pot, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Whisk in flour to coat onion. In a slow steady stream, whisk in milk until there are no lumps.

2 Cook, whisking often, until mixture is thick and bubbly and coats the back of a wooden spoon, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in cayenne, if using, and 1 cup each yellow and white cheddar cheese. Season with 1 teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper.

3 Toss pasta with cheese mixture; fold in ham. Transfer to a 9-by-13-inch baking dish or individual dishes (see note, below left). Set aside.

4 In a food processor, pulse bread until large crumbs form. Toss together with remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each white and yellow cheddar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt. Top pasta with breadcrumb mixture. Bake until top is golden, about 30 minutes.

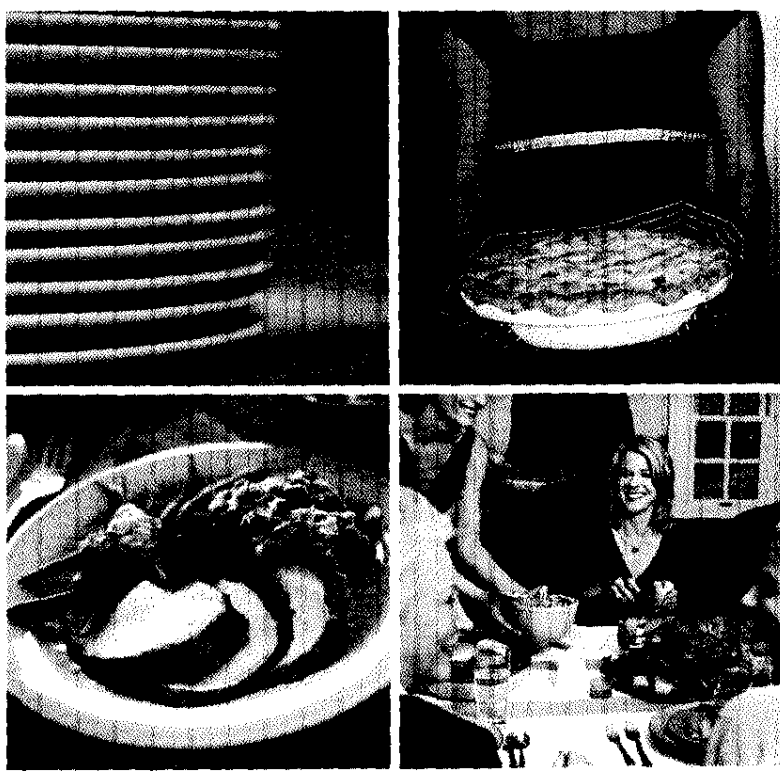
note

This recipe makes enough to fill eight 12-to-16-ounce baking dishes. Divide the macaroni and cheese evenly, sprinkle with topping, and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until golden.

ADVERTISEMENT

Holiday Potluck

Is there a better way to share your holiday meal?



THE POTLUCK IS A DISTINCTLY AMERICAN TRADITION, AND SOME CALL IT OUR NATIONAL MEAL. While we've come a long way since that first Thanksgiving, the potluck supper is still a great way to share a holiday meal with your closest friends and family. The variety of foods you'll see at your holiday table will be quite a treat, as will the extra time you'll have to enjoy the company.

Potluck Tips

- **Specific Assignments** While a potluck means less cooking for the host, it requires some thoughtful planning. Assign food categories to your guests or ask them to bring a specific dish, such as sweet potatoes or green beans. If some guests prefer not to cook, they can supply beverages, plates or utensils.
- **Strategize with Your Guests** To avoid last-minute chaos in the kitchen, ask your guests if their dish will be finished when they arrive or whether they'll need additional cooking time.
- **Easier Fare** If you're attending a potluck, try making a dish that's easy to transport and that will only need last-minute heating or arranging before going to the table. GLAD® Press'n Seal® Wrap is great for covering everything from baking pans to casserole dishes, and can help prevent spills en route. If you can't find the right-sized container, you can do without one and just custom-fit the wrap around your food.
- **The Portable Standard** The casserole has become a potluck staple since it travels so well. What's most important is that the dish is substantial enough to maintain its warmth from cooking, or durable enough to support reheating.
- **Party-Friendly Food** Dishes served at room temperature, such as pasta or chopped salads, are ideal for parties. Pasta salads can be dressed in advance and chopped salads can be dressed right before serving. Try using GladWare® containers to transport food ingredients. You can bring just the right amount of pre-cut ingredients and dressing for your recipe, and you can leave the disposable containers behind without worry.



A Festive Touch

Glad's new holiday products feature festive holiday designs exclusive to Target®. They're perfect for wrapping hostess gifts, such as cookies and cakes, and for transporting goodies to holiday parties.

These GLAD holiday containers, food bags and wraps—with special holiday designs—are available exclusively at Target®.

