West Virginia Department of Agriculture
Walt Helmick, Commissioner

Cast-Iron Cookbook II

Yesterday and Today

Volume II:

- Skillet Fajita
- Skillet/Round Skillet
- Chicken Fryer Skillet
- Cornbread Pans

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Introduction

Home-style cooking can be symbolized by no other cookware quite the way it is by cast iron. This durable and timeless cookware has been handed down from generation to generation. Cast iron cooking, a time-honored tradition, is again growing in popularity as our culture embraces basic traditions from the past. The selection of cookware has grown considerably with this popularity, cast iron cookware ranges from skillets and Dutch ovens to woks and hibachi grills. Cast-iron is considered the original non-stick cookware and a superb heat conductor. It's perfect for cooking with less fat or oils and readily adapts to a wide range of ethnic cuisine.

This cookbook illustrates the versatility of cast iron in today's kitchens, provides a brief history of cast iron, and provides information on the proper care and use of cast iron cookware. The recipes complied in this cookbook are easy to make using ingredients readily available in the grocery store. The great mix of traditional and contemporary recipes encourages home cooks and discerning chefs alike to expand their cast iron cooking and even try some West Virginia Grown products. While there is a plethora of fried chicken and cornbread recipes out there, along with those traditional favorites, you will find variety in this book.

When compared to other cookware, cast iron has its drawbacks. It can rust, pit, stick to food and have reactivity. These problems can be eliminated with proper seasoning, sometimes known as curing. Seasoning means coating the entire pan, inside and out with oil, shortening, or lard and baking it to seal the fat into the pan. This process allows the coating to fill cavities and pitted surfaces permeating pores and developing a non-stick surface to prevent water from creating rust and acidic food from creating reactivity. This protective layer of seasoning breaks down over time and the process must be repeated. Some cast iron pans are coated with enamel. This is an attempt to improve the deficiencies of cast iron while maintaining exceptional heat conduction.

Seasoning and caring for your cast-iron cookware may seem like a time-consuming task. However, cast iron cookware will last a lifetime with the proper care. The time it takes to care for this cookware is well worth it when you consider the value of the cast iron, the irreplaceable flavor it gives food and its durable quality. To ensure success when cooking with cast iron, follow the tried and true tips on cooking, proper seasoning, and care of cast iron in this cookbook.

How to Season and Care for Your Cast Iron Skillets and Pans

By Harry Lynch – Summersville, W.Va.

Proper care and seasoning of cast iron skillets and pans make cooking in them a joy. Neglect, on the other hand, will cause disappointment and poorly cooked food. Here are a few tips to keep those pans in top-notch shape:

1. If you have a new cast iron pan, wash with hot, soapy water to remove the protective coating that has been applied at the factory. Rinse and dry thoroughly. If the pan is old and shows some signs of rust, lightly sand rusted area and apply Cola for 10-15 minutes. Then wash with mild soapy water, rinse, towel-dry and place over low heat to remove excess water from the porous metal.

- Clean the cast-iron with a mild detergent and stiff brush. Be sure to wash both the inside and outside of the piece.

2. Lightly coat the entire pan's surface – inside and out – with cooking oil, lard or shortening. Do not use butter or margarine. Use a paper towel to spread the oil.

- Lard spoils faster than oil. While lard adds more favor, it requires that the cookware be used weekly to keep the seasoning from going bad. Oil, on the other hand, stays fresh longer but may become sticky and collect dust.
- Be sure to coat all exterior parts such as handles and lids.
- Using too much oil or grease during seasoning causes a pool of excess oil or grease to gum up.
- If excess oil or gummed up grease is found after seasoning, scrape it off and re-season the effected spot.
- Heating pans upside down typically will prevent gumming.

3. Place pan upside down on oven rack and heat without pre-heating in a 400°F oven for 1½-2 hours. Put aluminum foil in bottom of the oven to catch oil drippings. Let pan cool in oven. Remove from oven and wipe clean. It is now ready to use.

- Seasoning can generate smoke and odors. Season your cast iron cookware on a nice day to allow you to open windows and doors for air circulation or use an outdoor grill.
- If using an oven with two racks, just line the lower rack with aluminum foil to catch any excess oil or shortening.
- Be sure that both racks are in the two bottom positions
- Remove cast-iron from the oven only after it has cooled.
- Cast-iron may come out slightly brown. At this time, it is ready for use. Repeating the process will further season your cast-iron and make it darker, thus improving its appearance.

- Seasoning at higher temperatures to the point where most oils will begin to smoke can result in a darker seasoned piece in less time that won't be sticky or gummy.
- After coating warm cast iron with a thin layer of oil or grease, most manufacturers suggest heating the pan for 1 hour. However, some cooks suggest that seasoning cast iron requires 4 to 5 hours of baking to achieve the right amount. Other cooks repeat the thin layer of oil or grease and the 1 hour baking process several times before using the cookware.
- Some cooks believe seasoning should be repeated each time the cast iron cookware is used.

4. A well-seasoned cast iron pan takes time and improves each time it is used. However, high acid foods that contain tomatoes should be avoided until the pan had been thoroughly seasoned through usage. Hot liquids will also break down the seasoning until it has had a chance to completely fill the pores in the metal. Cooking beans should also be avoided at first. Frying or baking is good choices for first time usage. If you do cook acidic foods or beans, be prepared to re-season your cookware in the oven.

5. There's a rule of thumb that a seasoned cast iron pan should never be washed with soapy water or placed in the dishwasher. Rather, clean it with hot water and a plastic scrub brush. If you do have to wash with soap, you must re-season your cookware in the oven.

6. Always dry cast iron cookware thoroughly after cleaning. Then spray lightly-the word lightly is emphasized — with vegetable oil. Wipe dry and store. Never store cast iron pans with lids on them. Cast iron cookware needs the air to circulate. Humid weather can create moisture and lead to rust in cast iron cookware sealed with lids, therefore, lids should be stored separately. Place paper towels inside cast iron cookware to absorb any moisture that may form.

7. Frequent use of cast iron cookware is recommended. If stored too long or if a heavy coat of oil was applied before storage, expect the oil to become rancid and to affect the taste of the food being cooked. It may be removed by heating over low heat until a pool of oil forms in bottom of pan, and then wiped clean. If this technique does not work, prepare to wash in soapy water and re-season.

A History of Cast Iron

Cast iron is iron that is heated to a liquid state and then poured into a mold. Sand and a small mix of clay, to hold the sand in shape, line a mold. After the heated iron is poured into the mold, the shaped casting will have a rough surface because of the rough texture of the sand used in the mold. The texture of the surface will distinguish cast iron from forged metal. Cast iron is poured at a foundry, not a blacksmith shop. Cast iron cannot be heated and re-shaped, or welded.

For hundreds of years, foundries have used the sand casting technique. The techniques have changed very little over time. Minor changes in the casting techniques enable us to determine the approximate date of most pieces. The oldest pieces will have a circular 'sprue' mark on the underside of the piece. The sprue is the point where the molten iron is poured into the mold. This technique was used until the mid-to late 1700s. Cast iron pieces will have at least one point on where the iron entered the mold.

Cast iron pieces made from the mid-1700s to the late 1800s will have a long thin line on the bottom of the piece called a 'gate' mark, where the iron entered the mold. Smooth bottom pieces were made from around 1875 to present time, because the entrance for the iron was placed on the sides of the mold. These pieces can have one or more places on the side that have been heavily grinded to disguise where the iron entered the mold or to get rid of the excess metal from the pour.

Refined casting techniques produced some extremely well-made cast iron cookware pieces between 1875 and 1940. In efforts to refine the casting techniques from 1875 to 1900, cast iron cookware manufacturers created thinner pieces. Manufacturers soon learned this thinness did not maintain the durability that made the cookware famous. In fact, a high number of those pieces cracked or warped during use. Pieces produced during this time also had a slightly more primitive appearance due to fewer finishing steps on the production line. Pieces made between 1900 and 1940 were both thicker and more finished. The height of quality in cast iron production was realized between 1920 and 1940. During this time, cast iron pieces were produced with glass-like surfaces as a result of a series of polishing steps in the manufacturing process. Manufacturers might tumble small cast iron pieces in a large rotating drum containing small pieces of metal which polished the pieces. Skillets and Dutch ovens would be turned on lathes to create a smooth cooking surface. Lathe marks can be found on the inside of pieces created during this time.

Griswold, Wapak, Favorite Ware, Wagner Ware, and Lodge are some of the more recognized foundries for cast iron cookware. Cast iron cookware from these manufacturers is some of the hottest items in the antiques and collectibles market today.

In many West Virginia families the cast iron skillet is a treasured heirloom passed down from generation to generation. Since cast iron cookware is now considered collector's items they are rare to fine at garage or estate sales. Look in your attic, basement, or garage and dig out your heirloom and enjoy what many of us crave…food cooked in cast iron.

Skillet

This piece is the most popular cast-iron cookware. It has become a kitchen essential. It comes in a variety of sizes. Ten inch (10") and 12" models are most common. The 10" one is less weight, while the 12" one can feed a large group of people. The number on the handle on many skillets is not indicative of its size.

Cakes

PEACH UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Evelyn L. Smith – Windsor Heights, W.Va.

- 1 stick butter
- 2 eggs
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Cream butter, eggs, sugar, and salt together. Add flour, baking powder alternately with milk; beat until fluffy. Add vanilla.

Put a layer (¼") of brown sugar in cast iron skillet. Lay peach halves over brown sugar (round side up). Pour batter over and bake in oven at 350°F for 55-60 minutes. Insert toothpick to check for doneness.

To remove from pan, lay a flat plate over top of baked cake and flop cake onto platter. Any kind of fruit can be used.

PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Jean Fancher – Rachel, W.Va.

- ½ stick butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 can pineapple slices
- 4 maraschino cherries, halved
- 1 yellow cake mix – prepared

Melt butter in 10" iron skillet. Stir in brown sugar until smooth. Place pineapple rings to cover the bottom of skillet. Place ½ cherry in middle of pineapple rings. Pour cake batter over the top. Bake at 350°F for 30-35 minutes or until cake is done. Let cool. Turn upside down on plate.

PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

- 1 stick butter
- ¾ cup dark brown sugar, packed
- 1 20-ounce can Dole® sliced pineapple, (save juice)
- 10 cherries, candied
- 1 yellow cake mix

Melt butter in warm cast iron skillet. Put brown sugar all over butter in skillet. Layer pineapples all around on top of sugar. Put cherries in holes of pineapples. Mix cake batter by directions on box, replacing water with pineapple juice. Pour on top of pineapples, bake in preheated oven at 350°F until brown. Serve hot or cold.

PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Robin Scites – Milton, W.Va.

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 2 cups brown sugar (more if needed)
- 1 stick butter
- 1 18-ounce can pineapple rings, drained
- 1 6-ounce jar maraschino cherries

Melt butter in extra large deep iron skillet, adding brown sugar until thick. Line skillet with pineapple rings. Prepare cake mix per directions on box substituting drained pineapple juice for the water and also include any left over pineapple rings in mix. Pour cake mix over pineapples. Bake at 350°F for approx. 30-45 minutes (or until golden brown and firm on top). Remove from skillet while hot, turning upside down on a plate (pineapples are now on top of the cake). Decorate with a cherry in the center of each pineapple ring.

PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Joy Freeman – Hurricane, W.Va.

This cake has been in our family for a long time. I use the cast iron skillet my mom bought when she got married in 1943 for $1.49.

- 1 stick butter
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 18-ounce can crushed pineapple (save juice)
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 375°F. Melt butter in cast iron skillet. Add brown sugar. Top with crushed pineapple.

Beat 3 egg whites until stiff-set aside. Beat the 3 egg yolks. Add 1 cup sugar and mix until creamy. Add 5 tablespoons pineapple juice.

Sift and add flour, baking powder and salt. Fold in egg whites. Bake for 30 minutes. The edges are crisp. It is the only upside down cake I eat.

PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Ms. Doris Fields – Springfield, W.Va.

- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 can pineapple slices
- Pecan halves
- Candied cherries
- 1⅓ cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- ⅓ cup soft shortening
- ⅔ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Prepare heavy skillet. Melt ⅓ cup butter in skillet (9”). Sprinkle ½ cup brown sugar over butter. Arrange drained sliced pineapple over sugar. Decorate with pecan halves and cherries, if desired.

Sift together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Add shortening, milk, and vanilla.

Beat 2 minutes. Add egg and beat 2 more minutes. Pour batter over fruit. Bake at 350°F for 40-50 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Immediately turn out upside down on a plate.

PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Margaret C. Stone – Lewisburg, W.Va.

- 1 18-ounce can pineapple chunks
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 6 maraschino cherries, halved
- 1¼ cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1¼ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs, separated
- ⅛ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ½ cup pineapple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup coconut

Drain pineapples, reserve syrup. Melt butter (reserve 1 tbsp.) in 9" iron skillet. Add brown sugar and mix in skillet. Arrange pineapple chunks and cherry halves on mixture. Sift flour, baking powder, ¾ cup sugar, and salt together. Beat egg whites with cream of tartar to soft peaks. Gradually add remaining sugar beating to stiff peaks. Combine egg yolks, ½ cup syrup, and vanilla to dry ingredients. Pour over egg whites, folding to make smooth batter. Fold in coconut and reserved tablespoon of melted butter. Pour over fruit. Bake on lowest rack in oven at 325°F for 40-45 minutes. Let stand a few minutes, then invert onto platter. Leave skillet there, to let syrup drain. Serve plain or with whipped cream.

WV SKILLET UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Wanda Wills – Grassy Meadows, W.Va.

- ½ stick margarine
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 20-ounce can pineapple slices (reserve juice)
- 1¼ cups plain flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 egg
- ⅓ cup shortening
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

Melt margarine in 8" iron skillet. Sprinkle brown sugar over margarine. Place pineapple slices on top of brown sugar.

Mix remaining ingredients together and pour over mixture in skillet. Bake at 375°F for 25-30 minutes until golden brown. Cool 5 minutes and invert onto large plate.

If food sticks to cast iron, the cookware is not seasoned right. It's time to re-season it!

PEAR WALNUT UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Margaret C. Stone – Lewisburg, W.Va.

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon cloves
- 1 peeled, cored and sliced lengthwise pears
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup molasses
- 1 tablespoon butter
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons walnuts

Preheat oven to 375°F. Combine and mix well the first 7 ingredients. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk, eggs, butter and molasses; mix well. Mix both bowls together and stir until smooth. Melt 1 tsp. butter in 9" cast iron skillet. Stir in brown sugar and cook over medium heat for 1 minute. Remove from heat; sprinkle with walnuts. Place pear slices in bottom of skillet. Pour batter over pears and bake at 375°F for 30 minutes. Cool 10 minutes. Remove from skillet and place on plate.

RASPBERRY SKILLET CAKE

Ginny Fitzwater – Charleston, W.Va.

- 1⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons butter or margarine, room temperature, divided
- ⅓ cup light brown sugar
- 2 cups red raspberries or 12 oz. frozen, unsweetened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 egg whites
- 1 teaspoon orange zest, grated
- ⅔ cup orange juice

Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine flour, baking soda and salt. In 10" iron skillet, melt 1 tbsp. butter over low heat. Remove from heat. Stir in brown sugar. Spread berries over sugar. Beat remaining butter and granulated sugar until combined. Add egg whites and zest. Beat until creamy. Alternately beat in flour mixture and orange juice until combined. Spoon batter over raspberries. Bake 45-50 minutes. Cool in skillet 10 minutes. Loosen edges of cake. Invert onto serving plate. Serve warm.

Makes 10 servings. Has one third of the fat of a traditional upside down cake.

PINEAPPLE SKILLET CAKE

Carolyn Blakemore – Fairmont, W.Va.

Topping:

- 3 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 7 pineapple rings, (juice reserved)
- 6 maraschino cherries
- ⅓ cup chopped pecans

Cake:

- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- 1½ cups flour, sifted
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 325°F. In a 10” seasoned cast iron skillet melt margarine on low heat. Remove from heat and sprinkle brown sugar over margarine. Place pineapple rings on sugar, put a cherry in center and sprinkle pecans on top.

In a mixing bowl, mix eggs and sugar. Add vanilla and juice. Mix well. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Add to the sugar, until well blended. Pour batter over pineapple rings in skillet. Bake 25 minutes or until well browned and test with a wooden pick. Cool to warm. Remove to plate or serve from skillet. Invert on plate. Pineapples will be on the top. Serves 4-6.

SPICED PEAR SKILLET CAKE

- 1 cup light brown sugar, firmly packed
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 4 pieces (¾ stick)
- 1⅓ cups flour, all-purpose
- 1⅓ cups granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1¼ teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoons salt
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup corn oil or vegetable oil
- 1 small pear, unpeeled, coarsely grated
- 1 tablespoon ginger, fresh, grated, peeled
- 4 medium pears, peeled, cored, each cut into 6 wedges (about 1.5 pounds)
- 2 scoops vanilla ice cream (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F and position rack in center of oven. Sprinkle brown sugar evenly over bottom of 12” cast iron skillet with 2½ inch high sides. Add butter pieces to skillet. Place skillet in oven until butter melts, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, mix flour, sugar, cinnamon, baking soda and salt in bowl. Using electric mixer, beat in eggs and oil. Mix in grated pear and ginger; set aside. Using oven mitt, remove skillet from oven; whisk butter and sugar until sugar dissolves.

Arrange pear wedges in skillet in a flower pattern, fitting wedges closely together and placing any remaining wedges in center. Pour batter over pears, spreading evenly. Bake until cake is springy to the touch and tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Transfer from skillet to rack and cool 20 minutes. Loosen edge of cake with knife. Place large plate over skillet. Using oven mitts, firmly grasp plate and skillet. Carefully invert skillet, turning out cake onto plate. Remove skillet. Serve cake warm with ice cream, if desired.

CHERRY CHOCOLATE DELIGHT

Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

- 1 chocolate cake mix, prepared
- 1 20-ounce can cherry pie filling

Preheat oven to 350° F. Coat iron skillet with cooking spray. Mix up cake batter by directions on box. Pour into pan. Bake cake for about 20-25 minutes or until done. Let cool. Pour pie filling over warm cake. (To treat skillet after washing, pat dry and heat on top of stove until hot. Turn off heat and let cool. Store as usual.)

Cobblers

APPLE SKILLET COBBLER

Carlene Reher – St. Clairsville, OH

- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 6 apples, peeled, cored and diced
- 1½ cups buttermilk biscuit mix
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 cup sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
- ¾-1 cup milk

Heat the butter and 1 cup sugar in 10” skillet over medium heat. Add apples; continue cooking until sugar is melted and forms amber-colored syrup. Mix the biscuit mix with ¼ cup sugar and grated cheese. Add enough milk to form soft dough. Spoon over the apple mixture and bake in a 350°F oven for 20 minutes or until top is lightly browned.

CAST IRON COBBLER

Celestine Ervin – Charleston, W.Va.

- 2 20-ounce cans pie filling (your choice)
- 1 white or yellow cake mix
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup 7-Up®
- Ice cream or whipped topping, optional

Pour the pie filling into a 10” cast iron skillet. Sprinkle cake mix over the pie filling. Slice butter over the top. Pour the 7-Up® over everything. Bake at 350°F for about 35-45 minutes. Serve with ice cream or whipped topping.

Other Desserts

APPLE CRISP

1½ cups quick oats
1 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ cup flour
1 stick butter
1 can apple pie filling

Mix oats, brown sugar, cinnamon and flour. Melt butter in bowl. Add to mixture and mix until crumbly. Put apple filling in the bottom of skillet. Sprinkle crumbled mixture on top of filling. Bake in oven at 350°F for about 15 minutes. Serve hot with vanilla ice cream or cold.

BAKED FUDGE BROWNIE

1 cup granulated sugar
3 tablespoons shortening (not butter)
Dash of salt
3½ teaspoons plain flour
2 beaten eggs
3 tablespoons cocoa
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325°F. Mix sugar, shortening, salt, flour and eggs. Add cocoa and vanilla extract. Pour into a greased cast iron skillet. Bake for about 20 minutes (more or less, depending on the size of your skillet). Fudge will be done when the entire top is crusty.

BLACK IRON SKILLET BUTTTERSCOTCH PIE

Anna C. Boyles – Grafton, W.Va

8" pie crust (baked)

Filling:
1 cup brown sugar
4 tablespoons milk
¼ stick of butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
2 yolks (reserve whites for meringue)

Meringue:
2 egg whites
½ teaspoon vanilla
¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
4 tablespoons sugar

Meringue: In small mixing bowl, beat egg whites, vanilla and cream of tartar at medium speed on electric mixer for about 1 minute or till soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar and mix on high for 4 minutes or till stiff peaks form.

Filling: Heat brown sugar, milk and butter in a cast iron skillet. Blend flour and milk slowly and add to mixture in cast iron skillet. Beat 2 egg yolks and add, stirring until thick. Pour hot filling from skillet into 8" baked pie crust.

Spread meringue over hot filling; seal to edge to prevent shrinkage. Bake at 350°F for 10-12 minutes.

SHUT YOUR MOUTH SWEET POTATO PIE

Pie Filling:

- 3 pounds yams
- 1 stick of butter
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoon nutmeg
- Dash of cinnamon

Pie Crust:

- 2 cups of flour
- ⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon of shortening
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons ice water

Poke 3 holes with knife into the yams, Bake in oven at 425°F for about an hour, until soft.

Pie Crust:

Add shortening to flour and mix till crumbly. Add salt and water and mix to a play dough consistency. Roll out on a bread board dusted with flour. Place in 10-inch cast iron skillet.

Pie Filling:

Allow yams to cool slightly and remove skin. Add butter to warm Yams (right from the oven and peeled), and mash with a fork. Add the rest of ingredients (except cinnamon) and mix until pie filling is real smooth. Pour into an uncooked pie crust. Sprinkle top with cinnamon. Bake for 50-60 minutes at 400°F until you can stick a knife in it and pull it out clean. Let cool at least one hour.

Breads

GRANDMA'S CORN PONE

Celestine Ervin – Charleston, W.Va.

- 4 cups corn meal, stone ground (or self rising)
- 1 pint water, boiling
- 1 pint water, hot
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup flour (use plain or self-rising)
- 1 pinch of salt

Melt enough grease in a 10" iron skillet to coat the bottom, then twirl until the sides are coated (or use cooking spray) leave in oven on warm. In a large mixing bowl combine stone ground meal and boiling water, mix well. In a separate bowl beat eggs and buttermilk, till frothy, add to cornmeal mixture with the sugar and salt, spoon in flour, add the hot water as need until mixture is thick but easy to pour into skillet. Bake at 425°F about 50-60 minutes or until golden brown and knife inserted in middle comes out clean.

Neutral cooking oils are recommended for coating a cast iron pan as opposed to olive oil or hazelnut oil, butter, etc.

CORN PONE

Ann Walker – Hillsboro, W.Va.

- 4 cups cornmeal, fine ground
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 4 cups water, boiling
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup buttermilk

In a glass or crock bowl mix cornmeal, sugar, salt and boiling water. Cover and stir as often as possible the first hour. Let sit overnight or at least 8 hours. The next morning or 8 hours later, add flour, melted butter, baking powder, baking soda and buttermilk.

Place in a greased and floured #8 cast iron skillet. Bake 15 minutes at 460°F and then 45 minutes at 250°F or until golden brown.

IRISH BREAD

Veronica Keaton – Beckley, W.Va.

"I take this to pot luck dinner at church and none is left."

- 4 cups flour
- ½ cup sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 3¼ teaspoons baking powder
- 2 tablespoons caraway seeds, optional
- ½ teaspoon soda
- 2-3 eggs, beaten
- 1½ cups buttermilk
- 8 ounces raisins

Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease and flour a 10½" cast iron skillet. Combine dry ingredients. Add beaten eggs. Gradually add buttermilk until mixture is doughy. Add raisins. Spread in skillet and bake 55-60 minutes. I save a little of beaten egg to brush the top.

BUTTERMILK DROP BISCUITS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup butter, margarine or shortening
- 1¼ cup buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons carrots, finely shredded (optional)
- 1 tablespoon parsley, snipped (optional)
- 1 tablespoon green onion, chopped (optional)

In bowl, stir dry ingredients together. Cut in butter, margarine or shortening to coarse crumb stage. Add buttermilk and carrots, parsley and onion if desired. Stir until just blended.

Drop dough into 10" cast iron skillet. Fill quite full. Bake 15-18 minutes in 450°F oven. Serve warm. Makes 7 biscuits.

PEPPERONI BREAD

Kathleen King – Moorefield, W.Va.

- 1¼ cup warm water
- 2 .5-ounce packages dry yeast
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 3½ cups flour
- ½ pound pepperoni, slivered
- 2 cups Mozzarella cheese, shredded
- Herbs and spice of choice

Stir yeast and sugar into warm water. Let stand until bubbly. Add the salt and about half the flour to make soft sticky dough. Let rise until double. Stir down and add enough of the remaining flour so dough can be handled. Knead on lightly floured surface until smooth and elastic, adding flour only if necessary. Cover the ball of dough and let sit 10-15 minutes. Roll into 14”x16” rectangle. Spread with pepperoni, cheese, and herbs of your choice. Sprinkle with pepper. Roll as you would a jellyroll, sealing edge by pinching. Form the roll into a circle and place into a well-greased cast iron skillet. Let rise 1 hour. Bake at 375°F for 30 minutes. Brush with melted butter.

RAMP BISCUIT MIX PIZZA

Anna Brown – Morgantown, W.Va.

WV Company: Brown’s Creations in Clay

- 1 package Brown’s Creations Ramp Biscuit Mix®
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1-2 tomatoes, ripe, thinly sliced
- 2 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 1 pound sausage, cooked, crumbled or pepperoni
- ½ cup hot peppers, sliced (optional)

Preheat oven at 425°F. Oil a 10” cast iron skillet well. Mix Brown’s Creations Ramp Biscuit Mix® according to directions on package. Oil hands well and push dough out to cover bottom of skillet. Slice ripe tomatoes thin and cover top of the dough. Layer mozzarella cheese, pepperoni or crumbled fried sausage, and any other favorite pizza toppings – add what you like – sliced hot peppers add some spice! Sprinkle remaining shredded cheese to top on top and bake for 20 minutes.

BUTTERMILK BISCUITS

- 1¼ cups flour
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tablespoons shortening
- ½ cup Buttermilk

Put one tablespoon of shortening in your cast iron skillet. Place skillet in the oven and turn on to 500°F.

Mix flour, baking soda and salt. Cut in the shortening. Work mixture with pastry cutter or a fork until very small clumps are left. Add buttermilk and mix lightly. Knead a bit, but not much. Less is better. Rough out dough mixture to ½” thick. Use biscuit cutter to cut out biscuits.

Carefully remove hot skillet from the oven. Place the biscuits in skillet with the shortening. Turn skillet and place back in the oven. Bake for 10 minutes.

UPSIDE DOWN PIZZA

Ethel Kight – Moorefield, W.Va.

This is a great, easy dish my family has enjoyed for years.
Just one dish to wash. Great to use in our camper.
The skillet fits in the small oven and it stays warm for a while.

Filling:

½ pound sweet (or hot) sausage
1 pound hamburger
1 medium onion, chopped
2 tablespoons cooking oil
¾ teaspoon garlic powder
¾ teaspoon Italian seasonings
1½ 14-ounce jars pizza sauce
2 cups Mozzarella cheese, grated

Dough:

2 eggs
1 cup milk
¼ teaspoon salt
1½ cups flour

Topping:

½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Add oil to 10½" cast iron skillet. Add sausage, hamburger and onion; cook for 5 minutes. Drain grease. Add garlic powder, Italian seasonings and pizza sauce; sir well. Add grated Mozzarella cheese on top of mixture.

Combine eggs, milk, salt and flour. Mix well. Spread over meat mixture. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese. Bake at 400°F until golden brown, 20-30 minutes.

Variation: Add chopped green peppers, mushrooms and/or pepperoni, according to taste.

Yorkshire Pudding

Yorkshire pudding is an English savory dish similar to a popover made from batter. It is traditionally prepared in a cast iron skillet and is most often served with roast beef. Au jus, the juice obtained from roasting meat, is considered an essential accompaniment by many to really enjoy authentic Yorkshire pudding. Yorkshire pudding is cooked by pouring batter into a greased cast iron skillet that has been heated, and baking at a very high heat until it has risen. Traditionally, it is cooked in a large skillet underneath a roasting meat, in order to catch the juices that drip down.

Yorkshire puddings may be offered with a multitude of fillings, with the pudding acting as a bowl. It can also be eaten as a sweet dish, with jams, jellies or maple syrup.

YORKSHIRE PUDDING

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- ¾ cup water
- ½ cup beef drippings
- ¾ cup milk, room temperature

Mix flour and salt together until blended. Make a well in the flour, add the milk, and whisk until consistent. Beat the eggs into the batter. Add water and beat again until the mixture is light and frothy. Set aside for an hour (or, if it's the day before, cover and place in the refrigerator overnight).

If the batter has been refrigerated, allow it to come up to room temperature before using. When the roast beef is ready to come out of the oven, prepare the mixture.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Pour off drippings from roast beef and measure out desired amount (about ½ cup should do). Pour drippings into a 10" cast iron skillet and place into the oven until the drippings sizzle. Immediately pour the batter over the drippings and bake for 30 minutes (or until the sides have risen and are golden brown). Cut and serve immediately.

Extra au jus or beef drippings can be poured on top for added flavor.

YORKSHIRE PUDDING II

- 3 tablespoons shortening
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- 4 eggs

Preheat oven to 450°F. Spread shortening into a 10" cast iron skillet and place on center rack in oven.

In medium bowl, mix flour and 1 cup of milk until a smooth paste is formed. Whisk in eggs one at a time, mixing thoroughly. Whisk in remaining cup of milk.

When shortening in oven has begun to smoke, remove skillet from oven and pour in batter. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes, until golden brown and fluffy. Remove and allow to cool 5 minutes. Slice and serve immediately.

Casseroles

BROCCOLI CASSEROLE

Ruby Page – Core, W.Va.

- 10 ounces broccoli, chopped (frozen)
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 6 ounces cottage cheese, small curd
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ cup soft oleo or butter
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 box Jiffy cornbread mix (use dry)
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Stir all ingredients except ½ cup of cheddar cheese until well blended. Pour into a large greased hot iron skillet. (Make sure skillet is very hot!) Sprinkle remaining ½ cup of cheddar cheese on top. Bake until top is dry and pulls away from skillet (about 30-40 minutes at 375° F).

UPSIDE DOWN HAMBURGER PIE

Meat Mixture:

½ pound ground beef
1 tablespoon cooking oil
¼ cup celery, finely chopped
1 onion, chopped
¾ cup green pepper, chopped
1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper

Dough:

1 can biscuit dough
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped
½ teaspoon celery seed

Preheat oven to 450°F. Brown meat in oil in a cast iron skillet. Add celery, onion and green pepper. Cook over medium heat 5 minutes. Stir in tomato sauce, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Turn into an 8" cast iron skillet.

Roll out biscuit dough between 2 layers of wax paper. Use top layer of wax paper to push parsley and celery seeds into dough. Roll dough into 8" circle. Place dough over hot meat. Bake 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes. Invert onto round dish.

SMOKED VENISON POT PIE

Ric Menefee – Houston, TX

1 teaspoon olive oil
1 medium onion
Dash of salt (no-salt substitute)
Pinch of pepper
Pinch of ground cinnamon
1½ cups venison hind-quarter, smoked & chopped
½ cup carrots, frozen
½ cup corn, frozen
½ cup peas, frozen
1 12-ounce jar brown beef gravy
1 1.5-ounce package dry onion gravy mix
¼ cup water
1 box pie crusts (contains 2)
¼ cup Egg Beaters®
½ tablespoon melted butter

Preheat oven at 350°F. Use 6" iron skillet to sauté in olive oil; chopped onion, salt, pepper and cinnamon. Stir occasionally; remove from heat when onions are clear. Combine meat, vegetables, gravys, and water with sautéed mixture. Set aside mixture to allow frozen vegetables to warm to room temperature.

Combine Egg Beaters® and melted butter to make wash for crust.

Use well seasoned 10" iron skillet. Spray with cooking oil. Center one piecrust in bottom of skillet and mold sides.

Pour in complete mixture. Brush egg wash on exposed piecrust edge. Lay second piecrust over mixture, pinching top and bottom edges together. Brush egg wash across entire top crust. Make 3-4 cuts in top crust for heat vents.

Cover crust edges with foil and bake in pre-heated oven for 25 minutes. Remove foil and bake 25-30 additional minutes, or until crust is golden brown. Remove and let cool 10 minutes before serving. Serves 6-8.

BROCCOLI AND STUFFING SIDE DISH

Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

- 1 box of stove top stuffing
- 12 ounces broccoli, frozen (thawed)
- 2 cups Cheddar cheese, shredded

Prepare stuffing as per box directions. Spray iron skillet with cooking spray. Put stuffing in iron skillet. Sprinkle 1 cup of the cheese over top of stuffing. Spread 1 cup of broccoli on top. Sprinkle with remaining 1 cup of cheese on top. Place in 350°F. oven for 10-15 minutes. Serve while hot.

BROCCOLI RICE CASSEROLE

- ¾ cup onion, chopped
- ¾ cup celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 3 cups rice, cooked
- 1 10-ounce package broccoli, chopped, frozen (thawed)
- 1 10-ounce can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 4 ounces pasteurized process cheese
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, grated

In large skillet, cook onions and celery in butter until tender crisp. Add remaining ingredients, except grated cheese. Bake at 350°F for 35 minutes, or until hot and bubbly. Top with grated cheese. Bake 2 minutes longer, or until cheese melts. Serves 6-8.

SAUSAGE CORNBREAD

Janice Wright – Winfield, W.Va.

- ½ pound sausage
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup milk

Brown sausage in 8” iron skillet until crumbled. Drain excess grease. Combine dry ingredients in bowl; mix well. Stir in eggs and milk. Pour batter over sausage in iron skillet. Bake at 415°F for 25-30 minutes until brown. Makes 6 servings.

BAKED CORNBREAD CHILI

Celestine Ervin – Charleston, W.Va.

- 1 pound ground beef or venison
- ⅓ cup onion, chopped
- 1 10-ounce can tomato soup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1-ounce package of chili mix
- 1 15-ounce can kidney beans
- 1 10-ounce can of water (use soup can)
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 box Jiffy® cornbread mix

Brown ground beef or venison and onion in oil in a cast iron skillet. Add soup, water, beans and seasonings.

Mix cornbread according to directions on the box; pour on top of meat mixture. Place in oven; bake 20-30 minutes at 350°F.

MEXICAN SKILLET CHICKEN

- 2 cups corn tortilla chips, slightly broken
- 2½ cups chicken, cooked, diced
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 10.5-ounce can cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1 4-ounce can green chilies, diced and peeled
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup hot pepper cheese, grated
- 2 6-ounce packages yellow cornbread mix
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, grated

Heat oven to 400°F. Grease large cast-iron skillet. Combine sour cream, soup, chilies, onions and chicken in medium mixing bowl. Make cornbread following the instructions on package in large mixing bowl. Add grated cheddar cheese to cornbread mixture. Cover the bottom of the skillet with the broken tortilla chips. Sprinkle the grated hot pepper cheese over the chips. Spread sour cream and chicken mixture over chips. Carefully spread cornbread mixture over chicken layer. Bake at 400°F for 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown. Serves 6-8.

Rusty or grease-encrusted cast iron pieces can be restored. One method is to spray cookware with an oven cleaner and seal it in a black plastic bag. Place bag in full sun for 6 hours. Scrub, rinse, and repeat until clean. Then re-season the cookware.

Submitted by: Ann Walker, Hillsboro, W.Va.

CREOLE-ITALIAN CORNBREAD CASSEROLE

Harry Lynch – Summersville, W.Va.

- 2 6-ounce packages of cornbread mix
- Vegetable oil
- 1 cup salad olives, chopped and drained
- ¼ cup red onion, finely chopped
- ¼ cup celery, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 2.25-ounce can black olive slices, drained
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 thin slices ham, deli-style
- 4 slices provolone cheese
- 20 slices pepperoni

Preheat oven to 450°F. Prepare cornbread mix according to package directions. Grease a 10” cast iron skillet lightly with vegetable oil. Place skillet in preheated oven for 5 minutes. While skillet is heating, combine salad olives, chopped red onion, celery, minced garlic, oregano and olive oil in small bowl; stir to mix well.

Remove skillet from oven. Pour half of cornbread mixture in bottom of pan. Layer ham slices, Provolone cheese and pepperoni slices on top of cornbread mixture. Top with salad olive mixture. Pour remaining cornbread mixture over top of meat, cheese and olive mixture. Arrange sliced black olives over top of cornbread mixture.

Bake approximately 18-20 minutes, or until top is golden brown. Remove from oven; cool on rack for 5 minutes. Cut into wedges. Serves 4-6.

Meats

SMOKED SAUSAGE JAMBALAYA

Margaret C. Stone – Lewisburg, W.Va.

1 pound smoked sausage
1 medium onion, chopped
½ cup green pepper, chopped
½ cup celery, sliced
1 cup instant rice
1 8-ounce can tomatoes
4 drops hot pepper sauce
¼ teaspoon black pepper

Cut sausage into 2” pieces; brown in a 10” iron skillet. Sauté onion, green pepper and celery until tender. Add rice, tomatoes, hot pepper sauce and black pepper; cook on low heat until thoroughly heated.

GRANNY’S SAUSAGE

Kathleen King – Moorefield, W.Va.

“A quick skillet supper that I have been making for years!”
“It is delicious with biscuits and apple butter.”

1 pound ground sausage (we like it hot)
1 cup quick rice
1 cup water
1 10.5 can of Campbell’s® Old-Fashioned Vegetable Soup

Boil water. Stir in rice; let sit while you brown sausage in iron skillet. Mix soup into sausage. When rice is ready stir in iron skillet. serve in the iron skillet.

SLICED PORK SHOULDER AND GRAVY

Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

4 pieces pork shoulder, bone or boneless
2 cups water
½ cup flour
3 tablespoons oil
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

Heat oil in iron skillet on low. Roll pork in flour; place in skillet. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Brown pork on both sides. Add water to browned pork. Simmer on low and turn pork every 5 or 10 minutes. Cook down until gravy thickens. Serve over biscuits or potatoes.

CORN BEEF AND POTATOES

1 12-ounce can corn beef
6 potatoes
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablespoon sugar
½ stick margarine
2 tablespoons bacon

Peel and quarter potatoes. Cook with bacon grease, salt, sugar and pepper in heavy iron skillet. When tender, add corn beef and margarine to potatoes. Simmer for 15 minutes. Serves 6 or more.

BROOK OR RAINBOW TROUT SUPREME

- 4 trout, cleaned
  Lemon juice to taste
  Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tablespoons milk
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- ½ cup butter
- 1 2-ounce can sliced mushrooms, drained
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt

Sprinkle trout inside and out with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Combine egg with milk; dip trout in mixture. Coat with bread crumbs. Melt ¼ cup butter in large cast iron skillet. Add fish; sauté until golden brown on both sides. About 3-4 minutes.

Melt remaining butter in separate skillet. Add mushrooms, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and ½ teaspoon salt. Sauté until mushrooms are hot. Place trout on serving platter; spoon mushrooms on top.

CHICKEN FRIED PORK WITH MILK GRAVY

- 4 rib pork chops, boneless (½" thick) or 1½ pounds
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1¾ teaspoons salt
- 1½ teaspoons black pepper
- 1 large egg
- 3¼ cups whole milk
- 2 cups vegetable oil

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: a meat pounder with rough-textured side; a deep-fat thermometer.

Preheat oven to 250°F. Pound pork chops on both sides with rough-textured side of meat pounder until ¼" thick. Season with salt and pepper; cut into 3" pieces.

Whisk together 2 cups flour, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon pepper in a shallow dish. Whisk together egg, ¾ cup milk, remaining ¾ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper in another shallow dish. Dip pork pieces in egg mixture to coat, then dredge in flour. Transfer pork as coated to large rack set on a baking sheet. Let pork stand, uncovered, at room temperature 15 minutes.

Heat oil in deep 10" cast iron skillet over high heat until thermometer registers 375°F (see cook's note, below). Fry pork in batches, turning over once, until golden, about 4 minutes per batch, transferring to paper towels to drain. Return oil to 375°F between batches. Keep pork warm on clean baking sheet in oven.

Pour off all but 2 tablespoons oil into a heat proof bowl, leaving any brown bits in bottom of skillet. Add remaining 3 tablespoons flour to skillet; cook roux over moderate heat, stirring constantly, 3 minutes. Bring to a boil; whisk in remaining 2½ cups milk. Reduce heat and simmer, whisking occasionally, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Season gravy with salt and pepper and serve over pork.

COOK'S NOTE: To take the temperature of a shallow amount of oil with a metal flat-framed deep-fat thermometer, put bulb of thermometer facedown in skillet, resting other end (not plastic handle) on rim of skillet. Check temperature frequently. Serves 4.

PAN-FRIED BROOK TROUT

4 whole brook trout (cleaned with head and tail left on)
8 slices bacon
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 cups white or yellow cornmeal

In large cast iron skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Transfer bacon to paper towels to drain. Leave bacon fat in the skillet.

Dry trout, sprinkle inside and out with salt and pepper; dredge in cornmeal, shaking off excess. Heat bacon fat in skillet. Add trout; cook for about 5 minutes on each side turning until browned on both sides. Drain on paper towels.

Serve trout on platter with bacon used for garnish.

SKILLET FRIED RAINBOW, BROWN OR BROOK TROUT

1 stick unsalted butter
2 whole brook, rainbow, or brown trout (cleaned, keeping head and tail intact)
1 teaspoon salt
¾ cup all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
¼ cup pecans, chopped
2 tablespoons parsley, fresh, chopped
¼ teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon lemon juice, fresh squeezed

Preheat oven to 200°F. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in 12” cast iron skillet over low heat; remove from heat. Rinse trout; pat dry. Brush with melted butter inside and out; season with ¾ teaspoon salt. Dredge each fish in flour to coat completely, shaking off excess.

Add oil and 2 tablespoons butter to skillet; heat over moderately high heat until foam subsides. Sauté both trout turning over once using spatulas until golden (about 8 minutes). Remove trout to serving platter.

Pour off fat from skillet; wipe clean. Melt remaining ½ stick butter over moderate low heat and cook pecans, stirring until fragrant and darker (about 1-2 minutes). Add parsley, pepper and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, swirling skillet to combine; remove from heat. Add lemon juice, stirring to incorporate and spoon over trout. Serve immediately.

TROUT ALMONDINE

4-6 cleaned trout
1 egg, beaten
¼ cup milk
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons cooking oil
2 tablespoons butter
¼ cup sliced almonds
¼ cup butter, melted
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Bone trout. Salt and pepper to taste. Combine egg and milk in bowl. Dredge trout in flour, then in egg mixture and again in the flour. In a large skillet, heat oil and 2 tablespoons butter. Add trout and fry for 5-6 minutes on each side.

In skillet, cook almonds in the ¼ cup melted butter until almonds are browned. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice. Place trout on a warm serving platter and pour almonds over and serve immediately.

SKILLET HASH

4 cups beef, cooked, chopped or ground leftovers
2 cups potatoes, cooked, chopped leftovers
1 cup onion, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon sage
½ cup meat juice or left over gravy
¼ cup bacon fat or lard

Mix meat, potatoes, onions and seasonings; moisten with meat juice. Heat bacon fat in heavy skillet; add hash and fry slowly until brown and crisp. Makes 4-5 servings.

PISTACHIO-CRUSTED ARCTIC CHAR

Jonathan Browning – Man, W.Va.
WV Company: West Virginia Aqua

6 ISIS Arctic Char fillets with skin (1-1¼" thick) deboned
1 cup shelled pistachios – not red
½ cup packed fresh basil leaves
2 tablespoons minced shallot
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
6½ tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
½ tablespoon vegetable oil

Chop pistachios in food processor until coarse. Add basil, shallots, salt pepper and softened butter. Puree until mixture forms a paste. Preheat oven to 400°F. Pat fish dry. Heat oil and remaining ½ tablespoon butter in 12" cast iron skillet. Brown fillets for 3-4 minutes. Transfer fillets, skin side down, to a lightly oiled baking pan. Spread pistachio paste ⅛" thick on each fillet. Bake in middle of oven until cooked through, about 9-11 minutes.

BARBECUED DEER MEAT

Margaret C. Stone – Lewisburg, W.Va.

1 pound deer meat
2 tablespoons shortening
1 cup onions, chopped
3 tablespoons vinegar
3 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
¾ cup ketchup
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 15-ounce can tomatoes

Melt shortening in iron skillet. Add onion and meat; cook until onion is tender and meat is brown. Add all other ingredients and cook 20 minutes. Add water if too thick.

ROGER'S SOUTHWESTERN CHILI OR TORTILLA CHIP DIP

- 1 16-ounce container of Custard Stand Hot Dog Chili®
- 1 pound black beans
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons taco seasoning
- 1 cup green chilies, diced

Combine ingredients in iron skillet. Bring mixture to a boil, immediately reduce heat; simmer for at least 15 minutes. Place in serving bowls; add a generous portion of shredded cheese or a heaping spoonful of sour cream on top. Serve with taco chips.

SOURDOUGH STEAK

- 3 pounds round beef steak (1" thick)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons onion salt
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup buttermilk
- ¾ cup lard or shortening

Using a meat-tenderizing mallet or knife, pound steak to ½" thick. Cut into serving pieces. Combine flour and seasonings. Dip pounded steak in buttermilk, then in flour mixture. Fry in 1" of hot lard in cast iron skillet. Makes 6-8 servings.

TEN MINUTE VENISON SPAGHETTI SAUCE

Margaret C. Stone – Lewisburg, W.Va.

This recipe gives a different taste and texture to spaghetti sauce.

- 1 16-ounce can tomatoes, undrained
- 1 14-ounce jar prepared spaghetti sauce
- 1 pound venison roast, cooked and shredded
- 1 teaspoon basil

Place tomatoes in large iron skillet and chop up with side of spoon. Add spaghetti sauce, venison and basil. Simmer until hot while pasta cooks in separate pot. Serve parmesan cheese for topping.

CREAMED VENISON

Margaret C. Stone – Lewisburg, W.Va.

- 2 cups cooked venison or beef, cooked and cubed
- ½-¾ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 10.5-ounce can cream of mushroom soup
- ½ 10.5-ounce can water
- 1 teaspoon beef bouillon granules

Sauté celery and onion in iron skillet until tender. Add mushroom soup and water to which bouillon has been added. Add chopped venison. Simmer to heat through. Salt and pepper to taste. Serve over rice or toast. Serves 4.

Gravies

RED EYE GRAVY
Celestine Ervin – Charleston, W.Va.

After frying country ham or pork shoulder, add water to drippings in hot iron skillet. Let sizzle and stir.

POOR MAN'S GRAVY
Celestine Ervin – Charleston, W.Va.

After frying any meat, sprinkle flour in pan drippings to cover the bottom of hot iron skillet, stir until flour golden brown. Add 1½ cups of water. Keep stirring; add evaporated milk until you reach desired consistency, salt and pepper to taste. You use this for sausage, ham, pork, chicken, etc.

If you don't have the meat, just use saved bacon grease or use lard and water or use beef or chicken broth.

Fruits & Vegetables

IRON SKILLET RAMPS AND BACON
Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

- ½ pound bacon, chunked or finely minced
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 pound fresh ramps or leeks, cleaned

Put bacon in skillet with oil and fry on low until done. Place ramps in skillet with bacon. Cook on low until done. Serve with scrambled eggs and fried potatoes.

FRIED OKRA

- ½ cup cornmeal
- 1 teaspoon salt or seasoned salt
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated, optional
- ¼ teaspoon chili powder, optional
- 3 cups okra, sliced
- ⅔ cup milk
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Mix dry ingredients in small mixing bowl. Dip slices of okra in milk, then in cornmeal mixture until coated. Heat oil in iron skillet over medium heat. Add cornmeal-coated okra; fry until golden brown. Turn; fry on other side.

To oven-fry: Oil cast iron skillet. Spread cornmeal-coated okra evenly in skillet; bake in preheated 400°F oven 30-45 minutes, stirring often. Serves 4-6.

SAUTEED CHERRY/GRAPE TOMATOES

Steve and Marialice Seaman – Sandyville, W.Va.

WV Company: Appalachian Mountain Specialty Foods

1 tablespoon olive oil
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
6 green onions, thinly sliced with some stems
1 pint fresh cherry/grape tomatoes
¼ cup Appalachian Mountain Specialty Wilted Lettuce Salad Dressing®
Salt to taste

Preheat oven to 375°F. In cast iron skillet over medium-high heat sauté onions and garlic in oil until they sweat (about 2-3 minutes). Add tomatoes and stir to coat in onions and garlic. Add dressing and salt, place in oven; roast 18-20 minutes.

FAT-FREE CINNAMON AND SORGHUM FRIED APPLES

Susanna Holstein – Sandyville, W.Va.

4 cups apples, tart, firm, pieced or sliced, cores removed
¼ cup sorghum molasses
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ cup water

Place apple pieces in a cast iron skillet. Add water and sorghum; cook over medium high heat, stirring occasionally to keep from sticking. When apples begin to soften, add cinnamon and reduce heat slightly. Stir as needed to keep from sticking; too much stirring will break apart the apple pieces. Add more molasses to your taste. Cook until water is gone and apples begin to caramelize in the molasses.

Remove from heat. Allow to cool some before serving.

OVEN FRIED ROOT VEGGIES

Anna Brown – Morgantown, W.Va.

WV Company: Brown's Creations in Clay

6 cups assorted root vegetables, chopped 1" thick
2 tablespoons Brown's Creations' Garlic Infused Oil®
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon rosemary, dried
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

Use any combination of root vegetables. I like to use yellow potatoes, parsnips, carrots, onions and rutabagas.

In iron skillet, toss vegetables with Brown's Creations' Garlic Infused Oil® until well coated. Add salt, black pepper, dried rosemary and red pepper flakes to taste. Bake in 450°F oven for about 20 minutes or until done.

SOUTHERN GREENS

Steve and Marialice Seaman – Sandyville, W.Va.

WV Company: Appalachian Mountain Specialty Foods

- ½ cup Appalachian Mountain Specialty Wilted Lettuce Salad Dressing
- 2 pounds fresh assorted greens (Kale, Collard, Mustard and Turnip)

In large cast iron skillet, heat salad dressing. Add fresh greens; sauté until they start to wilt. Simmer in dressing about 30 minutes.

Serve with additional dressing splashed on top.

MIXED VEGETABLE DISH

Nina Jean Painter – Baker, W.Va.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 potatoes
- 2 turnips
- 2 onions
- 1 green pepper
- 1 6-ounce jar or can mushrooms, sliced (or fresh)
- Salt and pepper to taste

In iron skillet, heat olive oil and butter. Slice and dice vegetables; add to skillet. Fry to desired tenderness; season to taste. Enjoy!

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES

Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 2-3 large green tomatoes, sliced
- ½ cup flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- Biscuits, optional
- Fried potatoes, optional

In iron skillet, heat oil on low. Roll sliced tomatoes in flour; place in pan. Add salt and pepper. Cook on low until tender and brown, turning every few minutes. Serve with biscuits and fried potatoes.

SKILLET FRIES

- 4 cups potatoes, raw, thinly sliced (about 2 pounds)
- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup bacon fat or lard

Toss potatoes, onions and seasonings together. Heat bacon fat in a heavy skillet; add potato mixture. Cover and cook over low heat for 15 minutes. Turn potatoes, cover and cook 15 minutes more. Makes 4-6 servings.

FRIED POTATOES WITH RAMPS

Kelly A. Quinn – Parkersburg, W.Va.
WV Company: Flamin' Red's

6 potatoes, sliced ½" thick
1 cup ramps, chopped (use entire plant if good)
1 tablespoon sugar
Bacon drippings
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 12-ounce bottle Flamin' Red's BBQ Sauce® (your choice)

In large cast iron skillet, add bacon drippings; combine potatoes, ramps, and sugar. Cook over medium to low heat until potatoes are tender. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with Flamin' Red's BBQ sauce on the side.

BLACK IRON SKILLET CORN

8 ears of corn, fresh
½ pound bacon
½ cup water
1 cup milk
4 tablespoons flour
6 slices bacon
Salt and pepper to taste

Fry bacon in cast iron skillet, remove; crumble.

Cut corn from cob; scrape cob to get milk out. Add corn to bacon drippings; cook for a couple of minutes on low heat, stirring constantly. Then add a little water, just past the corn; cook until corn is tender and most of the water is gone.

Mix flour into milk, several tablespoons to a cup of milk. Add corn, crumbled bacon, salt and pepper. Cook a few minutes longer to thicken the white sauce.

Fajita Skillet/Round Griddle

This piece is a flat round skillet. It's ideal for preparing fajitas or pancakes on the stovetop or homemade pizzas or biscuits in the oven.

Fajitas

BEEF FAJITAS

2 pounds sirloin beef steaks, cut into strips
3 tablespoons cooking oil
1 tablespoon cumin
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 large green pepper, cut into strip
1 large red pepper, cut into strip
1 large yellow pepper, cut into strip
2 medium onions, cut into strips
3 tomatoes, cut into wedges
1 16-ounce package flour tortillas

Toppings, optional:
Sour cream
WV Salsa of choice
Shredded cheddar cheese
Diced peppers
Olives

In cast iron fajita skillet or griddle, brown beef strips in oil. Sprinkle with ½ spices, set aside; keep warm. Sauté peppers and onion strips. Sprinkle with remaining spices. Add to meat; blend together. Place tomato wedges evenly around mixture and let tomatoes warm. Serve with flour tortillas warmed in oven. Serve with toppings.

SHRIMP FAJITAS

1 pound medium shrimp
1 cup cilantro, lightly packed
1 garlic clove, minced
⅓ cup lime juice
4-6 flour tortillas
1 tablespoon cooking oil
2 large green peppers, stemmed, seeded and thinly sliced
1 large onion, thinly sliced

Toppings, optional:
½ cup plain nonfat yogurt
1 16-ounce jar WV salsa of choice

Stir together shrimp, cilantro, garlic and lime juice. Let stand at room temperature 20 minutes.

Wrap tortillas in foil; place in 10” cast iron skillet in 350°F oven for 5-10 minutes.

Heat oil in cast iron fajita skillet or griddle. Add peppers and onions, stir over medium heat until soften, remove; keep warm.

Add shrimp to skillet, increase heat to high; cook, stirring often, until done (about 3 minutes). Add warm onions and peppers and remaining cilantro, garlic & lime juice mixture to skillet.

Warm flour tortillas by placing them in separate heated cast iron skillet individually for 5-10 seconds on each side. Spoon warm shrimp mixture into tortillas; serve with toppings.

CHICKEN FAJITAS

Marinade:
1 clove mince garlic
1½ teaspoons season salt
1½ teaspoons ground cumin
½ teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons lime juice, fresh
1½ pounds chicken, sliced into strips

Fajita:
½ cup sliced onion
½ cup chopped green onion
1 cup sliced red bell pepper
3-4 tablespoons olive oil
8 large flour tortillas, warmed

Toppings, optional:
1 sliced avocado
1 16-ounce jar WV salsa of choice
1 16-ounce container sour cream
1 16-ounce package cheddar cheese, shredded

Marinade: Combine all ingredients. Marinate chicken strips for at least 2 hours.

Fajita: In cast iron fajita skillet or griddle, sauté onions and peppers in oil until lightly browned; remove from pan. Sauté chicken until well coated with glaze, about 10 minutes. Toss in vegetables, reheat; then spoon into flour tortillas. Serve with toppings.

TURKEY FAJITAS

2 tablespoons cooking oil
1 pound turkey, cut into strips
1 teaspoon seasoning salt
1 green bell pepper, cut into strips
1 red bell pepper, cut into strips
1 medium yellow onion, cut into rings
2 fresh tomatoes, peeled and cubed
½ cup salsa
12 flour tortillas

Toppings, optional

1 16-ounce container sour cream
1 8-ounce jar black olives, sliced

In cast iron fajita skillet or griddle, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat. Add turkey strips and sprinkle with seasoning salt. Stir 3-4 minutes or until turkey is no longer pink (do not overcook); remove from skillet.

Add remaining oil to skillet, then add peppers and onions. Cook and stir for 2-3 minutes; add tomatoes and salsa. Put turkey back in skillet with vegetables; heat to bubbling.

Warm flour tortillas by placing in separate heated cast iron skillet individually for 5-10 seconds on each side. Spoon fajita mixture into warm flour tortillas; roll up. Serve with toppings.

Chicken Fryer Skillet

The piece is a modified skillet that is slightly deeper than a regular skillet to keep cooking oil from spilling out. It was this fryer that made southern fried chicken famous. It was Grandma's favorite.

CHICKEN DISHES

FRIED CHICKEN

Celestine Ervin – Charleston, W.Va.

2 cups shortening or cooking oil
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
1 teaspoon paprika
1 cup flour
1 egg
½ cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon flour
1 chicken, pieced

Melt shortening in 12" cast iron chicken fryer skillet. In bowl, combine dry ingredients. In separate bowl, mix egg with buttermilk; add 1 tablespoon of flour to wet mixture. Dip chicken in wet mixture, then dry mixture, repeat; shake off excess. Fry in hot shortening until brown, turning as needed. When both sides are golden brown, cover loosely with lid for 20-30 minutes on low heat. Drain on paper towels.

LA PAIX HERB FARM'S ROSEMARY CHICKEN

Myra Bonhage-Hale – Alum Bridge, W.Va.

WV Company: La Paix Herb Farm

- 4 chicken breasts, skinless
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 5 garlic cloves, chopped or pressed
- 1 cup white (Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio) or Rose wine
- 1½ cups mushrooms (shiitake preferred)
- 1 green pepper cut into strips
- 1 tablespoon dried rosemary or 4 fresh sprigs
- 1 cup Mozzarella cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cover bottom of iron chicken fryer skillet with salt and pepper; heat until hot but not smoking. Add chicken; sear both sides, then sauté in butter with garlic cloves. When breasts are light golden brown, add wine, garnish with mushrooms and peppers. Sprinkle rosemary in sauce and over chicken.

Place chicken fryer in preheated oven and heat 30 minutes. Check chicken; add more wine if needed. Sprinkle with cheese, heat an additional 15 minutes; garnish with any additional rosemary.

SIMMERED TUSCAN CHICKEN

Carlene Reher – St. Clairsville, OH

- 1 pound chicken breast, boneless, skinless, 1" cubes
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 medium potatoes, ½" cubes (about 4 cups)
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 1 27-ounce jar marinara pasta sauce
- 1 pound cut green beans, fresh or frozen
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a cast iron chicken fryer, sauté chicken and garlic in olive oil until chicken is lightly browned. Add potatoes and peppers; continue to cook about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add pasta sauce, green beans, basil, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium, cover; simmer 35 minutes or until chicken is thoroughly cook and potatoes are tender. Stir occasionally. Cooking time is 40 minutes. Serves 6.

MIRACLE CHICKEN SKILLET

Patti Crow – Cameron, W.Va.

- ¼ cup Miracle Whip® dressing
- 1½ cups minute white rice, uncooked
- 1½ cups chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 4 small chicken breast halves, boneless, skinless (1 pound)
- 1 tomato, chopped
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Mix dressing, rice, broth and chili powder in large chicken fryer skillet. Top with chicken. Bring to a boil; cover. Reduce heat to low; simmer 25 minutes. Top with remaining ingredients. Cook an additional 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through (170°F). Serves 4.

MOTHER'S FRIED CHICKEN

Kathy Hill – Marlinton, W.Va.

½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon sugar
½ cup flour
¼ cup Canola oil
1 egg
6 chicken legs
Garlic salt, optional

In bowl, combine salt, pepper, sugar and flour; mix well. Put oil in cast iron chicken fryer skillet; heat on low.

Beat egg. Roll chicken in egg, then flour mixture. Place in warm oil. Fry chicken on low until well brown on all sides. Chicken should be done in approximately 30 minutes.

For a different taste, add a sprinkle of garlic salt just before removing from pan.

SOUTHERN FRIED CHICKEN WITH MILK GRAVY

2 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
1¼ cup all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons pepper
¼ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon paprika
1 cup shortening
2 broiler/fryer-type chickens, cut up (3½ pounds each)

Milk Gravy:
¼ cup all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon pepper
1 cup milk
1 cup water
⅛ teaspoon browning sauce, optional
Fresh oregano, optional

In medium bowl, beat eggs and milk. In another bowl, combine flour and seasonings. Dip chicken pieces in egg mixture, then flour mixture.

Melt shortening in 12" cast iron chicken fryer; brown chicken on both sides. Cover and cook over low heat for 45 minutes or until juices run clear. Remove from fryer; keep warm. Reserve ¼ cup drippings in fryer for gravy.

Milk Gravy: stir flour, salt and pepper into reserved drippings in fryer. Cook and stir over medium heat 5 minutes or until browned. Combine milk and water; add to fryer, stirring constantly until it thickens. Bring to a boil; boil and stir 2 minutes. Add browning sauce if desired. Serve gravy with chicken. Garnish with oregano. Serves 8.

Cornbread

GRANDMA CHARLOTTE'S BLACK MAGIC CORN BREAD

Charlotte Davidson – Buckhannon, W.Va.

- 1 tablespoon bacon fat
- 1¼ cups cornmeal, stone ground
- ¾ cup white flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons shortening, melted
- 1 egg
- 1½ cups buttermilk

Preheat oven to 450°F. Put bacon fat in iron pan of your choice; place in oven until hot.

Put dry ingredients in bowl; add remaining ingredients and stir until smooth. Pour batter into hot cast iron pan. Bake 20-25 minutes until brown on top as desired.

Remove from oven; immediately loosen cornbread from pan by running knife around edges. Place plate on top of cornbread; while supporting plate with one hand, turn iron pan over to remove cornbread.

NOTE: Grandma Charlotte has a cast iron skillet used ONLY for cornbread. The skillet is seldom washed but instead is wiped down with vegetable oil after each use. Treat your skillet this way – and don't substitute other oils for the bacon grease – and your cornbread will consistently pop right out of the skillet.

FANCY WEST VIRGINIA CORNBREAD

Recipe designed for 8" iron skillet.
Wanda Wills – Grassy Meadows, W.Va.

- 2 cups cornmeal, self-rising
- 1 8-ounce sour cream
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 15-ounce can creamed style corn, drained

Mix all ingredients together. Pour in greased cast iron pan or skillet of your choice. Bake at 375°F for 45 minutes until golden brown.

MY CRUSTY CORNBREAD

Recipe designed for #9 iron skillet.
Addie Keaton – Iaeger, W.Va.

"My family loves it"

- 1½ cups flour, self-rising
- 1 cup cornmeal, self-rising
- 1½ tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons margarine or oil
- 1 egg (optional)
- 1½ cups sweet milk

Mix all ingredients together in medium mixing bowl. Pour mixture into heated cast iron pan of your choice greased with cooking spray. Bake at 375°F for 35-40 minutes.

Unique Cornbread Pans

Wedge Pan
Wedge Sections provide a tasty crust to each piece of cornbread or scones.

Cactus Pan
Making Mexican cornbread or preparing special muffins, the cook can't go wrong with this Southwestern touch!

Corn Ear Pan
A traditional favorite – making cornbread in the shape of ears of corn is sure to be a hit!

Perch Pan
Fish-shaped muffins, cornbread or hushpuppies add a festive flare to an ordinary fish fry.

CORNBREAD

Recipe designed for #8 cast iron skillet.
Pat Barlow – Tunnelton, W.Va.

1½ cups yellow cornmeal
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
¼ cup cooking oil
1 egg
1 cup buttermilk
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ cup flour
1 teaspoon salt

Beat egg, buttermilk, baking soda, flour and salt together in large mixing bowl. Stir in cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and oil. Use 2 tablespoons of oil with a paper towel to grease and cover a cast iron pan of your choice. Pour batter into iron pan. Bake 450°F oven 30 minutes until golden brown. Serve warm with lots of butter.

CORNBREAD

Isabel Morgan – Caldwell, W.Va.

"The iron skillet I have used for 60 plus years was acquired with Octagon soap coupons which were redeemed at J. J. Townley's 5 and 10 store in Ronceverte, W.Va."

1½ cups cornmeal mix
½ cups flour, self-rising
1 tablespoon sugar
1 egg
2 tablespoons salad dressing
1¼ cups buttermilk

Mix dry ingredients together. Add egg, salad dressing and milk; mix thoroughly. Pour in greased cast iron pan. Bake at 425°F for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

SKILLET CORNBREAD

Kathryn Green – Cowen, W.Va.

- 2 teaspoons butter
- 1⅓ cups yellow cornmeal
- ⅓ cup flour, all-purpose
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 teaspoons sugar
- ⅓ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 400°F. Put butter in 9" iron skillet; heat skillet. Sift cornmeal, flour, soda, sugar and salt together. Stir in 1 cup milk and eggs. Stir in buttermilk. Pour into skillet. Pour 1 cup milk over top of corn mixture. DO NOT STIR. Bake in oven for 35 minutes. This is a cornbread with a custard layer. Cut in wedges and serve warm with butter. Serves 8.

MEXICAN CORNBREAD

Lola Kessell – Lexington, KY

"I place pats of butter across the top as soon as I remove it from the oven."

- 1 cup self-rising cornmeal
- 1 cup self-rising flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 banana pepper, chopped
- ¾ cup onions, chopped
- 1 8-ounce can creamed corn
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup hot cheese or longhorn cheese, shredded
- 1 egg

Combine all ingredients; mix well. Pour into large, well-greased cast iron pan of your choice. Bake at 350°F until bread begins to brown, about 1 hour.

FALL RUN JALAPENO CORNBREAD

Recipe designed for 10" iron skillet.
Johnna Heater – Walker, W.Va.

- 1 cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 cup yellow or white cornmeal
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 jalapeno red pepper, seeded and chopped fine
- 2 tablespoons melted shortening or oil

Mix flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and salt in medium bowl. Add milk, egg, jalapenos and shortening. Stir just until smooth; don't over beat. Pour batter into cast iron pan of your choice and bake at 450° F for 15-20 minutes until golden brown on top. Serves 8.

FULL COUNT CORNBREAD

Recipe designed for 10" iron skillet.
S. E. Ritz – Romney, W.Va.

- 3 cups yellow cornmeal, whole kernel
- 2 cups white flour, unbleached
- 6 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅔ cup white sugar, optional
- ½ cup butter
- 3 medium eggs
- 2 cups buttermilk *

Preheat oven to 375°F. Sift dry ingredients together in large mixing bowl. Warm cast iron pan in oven and melt butter in it while preparing other ingredients. Mix most of the butter into dry ingredients except a generous butter coating in the pan. Add eggs and buttermilk, mixing well until a thick, smooth batter is formed. (*Slightly more than 2 cups of buttermilk may be needed.)

Pour cornbread batter into warm cast iron pan; place in oven. Check after 30 minutes of baking. An additional 15 minutes or so of baking time may be required. If so, move iron pan to another location in oven to ensure even baking. Cornbread is finished baking when it is browned and risen and may split open. Remove from oven, cut; butter for immediate enjoyment!

Cast iron heats evenly making it a consistent heat conductor and allowing for precise control of cooking temperatures.

UPSIDE DOWN SALSA CORNBREAD

- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 pound ground beef chuck
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 medium bell pepper, seeded, cut in rings
- 2 cups Teays Valley® Cornbread Mix
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 16-ounce jar Fire Creek® salsa, medium hot
- 1¼ cups milk
- 1 egg

In deep 8" iron skillet with 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, cook ground chuck, onions and spices together until ground chuck is no longer red. Turn heat off. Move mixture to one side of skillet; place half of pepper rings in bottom. Repeat this procedure for the other side. Spread ground beef chuck mixture evenly over pepper rings.

In mixing bowl, combine cornmeal mix, sugar, cheese, salsa, milk, egg and 3 tablespoons vegetable oil; mix well. Spread over mixture in skillet. Bake in preheated 425°F oven 40 minutes or until done. Turn upside down on serving dish.

JOHNNA'S HAM AND CHEESE CORNBREAD

Recipe was designed for a 10" skillet.
Johnna Heater – Walker, W.Va.

- 1½ cups white cornmeal
- 1½ cups biscuit mix
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1¾ cups milk
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 cup ham, small cubes
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Mix cornmeal, biscuit mix, baking powder, sugar and salt in medium bowl. Add eggs, milk, cheese and cubed ham.

Heat half of oil in cast iron pan until very hot; add other half of oil to cornbread mixture. Pour batter into a prepared iron pan of choice. Bake at 450°F for 25 minutes. Serves 8.

Special Thanks

We gratefully thank and acknowledge those that have contributed to this cookbook. We appreciate each recipe, tip and historical tid-bit we received. Our contributors ranged from West Virginia residents and agribusiness owners to West Virginia Department of Agriculture employees to those who have West Virginia ties and even those that just hold a special place in their hearts for West Virginia. Without each and every piece of information we received, this cookbook would not be possible. We feel sure you have not only allowed us to engage appetites, but also memories!

Contributors can receive a complimentary copy of this cookbook by contacting the West Virginia Department of Agriculture at 558-2210.

Additional requests for complimentary copies can be made at 558-3708.

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