

BRAISED CABBAGE WITH BACON

It's always a feat to get certain members of my family to eat their greens. I use all kinds of trickery to sneak it into their diets. I put spinach in fruit smoothies and when desperate, I add bacon to my sautéed vegetables. Bacon can make anything taste better. I realize bacon isn't a super food, but it should be.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

4 strips bacon

Canola oil, as needed

1 onion, thinly sliced

4 cups Napa cabbage, chopped

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon red pepper flakes

salt and pepper to taste

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken stock

1 Tablespoon soy sauce

1 Tablespoon maple syrup

PREPARATION

In a large skillet, render the bacon. Once crispy, remove bacon strips and place on paper towel. Set aside. When cool, chop up the bacon strips and reserve.

Sauté onion in rendered bacon fat for about 6 minutes until beginning to brown. If too dry, add canola oil as needed. Add in cabbage, pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Continue to sauté for one minute. Add chicken stock, soy sauce and maple syrup. Continue to sauté until wilted, about 3-4 more minutes. Turn

off heat, add the bacon, toss, then serve.

FRIED HAKE OVER COCONUT RICE WITH TURMERIC SAUCE

I'm not a huge fan of flaky white fish unless it's fried. Originally I thought I'd try this in the airfryer—which you could do—but knew I'd like it better frying it in oil. It was worth the extra calories. I served it with some coconut rice that I had left over and I made a quick turmeric sauce to pull the dish together. Feel free to mix and match your favorite rice dishes and sauces! If you come up with a good one, let me know!

INGREDIENTS (serves 2-3)

FOR SAUCE

2 Tablespoons Canola Oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 Tablespoon fresh Turmeric, grated

1 clove garlic, grated

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cumin

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup coconut milk

Salt and pepper to taste

FOR RICE

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups coconut milk

2 cups chicken broth
2 cups basmati rice
1 teaspoon fine sea salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup currents
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sweet shredded coconut
zest of one lemon

FOR HAKE

1 cup canola oil
1 pound Hake (or Cod or other flaky white fish), filleted
1 egg, beaten
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup panko
Salt and pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup thinly sliced green onion
Tzatziki for garnish (optional)

PREPARATION

FOR SAUCE

In a sauce pan, heat the olive oil until it begins to shimmer. Add the onions and cook until translucent, about 4-5 minutes.

Place the onions, tumeric, garlic, cumin and coconut milk in a blender. Season with salt and pepper and blend on high until smooth. Taste and re-season if necessary. Set aside.

FOR RICE

In a saucepan, combine coconut milk, broth, rice, salt, currents and shredded coconut. Bring the mixture to a boil, then cover, turn down the heat and simmer for about 18 to 20 minutes, until the liquid is absorbed. Turn off the heat, then let stand covered for 5 to 10. Fluff the rice with a fork, then gently stir in the lemon zest.

FOR HAKE

Season the hake with salt and pepper. Cut into two or three equal sized pieces. Place the flour, egg and panko, each in their own bowl. Season each with salt and pepper and mix. Dredge each piece of the fish through the flour, then the egg, then the panko.

In a large, deep skillet, heat the cup of oil on medium heat. The oil should come up about $\frac{1}{2}$ " high in the pan. Add more if necessary. Bring up to 350 degrees.

Using tongs, gently place the fish pieces in the pan. Be careful of splatters. Cook until brown, about 3-4 minutes. If it's browning too quickly, lower the heat. Carefully flip each piece over and cook until the other side is brown, about another 3-4 minutes.

To plate, place some rice in the center of the plate. Pour some of the tumeric sauce over the rice. Place a piece of fish on top. Garnish with green onions and a spoonful of tzatziki.

FILO EGG PIE

A friend of mine was having a brunch and asked if I could bring a quiche or some type of egg dish. Since quiche is so 1990s, I started to scour the internet to find something new

and fun. I noticed a few videos of people using filo dough wrapped as fans to make a crunchy crust for an egg pie. It seemed like a fun technique, so I gave it whirl using the ingredients I love. It was a big hit! I hope you love it too.

INGREDIENTS (serves 6)

4 strips of bacon

1 onion, thinly sliced

Olive oil, as needed

8 cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups gruyere, large grate

8 eggs

3 Tablespoons milk

1 package, filo dough (sheets)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup parmesan, small grate

salt and pepper to taste

chili flakes to taste

2 scallions, chopped

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

In a large skillet over medium heat, render the bacon. When browned, remove from skillet and set aside on a paper towel. When cool, crumble bacon, set aside.

Pour out half of the bacon drippings and reserve. Sauté the onion in the remainder of the bacon drippings. If too dry, add more drippings or olive oil as needed. Allow onions to start

caramelizing—about 6-8 minutes—then add the mushrooms and sauté until wilted, about another 3 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and chili flakes to taste. Again, if too dry add olive oil as needed.

Combine the mushrooms, onions, crumbled bacon and $\frac{1}{2}$ the scallions. Place the mixture in a greased 9" circular baking dish. Make sure the baking dish is at least 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep. Allow mixture to cool, then sprinkle the gruyere over the mixture to cover.

Beat the eggs and milk together. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Take the filo sheets and fold them lengthwise as if making a fan. Then, starting from one end, roll up the fan into a circle and place in the center of the baking dish. Continue making the filo fans and start wrapping them around the first one until you have filo fans covering the entire dish. Don't overstuff the filo sheets. Keep them a little loose.



Pour the egg mixture evenly over the filo. Using a sharp knife, gently Poke a few holes in the filo or move the filo slightly to allow the egg mixture to spread out evenly. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ of the parmesan on top.

Place in oven and bake for 1 hour. After 25 minutes, start checking to see if the top is turning too brown or burning. Keep an eye on it. If it is getting too brown too quickly, lightly cover the dish with aluminum foil.

Allow to cool for fifteen minutes. Cut into 6 pie pieces. Garnish with the remainder of the chopped scallions and parmesan.

WINTER CITRUS SALAD

In an attempt to force some vegetables into me, my mom believed that salad was the key. But, it was always the same—iceberg lettuce, sliced cucumbers and tasteless supermarket tomatoes tossed with a dressing made from one of those Italian seasoning packets. It was not exactly a dish that I looked forward to.

But, in an effort to brush off the past and forge a new alliance with salad in my life, I've experimented with variations on the classic vinaigrette theme. Here's a winter salad I made for New Year's Eve and it was a big hit. It was the only dish that had no leftovers. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4-6)

FOR THE SALAD

1 cup shredded Napa Cabbage

3 large handfuls lettuce and/or spinach mix (rough chop)

$\frac{1}{2}$ English cucumber, skinned and sliced

12 cherry tomatoes, quartered

1 carrot, julienned

$\frac{1}{4}$ red onion, thinly sliced

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup pecans, rough chop

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried cranberries

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup Mandarin orange slices (best from can)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup feta cheese, crumbled

FOR THE DRESSING

4 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

3 tablespoons fresh orange juice (or use Mandarin juice from can)

1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard

salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

In a small bowl, whisk together all of the dressing ingredients. Set aside.

In a large bowl, lightly toss all of the salad ingredients together, but only half of the feta cheese. Pour the dressing on top and lightly toss. Garnish with the remaining feta cheese.