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BACKYARD LIFE

# Holiday Cookbook





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# 7 Layer Mexican Dip

## INGREDIENTS

- 16 oz. Mexican bean dip
- 1 large tub of guacamole
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 8 oz. mayo or Miracle Whip
- 1 package taco seasoning
- 1-2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1-2 bunches scallions, sliced
- 8 oz. black olives, sliced
- 16 oz. cheddar cheese, shredded
- Jalapeños (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Spread bean dip on bottom layer.
2. Spread guacamole.
3. Mix sour cream, mayo/miracle whip and taco seasoning together and spread as next layer.
4. Add chopped tomatoes.
5. Add sliced scallions.
6. Add sliced black olives.
7. Add shredded cheese.
8. Add jalapeños (optional).
9. Serve with scoop chips.



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. russet potatoes, peeled
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- ½ c. all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp. paprika (unless you're a purest)
- Dash of pepper (again, unless you're a latke purest)
- Canola oil (enough for a shallow fry)
- Chives (optional)
- Applesauce (optional but highly recommended)
- Sour cream (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Grate potatoes using the medium or largest holes on the cheese grater.
2. Place grated potatoes in a bowl of ice water if not using immediately.
3. Squeeze out excess liquid (squeeze hard).
4. Mix potatoes, eggs, flour, and 1 tsp. of salt together in a large bowl.
5. Place a skillet over medium heat and add a quarter inch or so (depending on the size of the skillet, you just want a shallow fry going) and heat until the oil shimmers.
6. Add a few heaping spoonfuls of the latke mix into the skillet and flatten (gently!) with the back of your spoon.
7. Fry latkes until they're beautiful and golden and crispy (maybe 3 minutes per side).
8. Move to paper towels to drain.
9. Sprinkle with salt.
10. Serve with your favorite toppings (but really, try the applesauce!)



# “Fancy” Cheese Bread

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 sprigs rosemary, fresh
- 1 package (2 per package) na’an style flat breads
- 6 oz. Brie cheese
- 2 tbsp mascarpone
- ½ c. fresh cranberries or blueberries (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Pull out a sheet pan large enough to fit both flat breads or two small sheet pans.
2. On each flat bread: spread 1 tbsp. mascarpone and 3 oz. of Brie—you will need to break the Brie into smaller pieces. Sprinkle with ¼ c. berries and half the full amount of fresh chopped rosemary.
3. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes until the cheese is browned, gooey and the bottom of the flat bread is crisp.<sup>2</sup>

### TIPS

<sup>1</sup> To save time chopping, use a small pair of kitchen scissors or pruning shears to cut the rosemary leaves right off the stem and onto the flat bread.

<sup>2</sup> For a super crispy bottom, cook directly on the oven rack with a sheet pan below to catch any cheese that may drip off.

<sup>3</sup> Peel the rind off the Brie. Then you can just use your hands to tear the creamy Brie into pieces small enough to scatter over the mascarpone.



# Beef Tenderloin

## INGREDIENTS

- 1  $\frac{1}{3}$  c. red wine vinegar
- 1 c. ketchup
- $\frac{1}{2}$  c. oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  c. soy sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$  c. Worcestershire sauce
- 4 tsp. mustard
- 4 tsp. salt
- 2-4 tsp. garlic powder
- 3 tsp. onion powder
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 (7-9 lb.) beef tenderloin
- 6-8 strips of bacon

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine all ingredients except beef and bacon. Set aside. Strip fat from tenderloin; place in heavy duty gallon plastic bag. Add marinade; seal; gently squeeze bag to coat well.
2. Marinate 48 hours in refrigerator, squeezing and turning twice per day.
3. Remove from marinade; wrap with bacon.
4. Place in shallow pan and insert meat thermometer.
5. Bake at 375-400°F until meat thermometer indicates rare (about 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours). Baste occasionally with marinade.
6. Slice and serve with additional warmed marinade.



# Pierogi Ruskie

## INGREDIENTS

### FILLING

- 5 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 large onion
- 1 lb. russet potatoes, peeled/cut into 1 in. cubes
- 6 oz. cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper

### DOUGH

- 12.5 oz. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 1 large egg

### FOR ASSEMBLY

- 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- Sour cream
- Chives

## INSTRUCTIONS

### FILLING

1. In medium skillet, melt 2 tbsp. butter over medium heat. Add onion, salt, and pepper. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring until softened. Add 1 or 2 tbsp. of water when onions begin to stick, for 15 minutes.
2. In large saucepan, combine potatoes, 2 qts. water, 2 tsp. salt. Bring to boil over high, reduce to simmer. Cook until soft. Drain, return to pan, set over low heat and cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Move potatoes into separate bowl and mash. Stir in 3 tbsp. butter, ½ c. onion mixture, salt, and pepper. Let sit for 5 minutes then stir in cheese, set aside.

### DOUGH

1. Whisk flour and salt in bowl for 30 seconds, add sour cream and egg. Mix with mixer for 6-8 minutes. Cover, set aside for 30 minutes.

### ASSEMBLY

1. Portion out filling into 1 tbsp. scoops onto baking sheet. Roll each portion into individual balls and set back on sheet. Take separate sheet, dust with flour, set aside. Take dough, place on lightly floured surface, roll out into 20-in. circle.
2. Take 2 or 3 in cookie cutter, punch out 24 to 25 rounds of dough. Take one ball of filling and place in center of each round. Fold over dough to create crescent shape. Firmly pinch edges to seal. Repeat for all remaining rounds.

### COOKING

1. Move half of pierogies to boiling pot of salted water for 3-5 minutes. Transfer to skillet with vegetable oil and butter over medium-high. Cook for 3-5 minutes, flipping until both sides golden brown.
2. Repeat previous 3 steps for remaining pierogies. Move cooked pierogies to serving platter, garnish with sour cream and chives, and serve.



# Honey Baked Ham

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 lb. ham; spiral-cut, bone-in
- ½ c. of butter
- 1 c. brown sugar
- ¼ c. honey
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. paprika
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Add butter, honey, brown sugar, and spices to a pot and place over medium heat.
3. Bring pot to a simmer and cook until it's a syrupy consistency.
4. Place ham in foil covered pan and pour half the glaze on top. Cover the ham with foil.
5. Bake the ham for 2 ½ hours and uncover.
6. Pour the remaining glaze over the ham.
7. Increase temperature to 400°F.
8. Place ham back into the oven, uncovered, and bake until the glaze is caramelized (15-20 minutes longer).
9. Allow ham to rest before slicing and serving.



# Grandma's Kielbasa & Sauerkraut

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs. kielbasa smoked sausage
- 1 28 oz. jar sauerkraut
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. dried minced onions
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 2 tbsp. butter, cut into smaller pieces
- ¼ c. water

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse and drain sauerkraut, then place on bottom of baking dish.
2. Slice larger ropes of kielbasa into smaller pieces, about 3 inches long.
3. Season with brown sugar, onions, garlic and pepper, and add water.
4. Place butter evenly over sauerkraut and top with kielbasa.
5. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes at 350°F or until sausage is cooked to 160°F, according to meat thermometer.
6. You can also put everything in a crock pot and cook on low for 5 hours.



# Jambalaya

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 package Andouille sausage
- 1 lb. peeled shrimp (prefer fresh)
- 2 cans chicken broth
- 1 can Rotel
- 1 stick butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 tsp. cajun seasoning
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp. thyme flakes
- 2 c. rice (add more if you want it thicker)
- Water (add to thicken if you add more rice)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start with chicken broth and add everything on high for 30 minutes.
2. Stir occasionally to get started then turn to medium/low and continue stirring occasionally until preferred.
3. Add more rice/water if you prefer it to be thicker.
4. Add in shrimp and cook for 30 more minutes before serving.

**BRIAN LATIMER'S**

# Southern Baked Mac & Cheese

## INGREDIENTS

- 1-2 c. of a lot of cheeses (sharp or extra cheddar, Colby-Jack, mozzarella, American, cream cheese)
- Garlic powder to taste
- Onion powder to taste
- Mustard powder to taste
- Smoked paprika to taste
- Unsalted butter
- Chicken broth
- 2-3 eggs (optional)
- 3 c. elbow macaroni
- ½ c. heavy cream
- Half and half
- Salt
- Black pepper

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rub down an 8x11 or 9x13-inch baking dish with the butter. Give it a good, generous layer of butter.
2. Next, cook macaroni pasta in the chicken broth until just under al dente. It needs to be undercooked so that it doesn't end up mushy and overcooked in the oven.
3. While your macaroni is cooking, shred your cheese but save half of the cheddar and colby jack to make that bubbly, delicious browned cheese crust that everyone will want to fight over because we all know that's the best part!
4. In a large bowl, mix in all of the different cheeses, the half-and-half and heavy cream, and your spices. A little mustard powder boosts the cheese flavor, salt and black pepper are a must, garlic and onion powder, and smoked paprika for that little extra somethin'.
5. Mix cooked macaroni pasta into the cheese, then give it a taste for seasoning. Add a little salt if needed, or pepper or garlic, whatever you want to boost up in flavor. Make sure to always taste for seasoning before moving on to adding the eggs!
6. Stir the eggs into the macaroni mixture. Get it nice and well-mixed before adding it to the buttered baking dish and spreading it evenly in there.
7. Cover it in the rest of the cheddar and Colby-Jack, sprinkle with some smoked paprika, then bake 350°F for 35-40 minutes (monitor cooking). No, there are no breadcrumbs here!
8. Let cool 10-15 minutes.



# Challah

## INGREDIENTS

- 4¼ c. all-purpose flour and more for dusting
- 1 tbsp. instant/rapid-rise yeast
- 2 tsp. salt
- ¾ c. lukewarm water
- ¼ c. + 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
- ¼ c. of sugar (can substitute for honey)
- 3 eggs, at room temperature
- 1 egg yolk, at room temperature
- Cinnamon (optional)
- Candied fruits to garnish (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl or stand mixer with a dough hook, combine the flour, yeast, and salt. Mix on low speed to combine.
2. In a separate bowl, combine the lukewarm water, oil, sugar, 2 eggs, and the egg yolk. Add to the dry ingredients and knead on medium-low speed until the dough is sticky. It might seem like the dough is too wet, but it's supposed to be!
3. Dust your hands and work surface with flour and scrape the dough out onto your clean counter. Dust some flour on the top of the loaf and knead it into a ball.
4. Lightly grease a large (very large if possible) bowl with vegetable oil (you can use olive oil, but the taste might be a little off). Put the dough into the bowl and brush a little vegetable oil on top. Cover with plastic wrap or a towel and sit it somewhere warm until it doubles in size for 1-2 hours. You can also place it in a proofing drawer or an oven that's been warmed to 150°F and turned off.
5. Punch the dough back down and allow it to proof for another 30 minutes.
6. Dump your dough onto your work surface (floured again) and dust the top with flour. Cut the dough into four equal pieces (if you have a food scale, you're aiming for 9 oz. pieces).
7. Roll the balls out into ropes about a foot and a half long. Pinch the tops together and take the strand farthest to the right and weave it toward the left through the other strands using an over, under, over pattern. Take the strand furthest to the right and repeat the pattern again.
8. Repeat this pattern, always starting with the strand farthest to the right, until the whole loaf is braided. Tuck the ends under.
9. Transfer the loaf to a parchment-lined baking dish. Cover the loaf and allow it to rise in a warm area for 1-2 hours.
10. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Make sure you have an oven rack in the middle.
11. In a separate, small bowl, beat the last egg and brush it all over the dough. This is where you can add your optional candied fruit topping.
12. Bake for 25-35 minutes until the internal temp reaches 190°F to 200°F. Remove the bread and allow it to cool.
13. You can save your challah in the freezer in a freezer Ziploc bag or you can use it the Jewish way—for french toast the next morning!



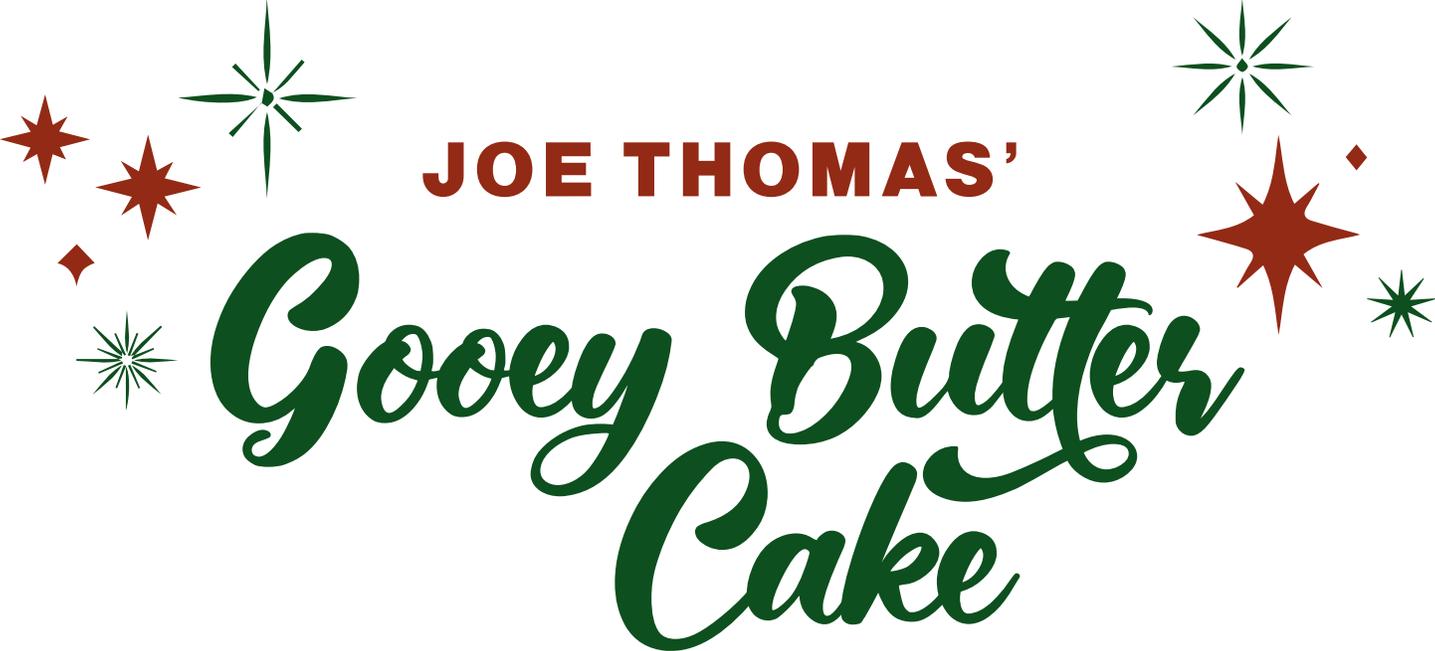
# Pineapple Salad

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 c. sugar
- 6 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 c. shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 20 oz. cans pineapple chunks
- 1 c. crushed Ritz Crackers
- 8 tbsp. butter

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Grease medium-size casserole dish with butter.
3. Stir together sugar and flour.
4. Gradually stir in cheese in large bowl.
5. Drain pineapple chunks (hold 6 tbsp. reserve off to the side), add to bowl.
6. Stir mixture and pour into dish.
7. Combine Ritz, melted butter, and reserve pineapple juice. Stir until blended.
8. Spread on top of mixture in dish.
9. Bake 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown.



**JOE THOMAS'**

# Goopy Butter Cake

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 18.25 oz. package of yellow cake mix
- ½ c. butter, melted
- 4 large eggs, divided
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract divided
- 1 8 oz. package of cream cheese
- 4 c. confectioners sugar

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Mix cake mix, butter, 2 eggs, and 1 tsp. vanilla in a large bowl until well combined. Pat mixture into a 9x13-inch dish. Using wet hands makes this work best.
3. Mix cream cheese, remaining 2 eggs, and remaining 1 tsp. vanilla with an electric mixer in a bowl. Slowly beat in confectioner's sugar. Pour over the cake layer. Spread evenly.
4. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown, 40 to 45 minutes. Cool before serving, if you can wait! I hear cutting it when cooled will make the squares come out more esthetically pleasing. I wouldn't know. We enjoy this with a scoop of ice cream, too.



# Pumpkin Roll

## INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{3}{4}$  c. all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 c. granulated sugar
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{2}{3}$  c. canned pumpkin
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 8 oz. (softened) cream cheese
- 2 tbsp. (softened) butter
- 1 c. powdered sugar

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Line pan w/ parchment paper. In large bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and pumpkin pie spice.
3. In separate bowl, mix eggs, sugar, vanilla, and pumpkin until smooth. Combine both bowls and stir.
4. Spread batter on the pan, bake for 14-15 minutes.
5. Remove parchment paper and baked cake to a flat surface. Starting at a short end, gently roll cake and parchment paper into tight spiral. Let cool.
6. Mix cream cheese, butter, vanilla, and powdered sugar until fluffy and smooth. Unroll cake roll, smooth filling in even layer across the cake.
7. Roll up cake without parchment paper.
8. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.
9. Dust with powdered sugar.
10. For best flavor, let sit in fridge for 3 days.



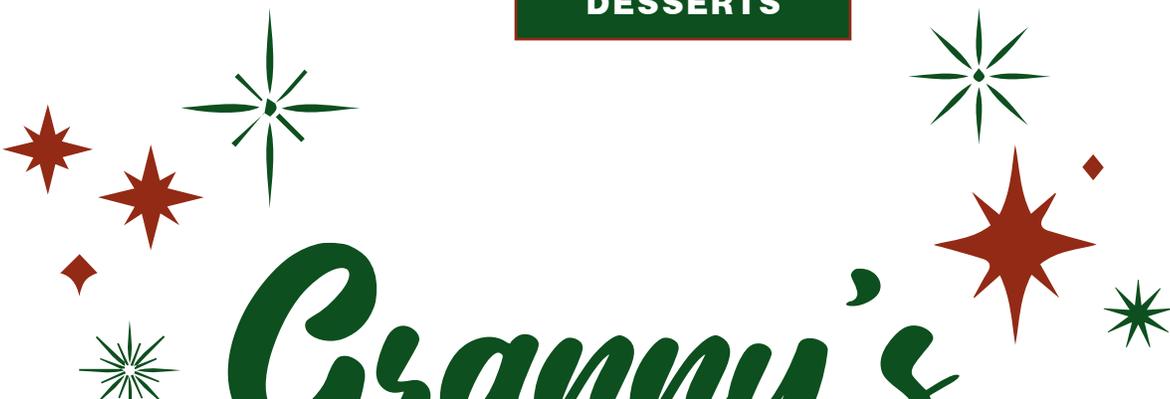
# Christmas Wreath

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 tbsp. butter
- 1 package of large marshmallows or 5½ c. of mini marshmallows
- 6 c. of corn flakes
- Green food dye
- Red M&Ms

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large saucepan, melt butter over low heat.
2. Add marshmallows and stir until completely melted.
3. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in drops of green food dye until a Christmas wreath color has been achieved.
5. Add corn flakes and stir until completely coated.
6. Spray your fingers with no-stick baking spray and form donut-like circles with the mixture.
7. Place red M&Ms around the “wreath” like “ornaments”.
8. Save for up to a week.



# Granny's Apple Cake

## INGREDIENTS

### CRUMB TOPPING

- ½ c. all-purpose flour
- ¼ c. unsalted butter, cold
- ½ c. light brown sugar
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon

### CAKE

- 1 ½ c. flour
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅔ c. vegetable oil
- ¾ c. granulated sugar
- ¼ c. brown sugar
- 1 whole egg
- 1 egg white
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2-3 Granny Smith apples, peeled and diced into small chunks
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F degrees. Generously spray a 9x9-inch baking pan with nonstick spray. Set aside.

### CRUMB TOPPING

2. In a small bowl, toss the flour, brown sugar, salt, and cinnamon together. Cut in the cold butter using a pastry blender, a fork, or your hands.
3. Mix to create clumps and crumbs. Set aside.

### APPLE CAKE

1. Sift together the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk the oil, granulated sugar, brown sugar, oil, egg, egg white, and vanilla together until combined.
2. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir until almost combined. Try not to over mix the batter. It will be very thick. Fold in apples and walnuts and mix until evenly combined.
3. Spoon/pour the batter into the prepared baking pan. Spread to make an even surface. Pour the crumb topping evenly on top and gently press them down into the batter.
4. Bake the cake for 30-35 minutes, or until the cake appears to be crispy around the edges and the batter doesn't jiggle when the pan is shaken.
5. If the cake still looks uncooked after 30 minutes, bake the cake for 5 more minutes.



# Cherry Sub Gum

## INGREDIENTS

### CRUMBLE

- ½ stick margarine
- 1 c. flour (self rising)
- ½ c. chopped pecans

### MIXTURE

- 2 containers dream whip
- 1 c. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 large cream cheese
- 1 c. confectioners sugar
- 1 28 oz. can of cherry pie filling
- ½ c. chopped walnuts

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix butter, flour and pecans and bake for 20 minutes on 350°F.
2. Let cool; crumble into 9x13-inch pan.
3. Mix together dream whip, milk and vanilla.
4. Mix cream cheese and sugar and add to dream whip mixture.
5. Pour mixture on crumb mixture; chill; top with cherry pie filling.

**GREG MRVICH'S**

# Old Fashioned Christmas Cocktail

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp. mulled wine simple syrup
- 3 dashes bitters
- 2 oz. bourbon
- 1 c. of ice cubes or one large cube
- 1 slice of orange peel (garnish)
- 1 cinnamon stick (garnish)
- 1 piece star anise (garnish)

## INSTRUCTIONS

### MULLED WINE SIMPLE SYRUP

1. To a large pot add 750ml bottle of your favorite red wine, 2 pieces of whole star anise, 4 whole cloves, 2 cinnamon sticks, 2 cardamom pods and three slices of orange. Simmer at medium-high heat for about 1 hour.
2. After the wine has finished simmering, strain the spices and orange out and measure the amount of simple syrup you wish to make. The ratio for this simple syrup is 1 part mulled wine to 1 part sugar.
3. Add the mulled wine and the sugar to your pot and simmer until the sugar is completely melted. Allow to cool before using.

### OLD FASHIONED

4. Pour your simple syrup into a whiskey glass and add bitters. Stir to combine, then place your ice cube(s) in the glass. Pour bourbon over the ice, give it a quick stir then garnish with a slice of orange peel (oil expressed over the drink) cinnamon stick and star anise.

**Cheers!**



# Spiced Egg Nog

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 c. milk
- $\frac{2}{3}$  c. granulated sugar ( $\frac{1}{2}$  c. if non-alcoholic)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 4 egg yolks
- $\frac{1}{2}$  c. heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$  c. bourbon (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat milk to low simmer in saucepan.
2. Whisk sugar, spice, and egg yolks until texture is light in color.
3. Take  $\frac{1}{4}$  c. of hot milk and whisk into mix (repeat 2 more times).
4. Transfer mix to saucepan.
5. Stirring continuously, bring custard to low simmer until thick enough to coat back of spoon.
6. Let cool.
7. Stir in cream (and bourbon, if using).
8. Chill and store in fridge.



# Holiday Gin & Tonic

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 oz. cranberry juice
- 3 oz. gin
- Ice
- 4 oz. tonic water
- Cranberries to garnish

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add cranberry juice, gin, and ice to a shaker and shake vigorously.
2. Pour into glass and top with tonic water.
3. Garnish with a few cranberries and enjoy!



# Tito's Holiday Mule

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ oz. Tito's vodka
- 3 oz. ginger beer
- ½ oz. cranberry juice
- ¼ oz. lime juice
- 2 dashes of orange bitters

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients into a copper mug with ice.
2. Stir and garnish with a lime slice.