**Brunch Favorites**

**April 2023**

**Candied Bacon**

**Ingredients:**

* Thick cut bacon – cut in half pieces
* ½ cup honey
* ¼ cup dark beer

**Directions:**

Preheat oven 350

Mix well the honey and beer. Foil line cookie sheet with lip, set cookie cooling rack on sheet. Put bacon on rack. Brush honey mixture on top side, bake 30 mins and flip, brush, bake additional 20-30 mins (check after 15, then every 5 to make sure it doesn’t burn) until dark remove and flip over every 5 mins or so until it cools, (30 mins) if you don’t it will stick.

**DON’T TOUCH BACON UNTIL IT COOLS – WILL BURN YOU!!**

Longer tastier version -

**Sweet Hot Bacon**

**Ingredients:**

* Thick cut bacon – cut in half pieces
* 1/3 siracha sauce
* 2/3 honey
* 2Tbs brown sugar

**Directions:**

Preheat over 225

Mix well the honey, sauce and brown sugar. Foil line cookie sheet with lip, set cookie cooling rack on sheet. Put bacon on rack. Brush honey mixture on top side, bake 1 hour and flip, brush with sauce, bake additional ½ hour, repeat and bake ½ hour, after about 15mins keep eye on it as you do not want it to burn and it will burn fast! Check every 5 mins. Remove from over and with tongs move bacon every 5-10 mins or it will stick, do this for the next 30 mins.

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**Blueberry Breakfast Cake**

### **Ingredients:**

* 2 cups all-purpose flour approximately 9 ounces
* 1/2 cup sugar
* 2 teaspoons baking powder
* 1 large egg lightly beaten
* 1/2 cup milk
* 1/4 cup butter or margarine softened (NOT melted)
* 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
* 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries

#### **For the topping:**

* 1/3 cup sugar
* 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
* 1/4 cup walnuts finely chopped
* 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
* 3 tablespoons cold butter or margarine

#### **For the drizzle: (optional)**

* 1/2 cup powdered sugar
* 2 tablespoons milk more or less to get to a drizzling consistency

### **Directions:**

* Preheat the oven to 350 F and spray or grease a 9-inch square baking pan.
* In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar and baking powder. Cut butter into small pieces. Add egg, milk, butter and lemon peel; mix just until dry ingredients are moistened. You may need to finish mixing with your hands to get all the flour incorporated. the batter will be very thick.
* Fold in the blueberries. Because the batter is so thick, this may take a few minutes. Spread into a greased 9-in. square baking pan.
* For topping, combine sugar, flour, walnuts and cinnamon in a mini food processor or bowl. Add butter and process, or cut in if doing by hand, until mixture is crumbly. I like to do this with my fingers so I can tell when it's ready by touch. Sprinkle over batter. Bake at 350 degrees F for 40-45 minutes or until cake tests done.
* For drizzle, combine the powdered sugar and milk. If too thick, add a few drops of additional milk at a time until it reaches drizzling consistency. Drizzles over the top of the cake and allow to sit until sugar solidifies.

### Notes

This cake has a very thick batter that will have to be spread into the pan rather than poured. It's also very important to make sure you are measuring your flour properly so that you don't end up with more than you are supposed to. Always measure flour using the "scoop and sweep" method.

**Coconut Cream Pie**

**Ingredients:**

* 1 pkg white cake mix
* 3 large egg whites
* 1 ¼ cup water
* 1/3 c sweetened shredded coconut
* 1 can 14 oz fat-free sweetened condensed milk
* 1 tsp coconut extract

**Topping Ingredients:**

* 1 ½ cup cool whip
* 1/3 c sweetened shredded coconut toasted

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 350, grease a 13 x 9 pan

Beat cake mix, egg whites, water and coconut on low speed, 30 sec. Beat on medium 2 mins. Transfer to pan. Bake 20 -25 minutes until toothpick comes out clean. Cool 10 mins.

Mix condensed milk and extract. Using a large meat fork, poke holes in cake. Gently spread half of milk mixture over cake, let stand for 3 mins. Spread with remaining milk mixture. Cool for 1 hour. Spread cool whip over top, sprinkle with toasted coconut. Cover and refrigerate for about 4 hours.

**Cream Cheese Stuffed Banana Coffee Cake**

### **Ingredients**

#### Special Equipment

* 1 [9.5/10-inch 16 cup capacity angel food cake pan](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003YKGR5U?ie=UTF8&tag=carlscravi0a-20&camp=1789&linkCode=xm2&creativeASIN=B003YKGR5U)

#### **Cinnamon Walnut Streusel**

* 1/2 cup walnuts
* 1/2 cup flour
* 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
* 1/2 tablespoon [cinnamon](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0126UHZJ0/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=carlscravi0a-20&camp=1789&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=B0126UHZJ0&linkId=16b2119b0d8d9b3ee71ca2e05fa47a27)
* 4 tablespoons cold butter, cubed

#### **Banana Cake**

* 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
* 1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
* 1 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
* 1 teaspoon [salt](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0714B7FTK/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=carlscravi0a-20&camp=1789&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=B0714B7FTK&linkId=359d71db31c6d236e5f2df2aee666119)
* 1 teaspoon [cinnamon](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0126UHZJ0/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=carlscravi0a-20&camp=1789&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=B0126UHZJ0&linkId=16b2119b0d8d9b3ee71ca2e05fa47a27)
* 1/2 cup butter, softened
* 1 1/2 cups sugar
* 2 large eggs at room temperature
* 1 cup mashed bananas (about 2 large ripe bananas)
* 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
* 1 1/4 cups sour ream (not nonfat) at room temperature
* 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips (optional)
* 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped (optional)

#### **Cream Cheese Filling**

* 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
* 1/4 cup Reserved Batter (see instructions)
* 1/4 cup sugar
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

#### **Vanilla Glaze**

* 1 cup Powdered sugar
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 2 tablespoons milk

#### **Garnish (optional)**

* Garnish (optional)
* mini chocolate chips

### **Directions:**

* Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and spray all inside surfaces of a [16 cup nonstick angel food cake pan](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003YKGR5U?ie=UTF8&tag=carlscravi0a-20&camp=1789&linkCode=xm2&creativeASIN=B003YKGR5U)with nonstick cooking spray WITH FLOUR or grease and flour the inside of your pan. Set aside.\*
* Cinnamon Walnut Streusel: Add walnuts to your food processor and pulse 3 times. Add flour, brown sugar and cinnamon and pulse a few times to combine. Sprinkle cold butter over top and pulse until the walnuts are chopped and the mixture resembles small pebbles. (You may also combine in a bowl and cut butter in by hand). Set aside in the refrigerator.
* Cake: In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Set aside.
* Using a stand or hand mixer, beat butter and sugar until fluffy on medium high speed, about 3 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating just until the yellow disappears after each egg. Mix in vanilla and bananas until just until combined.
* Gradually add flour mixture to banana/butter mixture in thirds, alternately with sour cream in between each third. Beat until just combined. Measure out 1/4 cup batter and set aside for cream cheese filling. Stir chocolate chips and walnuts into remaining batter until just until combined.
* Measure out 1 cup batter (to top cream cheese layer) and spoon the rest of the batter into the prepared pan.
* To your now empty mixing bowl, add 1/4 cup reserved batter, cream cheese, 1 teaspoon vanilla and 1/4 cup sugar. Beat on medium high speed until smooth and creamy, about 1 minute. Spoon Cream Cheese Filling over batter and gently smooth, but do not touch the sides of the pan. Spread reserved 1 cup batter evenly over filling (it will be very thin).
* Tap pan on counter a few times to get rid of any air bubbles then sprinkle evenly with Cinnamon Walnut Streusel.
* Bake for 55-60 minutes at 350 degrees F or until toothpick inserted comes out clean (without inserting in cream cheese). Some readers have stated their cake was not done in 60 minutes, so if it's not done, bake on! Let baked cake cool on wire rack for 1 hour. Gently invert cake onto a baking sheet, remove pan, and invert back onto cooling rack streusel side up. Let cool to room temperature.
* When ready to serve, whisk Vanilla Glaze ingredients together in a medium bowl and drizzle over cake. Sprinkle cake with mini chocolate chips (optional)
* Store in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.

### Notes

\*A bundt cake pan will NOT work in this recipe because it does not have enough volume.

**Lemon Glazed Cake Bites**

**Ingredients**

* Cake Bites
* 1 box lemon cake mix
* Water, vegetable oil and eggs called for on cake mix box

**Glaze Ingredients:**

* 1 bag, 2 lb powdered sugar (8 cups)
* ½ cup water
* ½ cup corn syrup
* 2 to 3 teaspoons lemon juice
* Poppy Seeds

**Directions:**

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Lightly grease 50 mini muffin cups. (you can make in 2 batches if you only have one pan)
2. In large bowl, beat cake ingredients with electric mixer on low speed 30 seconds, then on medium speed 2 minutes, scraping bowl occasionally.
3. Divide batter evenly among muffin cups (about half full).
4. Bake 10 to 13 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes. Remove cakes from muffin cups to cooling rack. Cool completely, about 30 minutes.
5. Place cooling rack on cookie sheet or waxed paper to catch glaze drips.
6. In 3-quart saucepan, mix all glaze ingredients. Heat over low heat, stirring frequently, until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat.
7. Dip a cake into glaze and remove gently with a fork, place top side is down on cooling rack. Top with poppy seeds immediately. Repeat till all cakes are coated. Let stand until glaze is set, about 15 minutes.
8. Store loosely covered.

**Lemon Lush**

## Ingredients:

* 1 (19.1-oz.) pkg. cream-filled vanilla sandwich cookies, crushed (about 4 1/2 cups)
* 1/2 cup butter, melted
* 2 (8-oz.) pkg cream cheese, softened
* 2 tsp. lemon zest plus 3 Tbsp. fresh juice
* 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar, divided
* 3 cups heavy whipping cream
* 3 cups whole milk
* 2 (3.4-oz.) pkg. lemon instant pudding mix and pie filling
* Lemon slices, for garnish

## Directions:

1. Coat a 13- x 9-inch freezer-safe baking dish with cooking spray, and line the dish with parchment paper.
2. Crush cookies in a food processor – works wonders!
3. Stir crushed cookies and melted butter in a large bowl until combined. Press firmly into bottom of prepared baking dish in an even layer. Freeze until firm, about 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, beat cream cheese, lemon zest and juice, and 1 1/4 cups of the powdered sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until fluffy, about 3 minutes. Place heavy whipping cream and remaining 1/4 cup powdered sugar in a large bowl; beat with a mixer on high until stiff peaks form, about 2 minutes. Fold 1 cup of the whipped cream into cream cheese mixture. Spread mixture over crust; freeze until set, about 10 minutes.
5. Whisk milk and pudding mix in a large bowl until smooth and thickened, 2 to 4 minutes. Spread pudding over cream cheese mixture in crust. Chill until pudding sets slightly, about 15 minutes.
6. Gently spread remaining whipped cream over pudding. Chill, covered, until firm, at least 4 hours or up to 24 hours. Garnish with lemon slices. Store, covered, in refrigerator up to 4 days.

**Make-Ahead Lemon Ricotta French Toast Bake**

### **INGREDIENTS**

### ***FOR THE LEMON CRUMBLE TOPPING:***

* 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
* 1/2 cup granulated sugar
* 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest (from 1 lemon)
* 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
* 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) Land O Lakes® Salted Full Stick Butter, chilled and cubed

#### **FOR THE LEMON RICOTTA FILLING:**

* 2 cups whole-milk ricotta cheese
* 3/4 cup lemon curd
* 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

#### **FOR THE FRENCH TOAST:**

* 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) Land O Lakes® Salted Full Stick Butter, melted and cooled, divided
* 10 large eggs
* 1 1/4 cups half-and-half
* 2 tablespoons finely grated lemon zest (from 2 lemons)
* 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
* 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
* 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
* 1 (1-pound) loaf challah bread, cut into 1-inch cubes and dried (see Recipe Notes)

### **Directions:**

1. **Make the lemon crumble topping:** Whisk the flour, sugar, lemon zest, and nutmeg together in a small bowl. Add the cubes of butter. Using your fingertips or a pastry blender, work the butter into the flour mixture until it has the consistency of coarse crumbs; set aside.
2. **Make the lemon ricotta filling:** Whisk the ricotta cheese, lemon curd and kosher salt together in a medium bowl; set aside.
3. **Assemble the French toast bake:** Brush the bottom and sides of an 9 by 13-inch baking dish with 1 tablespoon of the melted butter; set aside.
4. Whisk the remaining 5 tablespoons of melted butter, eggs, half-and-half, lemon zest, lemon juice, vanilla, and salt together in a large bowl. Add the bread and toss gently with your fingers until the custard has been absorbed.
5. Transfer half of the soaked bread to the prepared baking dish and arrange into a single layer. Spoon the lemon ricotta filling onto the bread and spread evenly. Top with the remaining soaked bread. Sprinkle with the lemon crumble, if using. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight or up to 24 hours.
6. **Bake:** Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 350°F. Uncover the French toast bake. Bake until puffed and golden brown, 40 to 50 minutes. Top with fresh berries and/or bananas, or drizzle with melted butter and/or warm maple syrup.

**Raspberry Cheesecake French Toast Casserole**

### **Ingredients:**

* 12 c cubed french bread (about 1 large loaf)
* 2 c raspberries fresh or frozen
* 8 oz cream cheese softened
* ⅓ c sugar
* 10 eggs
* 1 ⅔ c milk
* ½ c sugar
* 1 teaspoon vanilla
* powdered sugar optional

### **Directions:**

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* Use cooking spray to grease the bottom and sides of a 9x13 pan; set aside.
* Cut the bread into 1 ½ inch cubes until you have about 12 cups. Add about ⅔ of the bread cubes into the bottom of the dish.
* In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese and ⅓ c sugar and stir until smooth.
* Spoon the cream cheese mixture over the first layer of bread cubes. No need to spread it out - keeping it in dollops will be perfect!
* Sprinkle the berries on next followed by the remainder of the bread cubes. Set aside.
* In a large bowl, whisk the eggs. Then whisk in the milk, ½ c sugar and vanilla.
* Pour the egg mixture into the pan. Press the bread cubes down to help each cube soak up some of the liquid. Cover the casserole with a lid or plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.
* In the morning (or when you're ready to bake it), preheat the oven to 350°F.
* Bake the casserole (uncovered) for 45-50 minutes or until the internal temperature reaches 160 and the top is golden brown.
* Remove from the oven and let rest a few minutes. Sprinkle with powdered sugar, if desired, and serve with maple syrup.

**Spring Orzo Salad**

**Ingredients:**

* 1 ½ cups dry orzo, cooked according to package instructions, drained and rinsed
* 1 ½ cups frozen peas, thawed
* 6 radishes sliced
* ½ cup mint, chopped
* ½ cup slivered almonds
* 1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

**Lemon Dressing:**

* 1/8 cup oil
* 3Tbs lemon juice
* 2 cloves garlic, minced
* ½ tsp salt
* ¼ tsp black pepper
* Zest of one lemon

**Directions:**

Combine lemon dressing ingredients in jar. Shake until well combined.

Mix dressing and other ingredients together

Add extra salt, pepper, lemon to taste

**Stuffed Ham-and-Cheese Croissant Casserole**

(not sure if this is exactly it – but it’s the closest I could find!)

## Ingredients:

* 10 (1 1/4-oz.) deli smoked ham slices (1/4 inch thick)
* 10 mini croissants
* 10 (1/2-oz.) Swiss cheese slices
* 6 large eggs
* 2 cups heavy whipping cream
* 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
* Thyme sprigs

## Directions:

1. Microwave ham slices between paper towels on a microwavable plate on HIGH 45 seconds. Blot with paper towels to remove excess moisture.
2. Split croissants open with a serrated knife. Top bottom half of each croissant with 1 ham slice and 1 Swiss cheese slice (folding ham and cheese to fit, if needed). Cover with top half of croissant. Place stuffed croissants in a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 13- x 9-inch baking dish.
3. Whisk together eggs, heavy cream, and Dijon mustard in a large bowl. Pour mixture slowly over stuffed croissants. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate 8 hours or overnight.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F. Remove plastic wrap; bake in preheated oven until golden brown and knife inserted in center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes, covering with aluminum foil the last 15 minutes to prevent overbrowning. Garnish with thyme sprigs.

**Zucchini bread** – We all know the recipe! 😊