Potato Pancakes w/ Bacon

4 slices of bacon, diced
4 potatoes, peeled (medium sized)
1 yellow onion (medium)
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 eggs
4 T flour
Salt & Pepper
vegetable oil for frying (enough to cover bottom of skillet 1/4 inch)

Cook bacon until crispy, discard fat, drain bacon on paper-towel lined plate. Grate potato & onion. Squeeze excess liquid out of grated potatoes & onion using a towel or by hand. In a large bowl, place “dry” potato mixture, garlic, eggs, flour and salt & pepper, mix thoroughly. Put 1/4 inch of oil in bottom of cast iron skillet, heat until ripples appear. Form 3-inch diameter patties from mixture and add them to the pan. Cook pancakes until crispy and browned, press down occasionally to flatten (about 2 minutes per side). Remove to a paper-towel lined plate and keep them warm in a preheated 275 degree oven while you cook remaining pancakes.

For added flavor, I suppose you could go ahead and keep the bacon fat and just add vegetable oil for frying.

Powdered Sugar Pecan Balls

1 cup roughly chopped pecans (tossed, approx 350 for 8 minutes)
2 sticks of butter (room temp)
1 3/4 cups powdered sugar

1/2 t vanilla extract
1/2 t almond extract
1/4 t salt
2 cups flour (all-purpose)

Beat together butter and 1 cup of sugar until fluffy. Mix in vanilla & almond extracts & salt. Slowly add flour and then mix in pecans.

Shape dough into tablespoon sized balls. Place 1 1/2 inches apart on cookie sheet in either refrigerator or freezer. If freezing, wait until balls are completely frozen and store in an airtight plastic bag for up to two months. Otherwise, refrigerate for 30 minutes and bake 18-22 minutes. Let cool on the cookie sheet for 10 minutes.

Then while still slightly warm, roll cookies in 1/2 cup of powdered sugar. Just before serving sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup of powdered sugar.

Potato Gratin with Horseradish

3 lbs baking potatoes (peeled and thinly sliced…I use a mandolin)
salt & pepper to taste
3 cups of heavy cream
1/4 cup prepared horseradish

Preheat over to 375. Butter a 3-quart baking dish. In a bowl combine heavy cream, S&P and horseradish. Add potato slices and toss to coat.

Pour potato mixture into baking dish, be sure to submerge each potato slice. For easier clean-up, cover with foil or lid and place on baking sheet. Bake for 25 minutes then remove foil or lid and bake another 25 minutes or until top is golden brown and potatoes are tender.

Butter & Herbed Gnocchi

2 lbs gnocchi (fresh, refrigerated, frozen)
1/2 stick butter
2 t Dijon mustard
salt & pepper to taste
1/2 cup chopped parsley
1/4 cup minced chives

Cook gnocchi (follow package/recipe directions), save 1/2 cup starchy water, drain gnocchi. In a bowl add mustard, starchy water, salt & pepper and gnocchi. Toss together until butter has completely melted. Add parsley and chives right before serving to preserve flavor & color.

(Original idea came from Real Simple magazine’s December 2008 edition page 193; changes made to fit our tastes)

Cookies with Lemon Glaze

Cookies:
1 1/2 sticks of unsalted butter (room temp)
3/4 cup sugar

2 egg yolks
1/2 t vanilla extract
1/4 t salt
2 cups flour (all-purpose)

Glaze:
1 cup powdered sugar
2T lemon juice (fresh)
1 t grated lemon zest

Mix butter & sugar until fluffy, add egg yolks, vanilla & salt until combined. Slowly add flour until incorporated.

Divide dough in half, roll into logs (1 1/4 inch diameter), refrigerate about an hour

Preheat oven to 350. Slice cold logs into 1/4 inch slices and place on cookie sheet (sprayed or parchment) about 1 1/2 inches apart. Bake 16-20 minutes. Cool on cookie sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to cooling rake until completely cooled.

Whisk together glaze ingredients until thick, but pourable (using more lemon juice as necessary). Drizzle or dip each cookie and let set.

This dough can also be frozen for up to 2 months in the logs shape.

I have not tried this yet, but adding lemon juice or zest to the cookie itself might also be yummy and add more lemon flavor.

(Original idea from Real Simple magazine’s December 2008 edition page 250)

Weekly Meal Plan 1

1. Tacos (with seasoned taco meat, lettuce, diced tomatoes, salsa, shredded cheese, sour cream, Tabasco, taco shells)
2. pan-fried wild Pollock, rice & side salad (with tomato, cucumber, bell pepper, dressing)
3. Frozen pizza & side salad
4. Beef pot roast, potatoes, carrot, onion & gravy
5. Roast beef hash made from leftovers & side salad
6. Spaghetti & homemade meatballs
7. Quiche (with minced broccoli, breakfast sausages, diced ham, cheddar cheese, onion, & mushroom)

Chickpeas, Grape Tomatoes & Feta Cheese Salad

1/4 cup chickpeas (rinsed & drained)
1/2 cup grape tomatoes sliced in half
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
1 tbs. lemon juice
2 t. olive oil
1 t. dried oregano
pinch of salt & pepper

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Refrigerate for a couple of hours to let the flavors come together. This makes one serving and is a great lunch idea.

The above recipe has been altered from the original to accommodate our family tastes.
If you are interested in the original recipe, it can be found in Everyday Food, Jan/Feb 2003, page 16.

The Plan

This family needs a place where we can access our recipes. It needed to be organized and easy to use. This blog will be a collection point for the recipes we use daily and the new ones we want to try someday. When possible, we will attribute the recipe to the original source so credit is given where credit is due.