



Jake Nelson
Dalton, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Aebelskiver

Recipe Number: 119

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 2 - 3 minutes

INGREDIENTS: 4 eggs, separated
2 C cake flour
1 t baking powder
scant 2 C milk
1 T sugar
1/2 t salt
1/4 c melted butter

DIRECTIONS: Beat egg yolks until light. Add sugar and beat until thickened. Sift together dry ingredients and add alternating with butter and milk. Beat egg whites until soft and fold into batter. Fill each cup of Aebelskiver pan 2/3 full, cook over medium heat until bubbly, turn with a fork and cook on other side until brown. Serve with syrup, honey, or jam. If desired, a small piece of cooked apple or thick plum sauce can be pressed into each cup of batter before turning.

STORY:

History of Aebelskiver

The Aebelskiver is a Danish delicacy that is like a pancake, only in the shape of a ball. Back in the early history of Denmark, the Danish Vikings roamed up and down the coasts of Europe. Their Dragon ships were designed for speed and the Vikings traveled with very few supplies. Supposedly, the Vikings used their dented shields to cook an easy cake-like batter. The batter collected in the dents and formed balls. These pancake balls became known as Aebelskivers. Today my family serves Aebelskivers every Christmas along with our traditional Finken dinner. However, instead of a dented shield, we use a cast iron Aebelskiver pan.



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Orlando Afanador
Schuyler, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Chicken & Potato Sazonado

Recipe Number: 11

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 60 minutes

Oven temp 375°



INGREDIENTS: 2 lb. chicken
8 med. potatoes
1 lg. vidalia onion
3 lg cloves of garlic
1 oz. or half a package of Sazon (found in the international foods aisle)
1 tsp. of Adobo (also found in the international foods aisle)
½ cup of extra virgin olive oil.
Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 375

- Wash and pat dry chicken and put into a lg. bowl.
- Wash and scrub potato (peeling is optional) then quarter them toss in with chicken.
- Slice onions into thick slice (@¼ inch) and toss in with chicken and potato's.
- Mince garlic and add to bowl then salt and pepper to taste. (note: Sazon and Adobo might have some salt depending on the brand.)
- Mix every thing with Sazon and Adobo first then toss everything with olive oil.

Arrange everything into an oven safe dish. You can bake immediately or cover with clear wrap and place in the fridge till ready to cook.

To bake: place in center of the oven and bake uncovered for 45 minutes, then cover and bake for an additional 15 minutes.

STORY: *My mother used to make this dish on those cold December mornings. The flavors of chicken, potato, onions, garlic and spices were so warming to all the senses that it quickly made you forget how cold you were from playing in the snow all day. The Caribbean influence was also comforting especially for my parents having come from Puerto Rico to such inclement weather.*

Still when I make this now for my wife and child the Caribbean warms us in the comfort of our Nebraskan home.



Lesa Kechley
Nebraska City, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Dawson's Apple Caramel Crunch Pie

Recipe Number: 115

Cook time: 50 - 55 minutes

Prep time: 30 minutes

Oven Temp: 400° / 375°

INGREDIENTS:

Pie Crust:

- 1 ½ cup of flour
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- 1/3 cup of finely chopped black walnuts
- ¾ cup of shortening
- 3 to 4 Tablespoon of chilled water
- 1 egg white & 1 tablespoon water

Filling:

- 7-9 apples (gala apples work nice)
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- ½ to ¾ cup of sugar
- 3 tablespoon of flour
- ½ teaspoon of cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon of fresh nutmeg
- ¼ cup of caramel topping (caramel dip works great)

Topping:

- ½ cup of brown sugar
- 1/3 cup of old fashioned oatmeal
- 1 tablespoon of flour
- 1/8 of cinnamon
- dash of fresh nutmeg
- 2 to 3 tablespoon of butter (take out at room temperature for a 1/2 hour before adding to mixture)
- 1/2 to ¾ cup of chopped black walnuts
- ¼ to 1/3 of caramel topping (caramel dip works great)

DIRECTIONS:

Pie crust: Measure flour, salt, and finely chopped black walnuts together in medium bowl and mix. Cut in shortening with pastry blender until the shortening is broken down to small size pieces. Add chilled water, one tablespoon at a time, mixing with fork until flour mixture is well blended. Make into a ball. Turn out on lightly floured board or pastry cloth. Flatten with hand and roll out (with pastry roller) not quite 1/8 thick. Roll out and keep crust in a rounded shape (if breaks, pinch and continue to roll). Fold crust in half and put in a greased 9 inch pie pan. Be careful not to stretch as it can cause shrinking of the crust during cooking. Make your crust edge by pressing with finger tips and creating your own edging. Separate egg. Place the egg whites and add one tablespoon of water in a small bowl and whip, just enough to have some foam starting. Brush pie with edges with a pastry brush. Set aside.

Filling: Important to ensure your apples are firm. Peel, core and thinly slice apples in a large bowl. Mix lemon juice with the apples. Mix together sugar and flour then blend thoroughly into the apples. Add cinnamon and fresh nutmeg, then mix well. Add filling to the pie crust and arrange to apples are tightly layered. Take your caramel sauce (caramel dip products for apples work well) and fill in a plastic squeeze bottle. May have to heat caramel in microwave for about 10 to 20 seconds, it will depend on the thickness of the caramel. To get your best taste, it is recommended NOT to use flavored/syrup caramel. Drizzle over top of the filling. Set aside.

Topping: In a small bowl mix brown sugar, oatmeal, flour, cinnamon and a dash of fresh nutmeg. Cut 2 tablespoons of butter into small pieces and add to the mixture. Blend with a fork until fully incorporated as it will have a crumbled texture. You may have to use an additional tablespoon of butter if you need a little more of the crumble texture as the humidity can affect the texture. Take a tablespoon and sprinkle over top of the apple filling. In a preheated oven, place pie on the middle rack of the oven. The last 10 min before the pie is done, add chopped black walnuts on top (this will prevent the walnuts from turning too dark) and resume baking. Remove from oven and set on a cooling rack. Let set for about one hour and then drizzle the caramel over the apple pie. It is best to let the pie rest for 3 to 4 hours so it can set well and be firm when you slice. Once sliced you can add your favorite ice cream on the side or pour heavy cream on the top, then enjoy.

STORY:

I have always made a great apple pie that we all love. It has been in the family for some time, but I decided to make changes and create more of a special touch than just a traditional apple pie. It was time to add a new addition to a couple traditional favorites that my family comes to expect on holidays, such as our Lime Party Salad. If it does not get made at Christmas, disappointment is set in! Also the most moist potato dinner rolls you could imagine. I had tried different ways to step up the apple pie. I tried some black walnuts to the crust and thought there needed to be more. I tried fresh cherries from my cherry tree to add with the apples but that did not have the "wow" factor that I was looking for. I wanted to make this a special pie to be a tradition for years to come. After different attempts of blending different things I found the "wow" and named it "Dawson's Apple Caramel Crunch Pie."

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Dawson's Apple Caramel Crunch Pie addition to my family is very important. I wanted to add a new tradition on behalf of my daughter, Christina. Two years ago, our daughter was in a car accident. She struggled to survive, but after 9 days it was time to let her go. We were blessed to have her for 25 years in our life and even more blessed to be able to raise our two year old grandson, Dawson (Christina's little boy who is now four years old). The joy and love of Dawson in our home can not be described, as it truly is the most special gift I could ever have asked for. Dawson loves to cook and bake. We have our own aprons. My husband calls Dawson's apron his "shop apron." Almost every Saturday we make cookies. I do believe we made just about every cookie you can think of and made up some of our own. He loves getting his hands into dough and is becoming the next "Emeril." One of his aprons says, "Dawson...Emeril in training." He has kicked it up a notch and has moved on to kneading bread!

With the changes in our lives, I wanted to make a special dessert that not only will adults enjoy but a child would love. That is why I added the extra crunches with the nuts and the sweetness of the caramel, giving the apples the ultimate taste. So having a special dessert for Dawson that he can enjoy, and will know it was made with love.

**Note: photos were enclosed with recipe*



Angie Jenson
Papillion, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Halupsie

Recipe Number: 56

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 2 hours

Oven Temp: 350°

INGREDIENTS: 6 chicken breast (or one chicken cut up)
1 med onion chopped
1 head of cabbage chopped (reserve 3-4 outer leaves)
1 to 1½ stick butter or margarine
salt and pepper to taste
3 cups of rice (not instant rice)
Cider vinegar - approx 1 cup
Water - approx 5 cups
*amount of chicken, rice, and water can be changed to fit your crowd size!



DIRECTIONS: Cube chicken breasts into bite size pieces. Chop onion into small pieces. Melt butter in large skillet, add onions, salt and pepper. Saute until onion just start to get soft, add chicken. Cook for 10-15 minutes. While chicken is cooking chop cabbage, be sure to reserve 3-4 outer leaves. Spray large roasting pan with non stick spray. Measure rice into bottom. Scoop chicken out of skillet and put on top of rice. (reserve the liquid from cooking the chicken). Put chopped cabbage on top of chicken. Cover with the reserved whole outer cabbage leaves. Take cooking liquid and add to large measuring cup or bowl. Add vinegar to equal 1 ¾ cups (vinegar plus cooking liquid equals 1 ¾ cups). Add 3 cups of water for a total of 6 cups. Mix the broth and taste. It should be tart but not sour enough to make you pucker. Adjust taste with the remaining ¼ cup of either water or vinegar. Add broth slowly to roasting pan. Cover and bake at 350 for about 2 hours or until rice has absorbed all the water and is tender.

STORY: *This recipe is a long standing family recipe. I learned it from my father, who learned from his mother who learned it from her mother. My dad grew up in a large family and did a lot of the cooking as his mom died when he was 8 years old. Being the 2nd youngest, he took on a lot of the household chores while his sisters and older brothers worked on the farm and looked after the other children. This recipe was easy to stretch for a large family by adding more rice. Usually the used a whole chicken as they always had chickens on the farm. Sometimes they would add corn to make it stretch even more. I remember my dad saying that this was a meal they could always have, even during lean times, and if company was coming, they could just add more rice. I have so many memories of my dad cooking this dish, not only as a child, but as an adult as well. It is meal that sounds strange but tastes so good. When I asked him to teach me how to make it, I was in college!*

I could tell he was very pleased that I wanted to learn how to make it so that the recipe would continue. It was so enjoyable cooking side by side with my dad, we both shared the love and talent for cooking. It is amazing how we have dishes like this and don't think much about it from day to day. My father passed away very unexpectedly at the young age of 56 two years ago. Now this dish means more to me than ever. I intend to teach my girls how to make it, so they may keep the recipe alive as well.

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Anita Miller
Neligh, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Italian Sausage with Peppers

Recipe Number: 110

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 35-40 minutes

INGREDIENTS: 1 lb Italian sausage
2 tbs olive oil
1 green pepper
1 onion
2 tomatoes
2 cloves crushed garlic
salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS: Prick Italian sausage links with fork and fry. In another skillet saute slices of pepper, crushed garlic and onion in olive oil. After several minutes add two diced tomatoes (remove skins) and cook until vegetables are tender. Place cooked sausages on bun and top with peppers, onions, and tomatoes.

STORY: *My Grandmother came to Omaha from Sicily in 1912. She was 16 years old at that time. She married my Grandfather, Salvatore Circo and they had five children. They survived tough economic times, the Great Depression and the 1914 flu, World Wars, etc. but Grandma never missed serving/cooking the best food I have ever eaten. She loved to cook and since we (my mom, dad, and sisters) lived just two blocks away, she cooked for us as well. She did not drive a car so she'd make pizzas, peppers, pasta, and plates of Italian delicacies and bring them on foot to our house. On Sundays the whole family, all of her children and grandchildren, gathered at her house and ate. It was like Thanksgiving every Sunday. She had two apple trees and a cherry tree in her yard and all of her neighbors enjoyed her pies and struedels. She even fed the mailman! Cooking was her life and mealtime was always at the table, which was beautifully set with her mis-matched set of dishes. I wear my apron proudly because it reminds me of the woman who instilled a love for cooking in me!*



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Shirley Brunkow
Milligan, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Kolaches

Recipe Number: 6

Prep time: 1-2 Hours

Cook time: 8-10 Minutes

INGREDIENTS: 1 T. instant dry yeast
1 ¼ cup milk, 110 degrees
1 tsp. salt
⅓ cup sugar
⅓ cup butter (or oil)
3 egg yolks, beaten (or 2 whole eggs)
4-5 cups flour



Fruit fillings:

Prune: Cover one pound of pitted prunes with water and cook until soft. Grind or mash with a potato masher. Add ¾ cup sugar, 2 teaspoons cinnamon and 1 ½ cups applesauce. Cook at a low temperature until slightly thick. Let cool.

Apricot: Cover one pound of dry apricots with water and cook until soft. Grind and add 1 cup sugar that has 4 T. cornstarch mixed in. Cook at a low temperature until thick. For a milder flavor, add 1 cup of applesauce.

Cherry: Thicken one quart cherries (drained) with cornstarch and add 1 cup of sugar. Cook until thick. You can also use the cherries from a can of pie filling.

Commercial kolache filling may also be purchased in tubes.

Poppy seed: Grind ½ pound poppy seed and put in a saucepan. Add 1 ½ cups Coffee-mate or half and half, 1 cup sugar, 1 cup finely crushed graham crackers, 2 T. red jelly, 1 T. Honey, ¼ pound butter and 1 tsp. vanilla. Cook slowly for about ten minutes. If it isn't thick enough, add more crushed graham crackers.

Cottage cheese: 1 lb. cottage cheese, drained and mashed, 2 egg yolks, ½ tsp. vanilla, 3 T. butter, ¼ cup sugar, ½ cup chopped raisins, 1 T. cornstarch. Mix all together and cook slowly for 2-3 minutes.

DIRECTIONS: Put the yeast and sugar in your mixing bowl. Add the milk that is 110 degrees. Mix in about 2 cups of the flour. Add the butter or oil, salt and beaten egg yolks and mix in well. Add another cup of flour and continue mixing using the dough hooks. Add the remaining flour in about ¼ cup amounts mixing the entire time. Add only enough flour while you are mixing until when lightly touched it doesn't stick to your finger. Do not have a very stiff dough. Continue mixing with the dough hooks for about 7 minutes. Put the dough into a microwave safe bowl, cover with plastic wrap and put in the microwave on power 1 for 2 minutes, let rest for 2 minutes, and repeat power 1 for an additional 2 minutes. Repeat if necessary. (If you have a convection oven, put the covered dough in at 100 degrees and press start. It should be ready in about 10-15 minutes.) You can also leave the dough rise naturally but it will take about an hour. When double in size, shape into walnut sized balls, put on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, and grease each ball with oil using a pastry brush. Let rise until double. Make an indentation in each ball (I use a cheesecloth that is tied on the end of a plastic bottle that is about 1 ¾ inches in diameter dipped in flour each time), working with only 2-3 at a time. Make sure the center of the dough ball is pressed very thin. Fill with your favorite filling. Grease the dough surrounding the filling again and let rise until double. Bake. When you take! the kolaches out of the oven, grease the dough again and remove to cooling racks. Cover with a clean cloth until cool.

STORY: *Since I am of Czech heritage, my mother baked kolaches for as long as I can remember. My first experience of baking kolaches when I got married resulted in miniature volcanoes. I did not press the center thin enough and the dough rose in the center with the filling on top of it. Even though I did learn how to bake kolaches, I depended on my mother to provide the family with kolaches as long as she was able. The day came when Mother no longer baked kolaches, so I took over as the family provider of kolaches. I did show my older granddaughters how to bake kolaches, but they, too, rely on "Gram" to bake kolaches for family gatherings. I am sure history will repeat itself and I will reach the time I will no longer be baking kolaches. I wonder if the next generation will take over again!!!*

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Beth Clarke
Blair, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Leckerli Cookies

Recipe Number: 15

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Oven temp 325°



INGREDIENTS:

1 C. honey	½ t. soda
1 C. butter	3 C. flour
1 C. sugar	1 ½ C. mixed citron, orange, lemon peel
rind of 1 lemon	1 ½ C. almonds
juice of 1 lemon	
1 t. cinnamon	Glaze:
½ t. nutmeg	½ t. almond extract
½ t. cloves	½ t. rose water
½ t. salt	1 ½ C. powdered sugar

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a bowl, mix the spices, salt, soda and flour. Set aside.
2. In a food processor, grind the fruit peel, rind, juice and almonds.
3. Combine the honey, butter and sugar in a small sauce pan. Place over a low heat until the honey melts. Transfer to a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook.
4. Stir in the fruit peel mixture.
5. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients.
6. Chill dough over night.
7. Roll 1/8-1/4 inch thick and bake for 20 minutes.
8. Cool for 1 minute, then cut into rectangles.
9. Mix the glaze using a whisk. Brush on to the cookies while they are still warm.
10. Cool completely.
11. Place in an airtight container and let "ripen" for 1-4 weeks (really!).

STORY: *I found this recipe in my Grandmother McQuistan's "Gramma's Favorite Recipes" book that she made for her grandchildren in 1988. The notation at the bottom of the recipe said, "This recipe was sent to me by Granny's sister, my Aunt Mildred, with this notation, 'Christmas cookies made by great grandmother Rasley, also made by her grandmother.'" My mother, the family geneologist, helped me trace the recipe back to Switzerland around the 1700's. Here's the family tree:*

9. Beth - me (b. 1966)
8. Peggy - my mom (b. 1934)
7. Margaret McQuistan-my 99 year old grandmother (b. 1909)
6. Edith Hunt - My great grandmother (b. 1882)
5. Abraham Rasley-My great, great grandfather (b.1850)
4. Peter Rasley (Abraham's father) (b.1806)
3. Mary Magdeline Rasli -Peter's mom (b.1766)
2. Johan Schmell (b. 1738 in Germany) and Anne Margaretta Kiliers (b. 1734)- Mary's parents
1. Mary's grandmother (either Grandmother Schmell or Grandmother Kiliers) - also made the cookies.

As the family baker, a duty I love, I decided to bake the cookies on my grandmother's 99th birthday. I tasted them that day, even though they hadn't ripened. They were quite bitter. After just two weeks they become the most wonderful honey-spice cookie. The flavors blended and taste was extraordinary! Once the rest of the family tasted them, they became an instant staple for Christmas and a favorite - not only for their taste, but for the history behind the recipe.



Jan Dutton
Lincoln, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Platte River Pulled Pork BBQ

Recipe Number: 24

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 hours

Oven temp 355° - 225°



INGREDIENTS: 1 large Pork roast, approx 3 lbs (pork shoulder or sometimes called Boston Butt).
The cheapest cut is just fine.

1 large onion, chopped
2-3 gloves garlic, chopped
2 Cups BBQ sauce (store bought)
½ c. vinegar
optional (1-2 tsp of liquid smoke)

DIRECTIONS: Start in the evening. Put pork roast in oven dish (metal or glass) or covered casserole. Slather with chopped onion and 1 C. BBQ sauce. Optional for liquid smoke. Cover with tin foil. Cook for 1 hour on 350.

Turn oven down to 225 degrees. Slow roast all nite, for 9-10 hours.

In morning, drain off all grease and let cool. With clean hands, pick off any remaining fat, then shred meat. Can refrigerate or serve immediately.

To serve, heat for 1 hour at 300 degrees – cover meat with 1 C BBQ and ½ c vinegar, lots of salt and pepper, more garlic if desired. Serve on sandwich buns with pickles and/or mustard, plus more BBQ sauce on the side. One roast serves 8-10, I make a double batch and freeze the extra. (This can also be adapted for crock pot and make during day.)

Side dishes: calico baked beans and coleslaw.

STORY: *Every June, around fathers day, we camp at Platte River Park near Louisville with 5 other families. We started this "tradition" 26 years ago with tiny babies and stayed in the "Wild Strawberry" cabins, so we call our camping group the Wild Strawberries. Between us we have raised 20 successful kids + loads of friends have joined us over the years for meal-time, canoeing on the Platter River, and sitting around the camp-fire, telling stories. It's a 45 minute drive from Lincoln but we might as well be in the Rocky Mountains, it is so remote and a great break from our hectic lives. It often rains and we have never missed a year of canoeing on the platte. Every year we enjoy fabulous food and pledge our undying friendship until next June.*

Each family brings food to share. My husband and I do breakfast and have 2 favorite dishes: calico beans (the kids call it my signature dish) and pulled pork BBQ. We make the pork ahead of time and reheat in crock pots, same with the beans – everything has a smoky BBQ feel, great for outdoors. Our young adult children are scattered all over the USA and foreign countries, but try to return for the greatest weekend of the year. PS – if selected, the entire camping group will help cook!!

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Sigrid Wimberly
North Platte, NE

Semi-Finalist



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Worldwide Ginger Snaps

Recipe Number: 87

Prep time: 15-20 minutes

Cook time: 10-12 minutes

Oven Temp: 350°

INGREDIENTS: ¾ C Shortening
1 C Sugar
1 Egg
4 Tablespoons Molasses
2 t Soda
½ t Salt
1 t Cinnamon
1 t Ginger
2 ¼ C Flour

DIRECTIONS: Cream shortening and sugar thoroughly. Add beaten egg, molasses and sifted dry ingredients. Mix well. Place in refrigerator until chilled. Remove and roll into small balls the size of a walnut. Roll in granulated sugar. Place cookie on sheet one + one half inches apart. So not flatten the balls will flatten and become cracked in 12 minutes. Bake at 350. Bakes 50 cookies.

STORY: *I was born and raised on a farm near Hershey, NE. Hershey is twelve miles from North Platte, where the "Famous North Platte Canteen" originated during World War II. Hershey and all the other surrounding towns had their day to serve the soldiers at the canteen. The people were all happy to use their gas, sugar and coffee rations for our soldiers. No one complained. Our local paper still receives thank you letters from the soldiers saying they will never forget the North Platte Canteen.*

I wasn't able to participate in the canteen because I was living in California at that time and working at Bendix, which was a defense plant. We manufactured all kinds of defense items needed by our soldiers. I also wasn't able to send my ginger snaps to the soldiers because I didn't receive the recipe until 1945, when a friend from Sioux City, Iowa sent it to me. It has been one of favorites ever since, my friends too.

The ginger snaps became famous at the time my nephew was serving in Afghanistan. His mother sent him some of her cookies and he wrote back thanking her for the crumbs. We then decided it was time to try sending my ginger snaps. They arrived in excellent condition in one or three weeks. They soon acquired the name "World Wide Ginger Snaps". Another reason the name was changed to "World Wide Ginger Snaps" was because my nephew shared them with Service Personnel who came from various countries all over the world. I also received thank you notes from service men from all over the world. So please try them, I am sure you will enjoy them.

