

2010 Recipe Archive from Klein's Newsletters

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KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF DECEMBER 2010)--

Nuts are one of the most popular of all appetizers/munchies during the holiday season. Huge bins of nuts of all types line grocery store aisles this time of the year and prices are at their best while supply is at its peak. Below are a few of our more unusual concoctions using a wide assortment nuts. Enjoy and HAPPY HOLIDAYS from all of us at Klein's!

GINGERED CASHEWS--This eternal favorite appeared at a work holiday party a number of years ago.

2 cups lightly salted cashews
1 TBS. melted butter
1 TBS. minced fresh or jarred ginger
2 tsp. garam masala spice mix

Preheat the oven to 300°. In a bowl, toss together the cashews, butter, ginger and garam masala. Line a shallow, rimmed baking sheet with foil. Spread the nuts into the pan and roast 20 minutes until golden, stirring occasionally. Serve either warm or cooled. Makes 2 cups.

CRUNCHY MUNCHIES-- Who can resist with a name like that? A delicious mixture from the December 2004 issue of Better Homes & Gardens magazine.

1/4 cup jalapeno jelly
2 TBS. butter
1/4 tsp. Chinese 5-spice powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. Tobasco
2 cups whole unsalted cashews or dry roast peanuts
1 cup banana chips
1 cup dried pineapple, cut up
1 cup chopped dates
1 cup chow mein noodles

Preheat oven to 325°. In a medium saucepan, combine the jelly, butter, spice powder, salt and Tobasco. Heat over low heat until the jelly is melted. Stir in the rest of ingredients until well coated. Pour into a large roasting pan and bake 15-20 minutes until the nuts are lightly browned, stirring just once. Remove from the oven and spread on a large piece of foil to cool.

SYRIAN WALNUT SPREAD (MUHAMMARA)--We don't remember where this one came from, but it's a keeper!!

1 x 12 oz. jar roasted red peppers in olive oil and garlic, drained
1 cup walnuts
1/3 cup panko (Japanese bread crumbs)
2 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
2 tsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. ground cumin
1/4 tsp. cayenne
salt
Pita chips

Blend all ingredients in a food processor until a coarse puree. Season to taste with salt and serve with chips. Makes 2 cups.

BAKED BRIE WITH PECANS--A classic from the November 2007 issue of Everyday Food magazine.

1 x 9 oz. wheel of brie or camembert cheese
1/2 cup pecan pieces
3 TBS. brown sugar
3 TBS. maple syrup
Crackers or sliced baguette

Preheat the oven to 350°. Place the cheese on a rimmed sheet and bake 15-20 minutes until soft. Transfer to a serving plate and cool 20 minutes. Meanwhile, toast the nuts 7-10 minutes in the hot oven. In a saucepan, combine the sugar and the syrup. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Simmer until foamy, 1-2 minutes. Drizzle the warm sauce over the cheese and nuts and serve with the crackers or baguette slices. Serves 4.

CARROT CASHEW DIP/SPREAD--A very healthy spread from a Krupalu yoga cookbook. Very delicious!!

4 cups chopped carrots
5 cups water
1 TBS. salt
1/2 cup unsalted cashews
Crackers, pita bread or crudités

In a saucepan, combine the carrots and the water and bring to a boil. Add the salt, reduce the heat and simmer 20 minutes until the carrots are very soft. Drain, keeping the cooking water. Allow everything to cool. In a food processor, blend the carrots and the cashews. Add water for desired consistency. Serve with crackers, pita bread or crudités.

CURRIED PECANS--This family favorite comes from the November 2002 pages of Bon Appetit magazine.

1 1/2 tsp. onion powder
1 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
3/4 tsp. curry powder
1/4 tsp. cayenne
2 TBS. butter
2 TBS. honey
3 cups pecan halves

Preheat the oven to 250°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Mix the onion powder, garlic powder, 1 tsp. salt, curry powder and cayenne to blend. Melt the butter and honey with 1/4 tsp. salt in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add the nuts and stir to coat. Remove from the heat and stir in the spice mixture. Toss to coat evenly. Spread the mixture in a single layer on the baking sheet. Bake until dry and toasted, about 40 minutes. Cool completely and separate the pecans. Makes 3 cups.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF NOVEMBER 2010)--

Yes, soup season has arrived and nothing warms the body better on a cold and blustery day than a hearty bowl of chili and fresh baked cornbread. And who says chili chili has to be loaded with meat? Here are four of our very favorite vegetarian offerings that are certain to please even hardcore meat eaters.

'CLASSIC' VEGETARIAN CHILI--This favorite comes from the September 24, 2000 issue of Parade magazine from the Sunday paper. An easy-to-make winner!

2 TBS. olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, sliced
1 green pepper, coarsely chopped
2 small zucchinis, cut into 1/2" dice
2 small yellow squash, cut into 1/2" dice
1 x 28 oz. can crushed tomatoes
2 x 15 oz. cans dark red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 x 15 oz. can corn with the liquid
1 x 6 oz. can tomato paste
1 x 4 oz. can green chilies with the liquid
1/4 cup chili powder
1 TBS. ground cumin
2 TBS. sugar
1-2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
Sour cream
Shredded cheese

Heat the oil in a large heavy pot on medium. Sauté the onions, carrots and peppers until tender, about 8 minutes. Add the zucchini and squash and cook until all is tender, about 8 minutes. Add all of the ingredients except the sour cream and the cheese and mix well. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer gently for one hour, stirring occasionally. Serve with sour cream and cheese. Serves 6.

SPICY TWO BEAN VEGETARIAN CHILI-- This thick and super flavorful chili comes from the November 2002 issue of Bon Appetit magazine.

2 TBS. olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, thinly sliced
1 sweet red pepper, chopped
4 TBS. chopped jalapeno
1 x 28 oz. can crushed tomatoes
3 cups water
2 x 15 oz. cans black beans, drained and rinsed
2 x 15 oz. cans kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1/2 cup bulgur
2 TBS. white wine vinegar
5 cloves minced garlic
2 TBS. chili powder
1 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
1 1/2 tsp. ground coriander
1/2 tsp. cinnamon

Heat the oil in a large pot on medium high. Sauté the onions, carrots, sweet pepper and jalapeno until almost tender, about 8 minutes. Add the tomatoes, water, beans, bulgur, vinegar, garlic and spices. Bring to a boil, reduce to medium high and cook, uncovered, until the bulgur is tender and the mixture thickens, stirring often, about 20 minutes. Serve with sour cream, shredded cheese, black olives, tortilla chips, etc. Serves 6.

VEGETARIAN CHILI--This classic comes from an old Better Homes & Gardens.

2 TBS. olive oil
1 1/2 cups chopped celery
1 1/2 cups chopped green pepper
1 cup chopped onion
3 cloves minced garlic
2 x 28 oz. cans whole tomatoes, undrained and cut up
3 x 15-16 oz. cans of beans of choice (kidney, black, garbanzo, great northern, pinto, etc.)
drained and rinsed
1/2 cup raisins
1/3 cup red wine vinegar
1 1/2 TBS. chili powder
1 1/2 TBS. dried basil
1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano

1 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. allspice
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/4 tsp. or to taste Tobasco sauce
1 bay leaf
1 x 12 oz. beer of choice
3/4 cup whole unsalted cashews
Shredded cheese

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven on medium high. Cook the celery, green pepper, onion and garlic, covered, for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the tomatoes, beans, raisins, vinegar, chili powder, basil, oregano, cumin, sugar, allspice, salt, pepper, Tobasco and bay leaf. Bring to a boil, reduce, and simmer, covered, 1 1/2 hours. Stir in the beer and return to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, 30 minutes more or until of desired consistency. Remove the bay leaf and stir in the cashews. Serve with cheese. Serves 8.

VEGETARIAN CHILI--A short-'n-sweet recipe from the January 2005 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

1 TBS. olive oil
2 cups chopped onion
3 cloves minced garlic
4 cups water, divided
2 TBS. sugar
2 TBS. chili powder
2 TBS. Worcestershire sauce
2 x 14.5 oz. cans diced tomatoes with the juice
1 x 15.5 oz. can garbanzoes
1 x 15 oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 x 15 oz. can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 x 15. oz. can cannellini (white kidney beans), drained and rinsed
1 x 6 oz. can tomato paste
Shredded cheese

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven on medium high. Sauté the onion and the garlic until tender. Add 3 cups water and all of the ingredients except the paste and cheese. Combine 1 cup water with the paste in a bowl and whisk until blended. Add to the pot. Bring to a boil, reduce and simmer until well heated, about 15 minutes. Serve topped with cheese. Serves 8.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF OCTOBER 2010)--

When cooking with rosemary, a little goes a long way. Just a few teaspoons of this pungent and very aromatic herb usually suffices in any recipe calling for rosemary. Only the leaves and soft growing tips are used when cooking. Flowers are usually a soft blue or even white and are also edible. One healthy, good sized plant can supply a family with more than enough rosemary for average use. Plants are available nearly year round at Klein's. Our selection for winter

windowsill culture becomes available in mid-October. During the holidays, look for rosemary plants pruned into small Christmas trees or topiaries. In the spring we sell small plants in our herb area. But shop early! We almost always run out of this ever-popular herb by June 1.

This woody shrub of the Mediterranean region can be very long lived and is very easy to grow under the proper conditions. Though an annual in Wisconsin, rosemary can be overwintered indoors in a bright south or west window. Outdoors in summer, rosemary thrives in the hottest and sunniest location you can find. Keep in mind that, though it appears rosemary would be very drought tolerant, it hates to become bone dry. In fact, keeping rosemary too dry too often is usually the reason for a plant's demise. Though it can never remain soggy, rosemary likes to be constantly moist--even in winter. Another problem to watch out for is powdery mildew. There are many natural and safe fungicides available to remedy this problem. A combination of milk and water is an effective homemade remedy to control powdery mildew on rosemary.

Rosemary is an ancient herb and is most commonly used in Italian based dishes and with chicken, pork or lamb. When cooking, it's important to use fresh, rather than dried. Unlike many herbs that dry well, rosemary becomes rather flavorless once dried. Enjoy some of our very favorite rosemary recipes:

ROASTED POTATOES WITH HERBS-- For one of Klein's staff members, this is far and away his favorite potato recipe when serving friends and family. Extremely simple with "a great rosemary taste." "The house smells amazing while the potatoes are roasting." Rave reviews all around!

1-2 TBS. butter
2 lbs. red potatoes cut into 3/4" cubes or tiny new potatoes
3 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
1 TBS. snipped fresh rosemary
1 tsp. dried thyme, crushed, or 1TBS. fresh snipped
2+ cloves minced garlic
coarse salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375°. Toss together all ingredients, except the butter, in a large bowl. Place butter in a 10x15" baking dish or heavy, rimmed sheet. Allow the butter to melt in the hot oven for a few minutes. Once butter has melted, carefully swirl the melted butter to spread out in the bottom of the baking dish. Spread the potatoes into the baking dish and bake 20 minutes. Stir and roast another 20 minutes until the potatoes are tender and turning crunchy at the edges. Serves 8.

PASTA SAUCE WITH ROSEMARY & BACON-- Another favorite from Cook's Illustrated from September 2006. Few foods are easier or heartier than a good thick tomato sauce!

1 lb. pasta of choice
6 slices of bacon, cut into 1/2" pieces
2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
2 cloves pressed garlic
1/2 tsp. fresh snipped rosemary
1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes

3 lbs. chopped tomatoes (about 4 cups)
1 TBS. snipped parsley
1/4 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
Sugar to taste
Parmesan

Cook the bacon in a large skillet until crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Discard the fat. Return the skillet to medium-high heat and add the oil, garlic, rosemary and red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring, about 30 seconds. Stir in the tomatoes, bring to a simmer and cook 10 minutes. Stir in the salt, pepper and the sugar. Toss with cooked pasta. Sprinkle with the reserved bacon and parmesan. Serves 8.

TOMATO TAPENADE--An easy and delicious appetizer from Cooking Light (September 2007).

1/2 cup pitted kalamata olives
2 tsp. fresh snipped rosemary
3/4 tsp. dried oregano
4 cloves minced garlic
2 1/2 lbs. plum tomatoes, halved and seeded
2 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
1/4 tsp. pepper
24 slices French bread
2 TBS. slivered basil

Preheat the oven to 300°. Combine the olives, rosemary, oregano, garlic and the tomatoes on a rimmed sheet that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Toss to coat. Arrange tomatoes in a single layer, cut sides up. Bake, 2 hours 15 minutes. Allow to cool and coarsely chop. Stir in the pepper. Serve on the bread topped with the slivered basil. Serves 8.

ROSEMARY BUTTER BASTE--This staple for grilling chicken came to us with our Weber grill. It's been a family favorite ever since.

1/2 cup melted butter
juice of one lemon
1 TBS. finely minced fresh rosemary

Baste chicken while grilling.

ROSEMARY PUNCH--This yet-to-be-tested recipe comes to us from The Capital Times (July 2002). The quote from the article says, "wonderful and unusually refreshing."

2 TBS. crushed fresh rosemary
3 TBS. sugar
1/8 tsp. salt
2/3 cups water
2 cups apricot nectar
1 qt. ginger ale
1 cup fresh lime juice

Simmer the rosemary, sugar, salt and water for 3 minutes. Allow to cool, then strain. Combine the nectar, ginger ale and lime juice. Add the cooled rosemary water and serve over ice.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF SEPTEMBER 2010)--

After so many years of offering seasonal vegetable and fruit recipes in our monthly newsletter, it came as a shock when we discovered we hadn't given any cucumber recipes. And from what we've heard from customers, 2010 has been a bountiful cucumber year.

Cucumbers come from a large family of garden plants that include squash and melons. In fact, their cultural needs are all quite similar. The vining plants require a bit of room in the garden to do well. Bush varieties are available but tend to be less productive. Vines cling to surfaces with tendrils and are often allowed to climb fences and trellises to save space in the garden. Many recipes call for cucumbers to be peeled and seeded. Using a melon baller or the tip of a teaspoon makes the seeding process a breeze once the cucumber is sliced lengthwise. Whether or not to peel or seed is a matter of personal preference. Doing so reduces gassiness in many people. Cucumbers are usually eaten raw; sliced or diced into salads or pickled in a salt or sugar brine.

THAI CUCUMBER SALAD-- A heavenly salad from *The Still Life with Menu Cookbook* by Mollie Katzen. Best made at least 4 hours ahead of time to chill and marinate. Great with grilled tuna or salmon.

2 medium cucumbers

1/2 cup finely minced red onion

1/2 cup finely minced green pepper

1 small, seeded, minced chile pepper (optional)

1/2 tsp. salt

2 tsp. sugar

1/4 cup cider vinegar

1/4 cup fresh, minced cilantro

Peel and slice the cukes into quarters lengthwise then cut into thin slices. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix gently. Cover tightly and allow to marinate in the refrigerator. Serve cold. Serves 4.

CUCUMBER SALAD WITH RICE VINEGAR DRESSING-- This recipe appeared in the June 2006 issue of *Cooking Light* magazine. Extremely easy and a good way to use up a bunch of cukes at once.

6 cups seeded and peeled cucumbers

1/4 cup rice vinegar

2 tsp. sugar

4 tsp. sesame oil

1 tsp. salt

4 TBS. chopped green onion

3 TBS. unsalted dry roast peanuts, chopped

Toss all of the ingredients, except the onions and the peanuts together in a large bowl. Sprinkle with the onions and the peanuts and serve. Serves 10.

EASY REFRIGERATOR PICKLES--Another excellent way to get rid of a lot of cucumbers if you have too many on hand. This recipe comes from the August 2007 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

2 lbs. thinly sliced pickles or cucumbers (6 cups)
2 cups thin sliced onion
1 1/2 cups white vinegar
3/4 cup sugar
3/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. mustard seed
1/2 tsp. celery seed
1/2 tsp. turmeric
1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
1/4 tsp. pepper
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

Place the cucumbers and the onions in a large container. Combine the vinegar and the rest of the ingredients in a saucepan. Stir well. Bring to a boil and cook one minute. Pour the hot liquid over the cucumbers and allow to cool. Place in a covered container and chill at least four days. Will keep for at least one month in the refrigerator.

SOUTHWEST CUCUMBER SALAD--a recipe found in the Wisconsin State Journal from July of 2009.

2 cups unpeeled, diced cucumber
1 cup diced tomato (2 medium)
1/2 cup chopped green onion
1 medium jalapeno, seeded and finely diced
1 x 15 oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 x 11 oz. can Mexicorn, drained
1 ripe avocado, diced
3 TBS. cider vinegar
1 lime, juiced
1 clove minced garlic
1 tsp. ground cumin
1/2 tsp. chili powder
1 TBS. olive oil

Combine the cucumber, tomato, onion, jalapeno, beans and corn in a bowl and toss well. Gently stir in the avocado. Whisk together the vinegar, lime juice, garlic, cumin and chili powder. Add the oil, while whisking, in a continuous stream. Pour over the veggies and toss until coated. Serves 10.

WATERMELON AND CUCUMBER TONIC--A refreshing twist on a classic drink from the July 2009 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

6 cups cubed watermelon, divided
1/4 cup torn mint leaves, divided
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice, divided
1 English cucumber, peeled, sliced and divided (3 cups)
2 1/2 cups chilled tonic water
1 1/4 cups gin

Combine one half of the watermelon, mint, lemon juice and cucumber in a blender. Strain into a bowl through 4 layers of cheese cloth lining a sieve. Squeeze out all of the juice. Repeat the process, discarding all solids. Combine 2 1/2 cups of the juice mixture, the tonic and the gin, stirring well. (Reserve the rest of the juice mixture for the next round of drinks or for another purpose.) Serve over ice. Makes 8 drinks.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF AUGUST 2010)--

Customers are oftentimes confused when they visit Klein's in the spring looking for the zucchini starter plants and expecting to find them in their own area. But being a summer squash, we choose to merchandise them along with our other summer squashes including yellow summer squash and patty-pans. Unlike their winter counterparts, summer squashes are eaten skin and all. Of the summer squashes, zucchinis are exceptionally versatile. They can be eaten raw in salads or cooked in soups, stews, casseroles, breads, or on their own sautéed in olive oil with a little salt and pepper. Zucchini production in the garden is a sure sign that summer is here and once plants start producing, there's no shortage of zucchini for weeks to come. It's always good to have a number of zucchini recipes on hand awaiting the influx. Fresh zucchini does not store well and should be used within a few days of harvest.

ZUCCHINI TOMATO CASSEROLE-- From the Vermont Valley Farm newsletter.

5 cups zucchini or any summer squash, cubed
1 cup onion, sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tomatoes, chopped
1/2 tsp. dried basil
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. paprika
1 1/2 cups cooked brown rice
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°. Sauté the onions, garlic and squash until tender. Combine the rest of the ingredients in a bowl and add the onion mixture. Spread into a 1 1/2 qt. casserole. Bake about 25 minutes. This recipe is easily doubled. Adjust baking time as needed.

STEAMED ZUCCHINI WITH HERB SAUCE-- This recipe appeared in the September 2007 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

1/4 cup parsley
3 TBS. finely chopped onion
1 TBS. chopped fresh basil

1 TBS. chopped capers
2 tsp. lemon zest
1/4 tsp. dried oregano
2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. coarse salt
6 cups, 1/4" zucchini slices

Combine all ingredients, except the zucchini, in a large bowl. Steam the zucchini slices 4 minutes or until tender crisp. Add the cooked slices to the bowl and toss gently to coat. Serves 4.

ZUCCHINI BOATS--From Rachel Ray's magazine of September 2007. The review says "Wonderful!"

4 medium to large zucchinis
3 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
1/2 onion, chopped
5 smallish plum tomatoes, chopped
1 cup bread crumbs
1/2 cup chopped walnuts, toasted
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
salt & pepper to taste
6 oz. shredded mozzarella
1/2 cup parmesan

Preheat oven to 375°. Halve the zucchinis lengthwise and scoop out the flesh leaving a 1/4-1/2" shell. Wrap the flesh in a paper towel and squeeze out the liquid. Discard the liquid. Place the shells, cut side down on a cookie sheet and bake 15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat 2 TBS. olive oil in a large skillet on high. Add the zucchini flesh and the onion and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook 5 minutes longer. Push the veggies aside and add the 1 TBS. olive oil and the bread crumbs. Toast the crumbs for 2 minutes. Off heat, stir in the nuts and the oregano and then combine with the veggies. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Flip over the shells and line the bottom of the boats with cheese. Pack in the filling. (They will be mounded.) Sprinkle with parmesan. Bake until tender, 20-25 minutes. Serves 4.

ROAST ZUCCHINI, ONION AND PEPPERS--Delicious and SO easy. From Martha Stewart's Everyday Food of May 2005.

3 lbs. zucchini cut into 1" thick rounds
2 red peppers cut into 1" pieces
1 medium onion cut into 1/2" wedges
2 TBS. olive oil
2 tsp. coarse salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

Preheat oven to 475°. In a bowl, combine the veggies, oil, salt and pepper. Place the mixture on to a large, rimmed baking sheet sprayed with cooking spray. Roast until tender and browned in spots for 30-35 minutes. Serves 6-8.

ZUCCHINI AND EGGPLANT BAKE--From the May 2008 issue of Better Homes & Gardens magazine.

3 medium zucchinis sliced thin (4 cups)
2 large, sweet peppers, coarsely chopped
2 medium onions, coarsely chopped
1 eggplant, peeled and coarsely chopped (5 cups)
2 cloves minced garlic
3 TBS. olive oil
4 eggs
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 cup grated romano or parmesan
8 oz. (2 cups) shredded mozzarella
12 (2/3 cup) crushed "rich" crackers

Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 9 x 13" baking dish (3 qts.) with cooking spray. In a skillet, sauté zucchini, peppers, onions, eggplant, garlic, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper on medium high for 10-15 minutes until all is tender. Meanwhile, in a very large bowl, whisk together the eggs and the mayo. Stir in the grated cheese and 1 cup of the mozzarella. Add the cooked veggies and toss to combine. Spread the mixture into the prepared dish and top with the rest of the mozzarella and the crumbs. Bake, uncovered, 20-25 minutes until lightly browned and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let rest 10 minutes before serving. Serves 6-8.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF JULY 2010)--

Crinkle-leafed spearmint (*Mentha spicata*) is among the easiest, most versatile, most common and most flavorful of all garden herbs. But gardeners beware--mint has its wicked side. In the garden setting, mint can be the bully of all bullies. Left unchecked, members of the mint family can take over a garden in no time. But grown in containers or in a confined space, spearmint is a must have for any herb enthusiast and cook. Spearmint is the most common of the mints and is used in beverages, salads, soups, desserts and in many, many ethnic dishes from around the world.

FRUIT SALAD WITH YOGURT MINT DRESSING-- This recipe appeared in the Isthmus a long, long time ago and remains a family favorite. We first made it in 1996.

8 oz. vanilla yogurt
2 TBS. honey
1 tsp. fresh orange zest
1/2 tsp. fresh grated ginger
a dash of amaretto or Grand Marnier
2-3 TBS. fresh minced spearmint
Extra mint sprigs for garnish
6-8 cups assorted fruit: strawberries, melons, pineapple, grapes, pitted cherries, blueberries, etc.

Combine the yogurt, honey, zest, ginger, liqueur and mint. Mix well and chill for several hours. When ready to serve, mix all fruits in a large bowl. Serve the fruit with the dressing on the side. Garnish with extra mint.

NEW POTATOES WITH PEAS AND MINT-- This summer potato salad first appeared in the Willie Street Co-op Reader during the 1990's. Mint and peas are a traditional pairing.

Creme Fraiche:

1 cup heavy or whipping cream

1 cup sour cream

Whisk together until blended. Pour the mixture into a jar, cover and allow to stand in a warm place for 12 hours. Stir well and refrigerate 36 hours. It'll keep for 7-10 days.

20 small new potatoes

1/3 cup olive oil

1/2 cup dry white wine

2 cups fresh or frozen peas

2 cups creme fraiche

1/2 cup chopped mint leaves

3 TBS. fresh snipped chives

salt & pepper to taste

Boil the potatoes until just tender, but not mushy. Drain and cut into quarters while they are still hot. Whisk together the oil and the wine and drizzle over the potatoes in a large bowl. Stir to coat well. Allow to cool to room temperature. Add the peas and then the creme fraiche, mint and chives. Toss to blend. Season to taste. Refrigerate several hours before serving. Serves 6-8.

SUMMER BERRY MEDLEY WITH MINT--From the July 2006 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

1 cup raspberries

2 cups blueberries

2 cups quartered strawberries

2 cups blackberries

1/4 cup sugar

1 TBS. fresh lemon zest

2 TBS. fresh lemon juice

2 TBS. Grand Marnier or limoncello

1/2 cup torn mint leaves

Combine all but the mint and allow to sit for 20 minutes. Gently stir in the mint. Serve in wine glasses. Serves 6.

TABOULEH--This classic Middle Eastern salad uses parsley as one of its main ingredients. There are many recipes to be found, but this one from Jane Brody's Good Food Book remains a favorite of ours.

For the salad:

- 1 cup bulgur
- 2 cups boiling water
- 2 tomatoes, finely diced
- 1 bunch green onions, finely chopped
- 1 cup finely chopped parsley
- 3 TBS. chopped mint (or 2 tsp. dried if fresh isn't available)

For the dressing:

- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1/4 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp. ground cumin
- a dash of allspice (optional)
- a dash of coriander (optional)

In a bowl, soak the bulgur in the boiling water for 1 hour. Drain the bulgur well, pressing out the excess water through a fine sieve or cheese cloth. In a bowl, combine the bulgur, tomatoes, green onions, parsley and mint. Whisk together the dressing ingredients in a small bowl. About an hour or less before serving, add the dressing to the bulgur mix and toss to coat the ingredients thoroughly. Serves 6-8.

MINT MARGARITAS--Appeared in the July 2008 issue of Cooking Light magazine. Yet to be tried! Let us know what you think.

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed mint leaves
- 2 cups water
- 3/4 cup tequila, divided
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice (4 limes)
- 2 TBS. Grand Marnier
- 3-4 dashes bitters

Combine the sugar, mint, water and 1/2 cup tequila in a saucepan on medium and cook 3 minutes or until tiny bubbles form around the edge of the pan. Remove from the heat and allow to steep for 15 minutes. Strain and discard the mint. Stir in the lime juice, Grand Marnier and 1/4 cup tequila. Cool to room temperature and add the bitters. Place the mixture in a ziplock bag, seal and freeze for 2 hours. (The booze will separate out.) Knead the bag to combine. Pour into margarita glasses, wet with a bit of lime juice and then dipped into a salt/sugar combination. Serves 4.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF JUNE 2010)--

The parsley debate rages on . . . probably due to single-handedly to Martha Stewart's TV show in the 1990's. Should one use flat leafed Italian or curly leafed parsley in a recipe? Truth is, there is no correct answer!! Which to use is simply personal preference. While to many cooks the flat leafed Italian is the only choice with it's well-rounded and milder parsley flavor, the curly leafed variety gives recipes a stronger and tangier parsley flavor and the plant looks far prettier in the garden! In fact, the curly leafed variety makes a lovely accent plant when added to mixed annual containers. Both are beloved host plants to swallowtail butterfly caterpillars; as are all members of the carrot family.

Parsley is a biennial; producing foliage the first season and flowering in the second. Though as any gardener knows, under certain stressful conditions, parsley will flower during the first season, producing a bitter and somewhat woody plant. Parsley is equally at home in containers and in beds. This native to the Mediterranean prefers full sun and rich and moist soil to perform at its best. Parsley is very, very healthy and is high in both vitamins A and C. It also contains high amounts of minerals, especially iron.

Parsley is delicious fresh on green salads or stirred into pasta salads. It adds color and flavor to cooked recipes, but must be added during the last few minutes of cooking to maintain color and texture. And as we Wisconsinites well know from our supper club visits, parsley is the king of garnishes on steaks, prime rib, fish or on relish platters.

A Tip: An easy and not so messy way to chop parsley (and almost any herb) is to place the parsley in a glass measuring cup and snip it with a pair of scissors or kitchen sheers until desired size is reached.

PARSLEY SAUCE FOR GRILLED STEAK-- Made for an Oscar night get together, one of our employees raves about its simplicity and flavor.

1 clove garlic, chopped
1 cup loose packed parsley
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
3 TBS. water
Salt & pepper to taste

In a blender or small processor, puree the garlic, parsley, oil and water until smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Makes about 1/2 cup.

PARSLEY WALNUT PESTO -- This extremely versatile recipe from the April 2008 issue of Cooking Light magazine is delicious on cooked salmon or chicken or simply stirred into pasta, rice or soups.

3 cups loose packed parsley
1/2 cup chopped and toasted walnuts
3 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
1 TBS. lemon juice
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

3 cloves garlic, chopped

Combine all ingredients in a processor or blender and combine until smooth, scraping the sides as necessary. This recipe freezes well so it's a great way to use up a lot of parsley and have during the winter months.

PARSLEY PASTA SAUCE--A rich and flavorful sauce that is similar to a creamy pesto. Another great recipe from *From Asparagus to Zucchini: A Guide to Farm-Fresh Seasonal Produce*.

1 lb cooked pasta
1 cup+ packed chopped parsley
1/4 cup olive oil
2 tsp. dried basil
1 1/2 tsp. dried marjoram
1 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. salt
2 cloves garlic
1/2 tsp. pepper
1 cup sour cream
1/4 cup grated parmesan
Sunflower seeds

While cooking the pasta, prep the sauce. In a processor, process the parsley, oil, basil, marjoram, oregano, salt, garlic and pepper until the parsley is finely chopped. Add the sour cream and the parmesan and puree. Place the mix in a saucepan and heat until it is almost, but not quite boiling. Serve over hot pasta and sprinkle with sunflower seeds.

Serves 8.

TABOULEH--This classic Middle Eastern salad uses parsley as one of its main ingredients. There are many recipes to be found, but this one from Jane Brody's *Good Food Book* remains a favorite of ours.

For the salad:

1 cup bulgur
2 cups boiling water
2 tomatoes, finely diced
1 bunch green onions, finely chopped
1 cup finely chopped parsley
3 TBS. chopped mint (or 2 tsp. dried if fresh isn't available)

For the dressing:

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
2 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/4 tsp. dried oregano
1/4 tsp. ground cumin
a dash of allspice (optional)

a dash of coriander (optional)

In a bowl, soak the bulgur in the boiling water for 1 hour. Drain the bulgur well, pressing out the excess water through a fine sieve or cheese cloth. In a bowl, combine the bulgur, tomatoes, green onions, parsley and mint. Whisk together the dressing ingredients in a small bowl. About an hour or less before serving, add the dressing to the bulgur mix and toss to coat the ingredients thoroughly. Serves 6-8.

COUSCOUS SALAD--Reprinted from the couscous package. Tastes like a very mild tabouleh. Prepare the dressing and toss with the following ingredients in a large bowl.

3 cups prepared couscous (12 oz. dry)
9 green onions, chopped
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 large cucumber, seeded and chopped
3/4 cup garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
1 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley

For the dressing:

1 cup extra virgin olive oil
3 cloves minced garlic
1 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 1/2 tsp. ground coriander
1 1/2 tsp salt
Fresh ground black pepper to taste

Serves 10-12

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF MAY 2010)--

May is Kentucky Derby month and no Kentucky Derby party would be complete without the refreshing and traditional mint julep--official drink of the Kentucky Derby. In fact, the variety of spearmint we sell at Klein's is no other than Kentucky Colonel--the perfect choice for homemade mint juleps and mojitos. (Remember that if growing mint in the garden, it can become very invasive. Mint is best grown in a confined space or in a container.)

And the best mint julep recipe? There are hundreds out there and they all say they require the perfect balance of mint, sweetness, citrus and bourbon. One of Klein's own insists this is the best mint julep recipe around, appearing in the June 2002 issue of Bon Appetit magazine.

LEMON-MINT JULEP-- So simple and so refreshing after work on a hot summer day.

Per cocktail:

1/4 cup mint leaves
1 TBS. sugar
1 1/2 TBS. fresh lemon juice
1/3 cup good Kentucky bourbon
ice

sprigs of mint for garnish

Using the back of a spoon, mash the mint, sugar and lemon juice in a bowl and allow to steep for 15 minutes. Strain the mixture into a tall glass, pressing on the mint with the back of the spoon. Mix in the bourbon and fill with ice. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint and serve.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF APRIL 2010)--

Spinach season begins locally in just a few short weeks. If you haven't already done so, it's time to get those spinach seeds into the garden a.s.a.p.! Spinach, like lettuce, is a cool season crop and should be sown outdoors as soon as the soil can be worked in the springtime. With nearly perfect and dry weather over the past few weeks, spinach is being planted up to three weeks ahead of schedule this season!

Spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) has a very long and complicated history as a food crop. Originally from Persia, it spread to China and other parts of Asia during the 600's A.D. It was only during the Middle Ages that the Moors brought spinach to Europe via Spain. Now, varieties and types of spinach are popular in nearly every culture.

Because spinach is a cool weather crop, it must be planted into Wisconsin gardens as soon as possible in the spring. If the weather warms too quickly and as our days lengthen, homegrown garden spinach tends to bolt, flower and go into seed. Local production is best in climate controlled hoopouses where spinach can be planted as early as late winter. A fall crop can sometimes be more productive than a spring crop here in Wisconsin. Seeds should be planted about a month before the last frost date, therefore, in early September here in Madison. Fall production can be lengthened dramatically if using a cold frame--sometimes until Thanksgiving or later! Refrigerating seeds for a week before planting hastens germination. Harvest leaves often and as needed. Most often the whole plant is harvested. There are warm weather substitutes including the tropical malabar spinach (available at Klein's) and amaranthus tricolor for summer production.

The following are favorite cold spinach salads from the Klein family to yours. Some are repeats because you've asked for the recipes again.

SPINACH WITH RED ONION--Sweet and easy. Who could ask for more? From the December 2003 issue of Better Homes & Gardens magazine.

Per five servings:

- 1 large red onion, halved and sliced
- 1 TBS. butter
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 1/8 cup grenadine or boysenberry syrup
- 1 TBS. sugar
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 x 5-6 oz. bag baby spinach
- salt and pepper

In a skillet, cook the onion in butter until tender, stirring occasionally. Add the wine, syrup, sugar and salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and boil, gently, uncovered, about 12 minutes or until most of the liquid is gone and is syrupy. Meanwhile, place the spinach in a serving bowl. Spoon the onions over the spinach and toss. Reseason with salt and pepper.

SPINACH & PEAR SALAD WITH MUSTARD VINAIGRETTE--

From Cooking Light magazine, November 2004.

2 bosc pears, cored and thinly sliced

1 x 6 oz. package spinach

3 TBS. water

2 TBS. balsamic vinegar

1 tsp. sugar

5 tsp. olive oil

1 1/2 tsp. stoneground mustard

3/4 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. pepper

parmesan cheese

Combine the pear and spinach in a large bowl. Combine the water, vinegar, sugar, oil, mustard, salt and pepper with a whisk. Drizzle over the salad and toss to coat. Sprinkle with parmesan to taste.

SPINACH & BEET SALAD--Rave reviews on this recipe even from people who say they don't like beets. A very easy recipe from a July 2000 Capital Times article.

3 large beets, trimmed

salt & pepper to taste

2 TBS. balsamic vinegar

1 tsp. Dijon mustard

4 TBS. extra-virgin olive oil

1/2 cup chopped green onions

1/4 cup chopped fresh mint leaves

4 cups spinach

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine beets, salt and pepper in a roasting pan. Cover with foil and bake 1 hour or more till tender. Let cool, peel off skins and cut into 1/4" wide strips. In a bowl, whisk together the vinegar and mustard. While whisking, slowly add the olive oil. In a large bowl combine the beets, half of the vinaigrette, some salt, pepper, the onions and half of the mint. Toss to coat and let stand 30 minutes. Add the spinach and the rest of the vinaigrette and mint. Toss and serve.

SPINACH STRAWBERRY SALAD--Talk about fresh spring flavors! This favorite of adults and kids alike is from Asparagus to Zucchini: A Guide to Farm-Fresh Seasonal Produce.

2 TBS. sesame seeds, toasted and set aside

4 TBS. sugar
4 TBS. red wine vinegar
Minced garlic to taste
1 tsp. dry mustard
coarse salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup vegetable oil (not olive)
2 bags of spinach
2+ cups sliced strawberries
1 tsp. dried dill

Combine the sugar, vinegar, mustard, garlic, salt and pepper in a bowl. Whisk in the oil in a thin stream. Toss together with the spinach, berries, dill and sesame seeds. Serves 8.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF MARCH 2010)--

For a quick and satisfying side with soups, stews and especially chili, nothing beats cornbread. Few breads can be put together so quickly and baked in so short a time--almost always under 30 minutes. And most ingredients are usually on hand in any well-stocked pantry. Many cornbread recipes call for buttermilk. None on hand? For a reasonable substitute, combine 2 TBS. vinegar or lemon juice with 1 cup milk and allow to stand for 5 minutes. Cornbread is a treat for young and old alike.

CHEDDAR BUTTERMILK CORNBREAD--An old favorite with perfect texture and flavor from Bon Appetit magazine from December, 2002

1 cup flour
1 cup yellow cornmeal
1/4 cup sugar
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1 cup, packed, extra sharp shredded cheddar (4 oz.)
1 cup buttermilk
2 large eggs
1/4 cup melted butter, cooled slightly

Preheat the oven to 400°. Butter an 8" x 8" pan. Whisk together the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and the salt to blend. Mix in the cheese. Whisk together the buttermilk, eggs and the melted butter in another bowl. Add the wet to the dry ingredients and stir just until all is incorporated. Don't overmix. Transfer the batter to the prepped pan. Bake until golden brown and a knife comes out clean in the center--about 22 minutes. Serve warm or cooled.

PERFECT CORNBREAD--A classic from the Better Homes & Gardens Cookbook.

1 cup flour
1 cup yellow cornmeal

3 TBS. sugar
1 TBS. baking powder
1/2 tsp. sa;t
2 eggs
1 cup milk
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 can kernel corn, drained
1 TBS. butter

Preheat the oven to 400°. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and the salt. In another bowl, beat together the eggs, milk and oil. Add the liquid mix to the flour mix and stir until just smooth. Stir the corn into the batter. Put 1 TBS. butter in a 10" cast iron skillet. Place in the oven 3 minutes until the butter is melted. Swirl to coat the bottom and the sides of the pan. Pour the batter into the hot skillet. Bake 15-20 minutes until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Serve warm.

MEXICAN CORNBREAD--A very moist and flavorful cornbread that can either be mild or spicy to taste. A family favorite from the Good Food Book by Jane Brody.

1 cup yellow (preferably stone ground) cornmeal
3/4 cup flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1 egg white
2 eggs
1 x can cream style corn
1 cup buttermilk
2 TBS. butter, melted, but not hot
1 cup finely shredded cheddar
1 x 4 oz. can chopped green chilies, either mild or hot, drained

Preheat the oven to 400°. In a large bowl, combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, baking soda and the salt. In another bowl, lightly beat the egg white and the whole eggs and combine with the corn, buttermilk, butter, cheese and chilies. Stir the moist ingredient into the dry ingredients until just combined. Grease a 9" square or round pan or a 9" cast iron skillet. Heat several minutes in the oven. Pour the batter into the hot pan. Return to the oven and bake 25 minutes or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean.

SANTA FE CHILI CORNBREAD--Super easy and super tasty.

1 cup yellow cornmeal
1 cup flour
1 TBS. baking powder
2 TBS. sugar
1 tsp. ground cumin

1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. chili powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 cup canned chopped green chilies
1 cup milk
1/4 cup melted butter
1 egg
additional chili powder

Preheat the oven to 425°. Spray an 8" x 8" pan with cooking spray. Combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar, cumin, garlic powder, chili powder and the salt. Add the chilies. Stir in the milk, butter and the egg. Pour into the pan and sprinkle with chili powder. Bake 20 minutes. PERFECTION!

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF FEBRUARY 2010)--

Trend watchers have noted that 2010 is the year of the brussels sprouts! Dreaded among children, brussels sprouts are in the midst of a resurgence. These tasty small cabbages store rather well for reasonable periods, but are at their sweet best when eaten as soon after harvest as possible. And like many members of the cabbage family, sweetness and flavor is actually enhanced after a light frost. Brussels sprouts are delicious on their own, steamed and then tossed with butter and a little salt, but are especially scrumptious when roasted in the oven. Klein's is happy to share these family favorites with your family. Bon appetit!

CARAMELIZED BRUSSELS SPROUTS--Reviews say "Amazing. Super-easy and super-flavorful. The leftovers are even better." From Better Homes & Gardens magazine from December of 2003.

5 cups brussels sprouts, prepped and halved as needed
1/4 cup sugar
1/8 cup butter
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
3/8 cup water
1/4(+) tsp. salt

In a large skillet, heat the sugar over medium-high heat until it starts to melt, shaking the pan to heat evenly. Once it starts to melt, reduce the heat and cook until the sugar begins to brown. Add the butter and stir until melted. Add the vinegar and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add the water and salt. Bring to a boil and add the sprouts. Return to a boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 6 minutes. Uncover and cook 15 minutes until most of the liquid is gone and the sprouts are golden, stirring occasionally. Serves 8. (Be patient. Reduction of the liquid will happen quickly toward the end of the cooking time.)

CREAMY BRUSSELS SPROUTS--Another Better Homes & Gardens recipe. This one from November of 2006.

1 medium onion, quartered and thin sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced

3 TBS. butter
2 lbs. brussels sprouts, halved
1/4 tsp. dried thyme
3/4 cup chicken broth
3/4 cup whipping cream
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/2 cup shredded parmesan
1/4 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°. Spray or grease a 1 1/2 qt. baking dish. In a large skillet, cook the onion and garlic in the melted butter until tender. Stir in the sprouts and the thyme. Continue cooking until the onions begin to brown. Add the broth and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring, until the broth has nearly evaporated. Add the cream and the nutmeg and cook 4 minutes longer or until it begins to thicken. Transfer to the prepared baking dish and stir in 1/4 cup of the parmesan and the salt and pepper. Sprinkle with the rest of the parmesan. Bake, uncovered, 20-25 minutes or until tender. Serves 8.

MARSALA OR SHERRY GLAZED WINTER VEGETABLES--

Nicely sweet. Adjust the temperature and baking time to prepare with meatloaf or roasted meats. Other root vegetables can be substituted if desired. From the December 2003 edition of Cooking Light magazine.

3 cups rutabaga cut into 1/2" cubes
1 1/3 cups parsnips cut into 1/2" thick slices
1 1/4 cups onions cut coarsely into wedges
1 cup carrots cut into 1/2" thick slices
1 1/2 cups halved brussels sprouts
1 TBS. butter
1 TBS. olive oil
1/2 tsp. dried thyme
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/2 cup marsala wine or sherry

Preheat the oven to 450°. Bring 2 qts. water to a boil in a Dutch oven. Add the rutabaga, the parsnips, the onion and the carrot and cook 4 minutes. Add the sprouts and cook 1 minute more. Drain the veggies and place them in a roasting pan that has been coated with cooking spray. Add the butter, oil, thyme, salt, pepper and nutmeg and stir until the butter has melted. Pour the wine over all and cover with foil. Bake 30 minutes. Uncover, stir and bake 15 minutes more until all is tender, stirring after 8 minutes. Serves 6.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH LEMON & WALNUTS--A simple and tried and true recipe from the pages of Martha Stewart Living, from sometime in 2005.

2 lbs. brussels sprouts, stems ends scored with an 'X'
3 TBS. butter
1 clove minced garlic
coarse salt and pepper
2 tsp. lemon juice
1/2 cup chopped walnuts, toasted

Steam the brussels sprouts until tender--generally 8 or more minutes depending on the size of the sprouts. Transfer cooked sprouts to a bowl. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook 2 minutes. Stir in the sprouts and heat through, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Stir in the walnuts and the juice. Serves 8.

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH (NEWSLETTER OF JANUARY 2010)--

1. Gratin: noun (from French grater -to scratch), 1806. Any dish that is topped with cheese or bread crumbs mixed with bits of butter, then heated in the oven or under a broiler until brown and crispy. The term 'au gratin' refers to any dish prepared in such a manner. (Source: The New Food Lover's Companion by Sharon Tyler Herbst)

2. Gratin: noun (from English for nummy). An easy, one-dish, baked comfort food made only with the freshest of vegetables and topped with cheese or buttered bread crumbs. Perfect side dish on a cold winter night. (Source: Klein's Floral & Greenhouses, Inc.)

POTATO MUSHROOM GRATIN--This fantastic, easy and wonderfully decadent recipe comes from the December 2008 issue of Bon Appetit magazine.

5 TBS. olive oil, divided
2 1/2 lbs. potatoes cut into 1/8" thick slices
1 1/2 tsp. (+) coarse salt
3/4 tsp.(+) fresh ground pepper
1 1/4 cup (or more) heavy whipping cream, divided
1 cup grated parmesan
2 tsp. dried thyme
6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
12 oz. sliced mushrooms

Preheat oven to 375°. Brush a 9x13" baking pan with 2 TBS. oil. Arrange 1/3 of the potatoes in the pan, overlapping slightly. Sprinkle with 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Pour 1/3 of the cream over the top and sprinkle with 1/4 cup parmesan. Repeat the layers 2 more times. Bake, uncovered, about 45 minutes, adding cream by the tablespoons if it seems dry. After 45 minutes, sprinkle the thyme and garlic over the gratin. Toss the mushrooms in a bowl with 3 TBS. oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Arrange the mushroom slices around the edge of the dish. Drizzle the gratin with 1/4 cup cream and sprinkle with 1/4 cup cheese. Bake, uncovered, until the mushrooms are tender and the potatoes are browning, about 20 minutes. Serves 10.

ROAST VEGETABLE GRATIN--From Vermont Valley Farm's CSA newsletter, Plow Shares, of October 17, 2002.

8 cups root vegetables of choice (potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, daikon radish, turnips, rutabaga, leeks, beets, onions, etc.), cut into chunks

2 TBS. olive oil

1/4 cup white wine, sherry or broth

1 TBS. fresh snipped or 1 tsp. dried rosemary

1 TBS. chopped garlic

salt and pepper

2 TBS. butter

3 TBS. flour

1 1/2 cups milk

2 TBS. horseradish

1 cup shredded smoked Swiss or cheese of choice

3 TBS. dried bread crumbs

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Toss veggies, oil, wine, rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper together in a very large bowl. Spread into a large baking dish. Cover tightly with foil and bake 25 minutes. Remove the foil, turn the veggies and bake until the veggies are tender and browning, about 20-30 minutes more. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a saucepan. Stir in the flour and cook over low heat for a few minutes. Gradually whisk in the milk and bring to a boil, whisking constantly. Lower the heat and cook gently 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in the horseradish. When the veggies are tender, stir the sauce into the veggies. Sprinkle with the cheese and bread crumbs and continue to bake for 15-20 minutes. Serves 6-8.

POTATO AND ARTICHOKE GRATIN--This perfect pairing of flavors comes from the March 2002 issue of Bon Appetit magazine.

2 TBS. butter

1 cup chopped onion

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 lbs. russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/4" slices

1 tsp. dried thyme

1 1/4 tsp. salt

pepper to taste

2 x 8 oz. pkgs. frozen artichoke hearts, thawed and halved

1 1/2 cups whipping cream

1 1/2 cups half & half

Preheat oven to 400°. Butter a 9x13" pan. Melt the butter in a skillet on medium-high. Add the onion and the garlic and sauté until soft. Spread the onions into the prepared pan. Top with 1/2 of the potatoes and sprinkle with 1/2 of the thyme, 1/2 of the salt and a bit of pepper. Arrange 1/2 of the artichokes over the potatoes. Repeat with the rest of the potatoes, thyme, salt, pepper and artichokes. Pour the cream and the half & half over the potatoes. Bake about 1 hour until the potatoes are tender. Serves 8.

POTATO GRATIN--A simple and tried and true recipe from the pages of Martha Stewart Living, October 2004.

Butter for the dish

1 cup heavy cream

coarse salt

fresh ground pepper

a pinch of nutmeg

2 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes cut into thin rounds

2 cups (6 oz.) shredded Gruyere cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°. Butter a 9" square or similar sized casserole. In a small bowl, whisk together the cream, 1 tsp. salt, 1/4 tsp. pepper and the nutmeg and set aside. In a large bowl, toss the potatoes with 1 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp pepper. Arrange 1/3 of the potatoes in the prepared casserole and top with 1/3 of the cheese. Repeat layers 2 more times, ending with the cheese. Pour the cream over the top and gently shake the pan back and forth to distribute evenly. Cover the pan with foil and bake 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake 30 minutes more until bubbly and well browned. Serves 6-8.