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# How to Cook Everything<sup>®</sup>

SIMPLE  
RECIPES  
FOR GREAT  
FOOD



# Mark Bittman

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olive oil, for example, or tropical ones like coconut oil and lime. Whenever you're in doubt, reach for neutral oil; you can't go wrong flavoring it with ginger, chiles, garlic, or herbs. Just be sure to save your best olive oil for simple drizzling; it won't make a flavored oil noticeably better.

Infused oils can taste rancid after a while and even cause food poisoning. But you need not worry about this if you make the small batches (½ cup) that follow, just enough to store comfortably in the refrigerator and use within two weeks. Most oils will solidify in cold temperatures, but melt as soon as they warm up—or you can use them as a spread.

Use good, fresh ingredients. Over the years I've adjusted this advice to include making oils flavored

with ground spices, though still not dried herbs. As long as you're careful to avoid burning them, you can have excellent results (see the chart below).

## Flavored Oil

MAKES: ½ cup | TIME: 20 minutes, plus time to cool

F M V

The main recipe and the chart that follows are just outlines. Use whatever combinations you can imagine, and make special blends for your favorite dishes or meals. The amount of aromatics, herbs, or spices might change depending on whether they're fresh or dried,

## 11 Flavored Oil Combinations

Follow the directions for the recipe above, using these combinations or mixing and matching as you like.

OIL	FLAVORING A	FLAVORING B
Olive oil	Zest of 1 lemon, cut into strips	¼ cup fresh rosemary or thyme
Olive oil	Zest of 1 lime, cut into strips	1 tablespoon coriander seeds
Olive oil	Zest of ½ orange, cut into strips	1 tablespoon smoked paprika
Olive oil	1 tablespoon fennel seeds	¼ cup fresh marjoram, thyme, or a mixture
Olive oil	2 bay leaves	2 tablespoons chopped shallot
Good-quality vegetable oil	1 or more fresh red chiles, chopped	2 tablespoons chopped ginger
Good-quality vegetable oil	2 teaspoons mustard seeds	2 teaspoons cumin seeds
Good-quality vegetable oil	Zest of 1 lime, cut into strips	2 tablespoons chopped ginger
Coconut oil	Zest of 1 lime, cut into strips	2 tablespoons chopped lemongrass
Coconut oil	2 tablespoons chopped ginger	1 tablespoon coriander seeds
Olive or good-quality vegetable oil	2 tablespoons chopped garlic	1 tablespoon red chile flakes
Walnut or other nut oil like peanut, sesame, or almond	¼ cup chopped nuts; use the same as the oil	¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

and how they've been stored. But in general, make it stronger than you think; If you make the oil too strong, you can always dilute the final result with more fresh oil.

**¼ cup washed and dried fresh herb: rosemary, thyme, bay leaves (dried are also fine), celery leaves, tarragon, marjoram, oregano, etc.**  
OR

**1 tablespoon whole spice: star anise, peppercorns, cloves, allspice, nutmeg pieces (see page 30), dried chiles (less if they're very hot), etc.**  
OR

**2 tablespoons aromatics: sliced garlic, fresh ginger or turmeric, shallots, scallions, or leeks, or a combination**  
Pinch salt

**½ cup olive oil or other good-quality oil**

1. Combine the ingredients in a small saucepan over low heat. Warm gently until the mixture sizzles then continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the oil is very fragrant and the sizzling stops, another minute or 2 (or less for ground spices) or up to 10 minutes.

2. Remove from the heat, cool, then slowly pour into a clean bottle or other container through a fine mesh strainer. Refrigerate and use within a week. (There may be some sediment that will settle to the bottom.)

## Fresh (Uncooked) Sauces

Perhaps the better word is “condiment,” since a classically trained French chef would scoff at calling a bunch of chopped tomatoes, onions, chiles, and seasonings a “sauce.” But salsas, chutneys, relishes, and Asian-style dipping sauces are easier to master and vary than classic French sauces based on butter and eggs. (See the chart on page 24 for more ways to use these sauces.)

## Fresh Tomato or Fruit Salsa

MAKES: About 2 cups | TIME: 15 minutes

F M V

Salsa is America's favorite condiment for good reason, since you can use it for saucing meats, vegetables, eggs, or grains; dipping everything from crudité to dump-lings; or serving the usual way with chips, tacos, and burritos. To take this chunky, pico de gallo-style recipe in a different direction, replace the tomatoes with a couple of cups fruit. Apples (especially tart green ones), peaches, pears, and plums are the obvious choices, but seeded grapes, pineapple, or even berries are all wonderful. Cooked salsas start on page 71.

**2 large ripe fresh tomatoes, cored and chopped (or see the headnote for fruit options; about 1½ cups)**

**½ large white onion or 3 or 4 scallions, chopped**

**1 teaspoon chopped garlic, or to taste**  
**Chopped fresh chile (like jalapeño, Thai, or habanero), red chile flakes, or cayenne, to taste**

**½ cup chopped fresh cilantro or parsley**

**2 tablespoons fresh lime juice or 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar**

**Salt and pepper**

1. Combine everything but the salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, then taste and adjust the seasoning.

2. If possible, let the flavors develop for 15 minutes or so before serving, but serve within a couple of hours.

**PURÉED TOMATO OR FRUIT SALSA** For more of a true sauce: Toss the finished salsa into a food processor and blend as smooth as you like.



# Teriyaki Sauce

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MAKES: About 1 cup | TIME: 15 minutes



There's no reason to buy the gloopy, chemical-filled bottled kind when it's so simple to make at home. If you want to use it to marinate or baste raw meat or fish, set about half of the sauce aside ahead of time to pass at the table.

- ½ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup mirin (or ¼ cup honey mixed with ¼ cup water)
- 1 tablespoon minced or grated fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped scallions

Combine the soy sauce and mirin in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Cook until bubbling, about 2 minutes. Turn off the heat, stir in the ginger, garlic, and scallions. Use immediately or refrigerate for up to a day (and return to room temperature or reheat).

**ROASTED GARLIC TERIYAKI SAUCE** Increase the garlic to 2 cloves. Leave them whole and don't bother to peel. Wrap them in foil and roast in a 375°F oven until soft, about 20 minutes. Remove the skins from the garlic, mash the cloves into a paste, and add to the soy sauce and mirin.

## Compound Butter

Nothing more than butter mixed with a flavorful ingredient. I used to fuss with rolling compound butter into a tube in wax paper or plastic wrap to serve it in slices—and you can certainly try that—but it's much easier and just as good to serve it by the dollop. Use it as a finishing ingredient in sauces, toss with pasta or grains, or plop on top of grilled or broiled meats and vegetables so it melts and seasons at the same time. Or just spread on bread, crackers, or crudités.

To make compound butter, combine good-quality softened unsalted butter and your chosen seasonings; let your personal taste dictate the exact ratio. Start with 4 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$  stick) butter and add a pinch salt and one or more of the following.

1. 2 tablespoons chopped scallion
2. 1 teaspoon grated citrus zest and 1 tablespoon of the fresh juice
3. 1 tablespoon capers, rinsed, and mashed with 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
4. 1 teaspoon minced garlic
5. 2 tablespoons minced mixed fresh herbs like parsley, basil, cilantro, and/or dill
6. 2 teaspoons soy sauce
7. 1 or 2 (or more) mashed anchovies
8. 2 to 3 tablespoons minced dried shrimp
9. 2 pieces crisply cooked bacon, crumbled
10. About 3 tablespoons chopped cashews or other nuts, sautéed with a tablespoon or two of butter in a pan over medium-low heat until light golden

## Brown Butter

MAKES:  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup | TIME: 15 minutes

F V

Browning butter gives it both color and a full spectrum of nutty, caramelized flavors. It takes only a few minutes, even with any of the additions in the variation and the list that follows. Serve over steamed or broiled fish or chicken, or toss it with noodles and Parmesan for a quick pasta. And the recipe is easy to double if you think you'll need more.

### 4 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$ stick) unsalted butter

1. Put the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir, scraping down the sides with a rubber spatula, until the foam subsides and the butter turns brown and smells irresistible.
2. Turn off the heat. Keep warm until you're ready to use it, up to 15 minutes.

**BLACK BUTTER SAUCE (BEURRE NOIR)** One step further and more dramatic: Cook the brown butter until black

flecks start to form, another 2 to 3 minutes. Immediately drizzle the butter over whatever food you are serving, then turn the heat to medium and rinse the pan with 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar or white wine vinegar, swirling it and letting about half the liquid evaporate. Add 1 tablespoon drained capers if you like and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh parsley. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and drizzle over the food. Toss if necessary and serve.

### 5 SIMPLE ADDITIONS TO BROWN BUTTER

Stir in any of these during the last minute of cooking, when the butter is just about ready (this point is easy to recognize once you've made it a couple of times). If you want to use them in combination, increase the quantity of butter by 2 tablespoons for each additional ingredient.

1. **Finely ground nuts ( $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup):** The usual ones, like hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios, walnuts, or almonds. But also macadamia nuts, sunflower or pumpkin seeds, or whole pine nuts



- 2. Chopped fresh herbs:** A tablespoon or so of oregano, rosemary, sage, thyme, or tarragon; up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milder herbs like parsley, cilantro, mint, dill, or basil; or 1 fresh bay leaf
- 3. Mustard:** Up to a tablespoon of either Dijon or whole grain, to taste, whisked in
- 4. Vinegar:** About a tablespoon of sherry vinegar or balsamic vinegar, which will make a “broken” sauce rather than emulsifying into the butter
- 5. Anchovies:** 2 or more mashed anchovies

# Hollandaise Sauce

MAKES: About 1 cup | TIME: 10 minutes

**F V**

The infamous brunch sauce that has many uses beyond Eggs Benedict (page 728). Try it spooned over steamed or poached fish, chicken, or vegetables—asparagus and broccoli are great. Hollandaise takes well to fresh herbs added at the end, like tarragon (a teaspoon), or dill or chervil (a tablespoon).

**3 egg yolks**

**Salt**

**6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, softened**

**1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice**

**Pinch cayenne (optional)**

- 1.** Put the egg yolks, 2 tablespoons water, and a pinch salt in a small saucepan over very low heat. Cook, whisking constantly, until light, foamy, and slightly thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. If at any point during this process the yolks begin to curdle, immediately remove from the heat and continue to whisk for a minute before returning the pan to the stove.
- 2.** Remove from the heat and add the butter a tablespoon or two at a time, whisking constantly to incorporate between each addition. Return to the heat and continue to whisk until the mixture is thick and bright yellow.
- 3.** Add the lemon juice, then taste and adjust the seasoning (add the cayenne now if you're using it). Serve immediately, or if you like, you can keep the finished sauce warm over extremely low heat or (better) over very hot water for up to 30 minutes, whisking occasionally.

**BLENDER HOLLANDAISE** Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat or in the microwave; do not let it brown. Combine all the other ingredients in a blender and turn on the machine. Slowly drizzle in the butter; the mixture will thicken. Taste and add more lemon juice and/or other seasonings if necessary.



**DRY-ROASTED NUTS** You avoid extra fat, but these are still infinitely better than nuts straight from a jar or can: Try to buy raw nuts. Heat the oven to 350°F. Run cold water over the nuts and put them, still wet, in one layer on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with coarse salt and put in the oven. Bake, without stirring, until they are light brown and fragrant, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the oven, cool slightly, and serve or hold at room temperature for up to a few hours.

**ROASTED PUMPKIN, SQUASH, OR SUNFLOWER SEEDS** You can also use fresh pumpkin or squash seeds (see pages 309–311): Use the main recipe or any of the variations, baking at 350°F for about 30 minutes, tossing occasionally, until tan, or sautéing for about 5 minutes. Like nuts, they will crisp as they cool.

**ROASTED BEANS WITH OIL** Instead of the nuts, substitute cooked or canned chickpeas, soybeans, black beans, or any other legume you like: If you cooked the beans yourself, it's important that they're tender but still intact. Drain them well and pat dry with towels before starting the recipe. Lower the oven heat to 425°F and use olive or good-quality vegetable oil, not butter.

## Caramelized Spiced Nuts

MAKES: 4 to 6 servings | TIME: 15 minutes

F M V

Sugar and bit of spice make these only slightly more involved than the roasted nuts in the preceding recipe and even more addictive. Use all one kind of nut or a combination. Add seeds to the mix if you like; sunflower, pumpkin, and sesame seeds all add flavor and texture.

- 2 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil
- 2 cups sugar

- 2 teaspoons garam masala (to make your own, see page 34)
- ½ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups (about 1 pound) unsalted shelled nuts (see the headnote)

1. Heat the oven to 450°F. Grease a baking sheet with the oil. Put a large skillet over high heat and add 2 cups water and the sugar. Bring to a boil and stir in the garam masala, cayenne, salt, and nuts. Reduce the heat to medium and cook, stirring frequently, until the liquid is reduced to a syrup, 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Turn the heat to low. Remove the nuts with a slotted spoon, letting the excess syrup drain off a bit and spread the nuts on the baking sheet. Be sure to turn off the burner when you've finished.
3. Roast the nuts for 10 minutes, tossing once or twice with a spatula. Remove from the oven and let cool—the sugar coating will be very hot, so resist sampling for a few minutes! The sugar coating will harden as the nuts cool. Serve or store in an airtight container at room temperature for 2 or 3 days.

**FIERY CARAMELIZED NUTS** Substitute a tablespoon or more finely chopped canned chipotle chile with the adobo sauce for the garam masala.

**ROSEMARY CARAMELIZED NUTS** Substitute 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary for the garam masala.

**MISO CARAMELIZED NUTS** The miso flavor mellows after roasting. So go by your taste and the intensity you're using; see page 39 for more details. Omit the spices and wait to add salt. When the liquid has finished reducing in Step 1, remove from the heat and stir in up to 2 tablespoons any miso. Proceed with Step 2. As soon as you can safely taste a warm nut, decide if you want to toss in more miso or a little salt before transferring to a bowl.

# Popcorn

MAKES: 4 to 6 servings | TIME: About 10 minutes

F M V

If you depend on packages in the microwave, home-made stovetop popcorn is a revelation. It cooks twice as fast and takes brilliantly to real butter (instead of that terrible artificially butter-flavored oil), cheese, as well as many other seasonings; see “16 Flavor Boosters for Popcorn, Roasted Nuts, or Edamame” on page 91.

**2 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil**

**½ cup popping corn**

**4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter or ¼ cup olive oil (optional)**

**Salt**

- 1.** Put the vegetable oil in a large pot (6 quarts or so) with a lid. Turn the heat to medium, add 3 kernels of the corn, and cover.
- 2.** When the 3 kernels pop, remove the lid and add the remaining corn. Cover and shake the pot, holding the lid on. Cook, shaking the pot often, until the popping sound stops, after about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, melt the butter or gently warm the olive oil, if you're using it.
- 3.** Turn the popcorn into a large bowl. Drizzle with the butter or olive oil, if using. Sprinkle with salt while tossing the popcorn. Serve immediately—popcorn is best hot.

**SALTY-SWEET BUTTERED POPCORN** Use the butter. Add 1 tablespoon superfine sugar to the butter as soon as it's melted and stir, then drizzle it over the popcorn and add the salt. Toss well, taste and add more sugar and/or salt if needed.

**PARMESAN POPCORN** You can use whatever cheese you like here, but Parmesan is the best: Sprinkle ¼ cup finely grated Parmesan (as fine as possible) over the hot popcorn and toss.

**LENTIL-FILLED SAMOSAS** Omit the potatoes, spices, and peas. For the filling, use half a recipe for Dal with Potatoes or Other Root Vegetables on page 410. Drain the peas, beans, or lentils very well before proceeding to Step 4.

**BAKED SAMOSAS** Works with the main recipe or any of the variations: Omit the frying oil. Heat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a baking sheet and bake the samosas until golden brown, 20 to 30 minutes.

## Party Food

Some of the fanciest dishes I ever make are for friends and family on special occasions. The recipes in this section involve a little more work than the most of the others in this chapter, but celebrations are always worth it. Sometimes weeknight family dinners are too; there's nothing stopping you from making a meal from just one thing in this section.

In fact, that versatility is part of the appeal of what I consider party fare. All of these recipes work as plated or family-style first courses, on buffet spreads, as snacks, or passed as you mingle with guests. Some need adjustments for different kinds of gatherings: Some you can eat standing, with a small plate and a fork. Others, like Meatballs, Three Ways (page 127) can be served on toothpicks. Some, like Ceviche (page 132), can be served on chips or crackers. Finally, there are those you can skewer for easy handling, like Chicken or Pork Satay (page 130).

## Cheese Fondue

MAKES: 8 to 10 servings | TIME: 25 minutes

**F** **V**

You can make fondue even if you don't own a multi-piece set. Any enamel or ceramic-lined pot will do. Instead of the classic Swiss cheeses like Gruyère

or Emmental (or Appenzeller, Fribourg, or Vacherin), any good melting cheese—like cheddar, Jack, Comté, or fontina—will work fine. Even the alcohol is flexible: Dry and acidic white wines are good for balancing the heaviness of the cheese, but beer, dry cider, and red wine are also nice. The classic dippers are cubes of crusty or hearty bread, cooked meat, and cut-up fruits and vegetables. (See “Crudités” on page 102 for some details about which should be cooked first.) In any case, be sure the vegetables are completely dry, or the fondue will not stick to them.

- 2 cups dry white wine, or a little more
- 1 large clove garlic, peeled and crushed (optional)
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 pound Gruyère cheese, shredded (about 4 cups)
- 1 pound Emmental cheese, shredded (about 4 cups)

1. Combine the wine and garlic, if you're using it, in a large saucepan over medium heat and bring to a slow bubble. Whisk together the cornstarch and 1 tablespoon cold water in a small bowl.
2. Lower the heat, then gradually stir in the cheese a little at a time until it's melted and creamy; do not let the fondue boil. Whisk the cornstarch slurry again and then add to the fondue while stirring; cook until thick and creamy, another 5 minutes. If the fondue is too thick, add a little more wine and cook for another 3 minutes or so. Serve immediately and keep warm over a tea light, or gently reheat on the stove if it starts to thicken.

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### 12 WAYS TO ADD MORE FLAVOR TO FONDUE

1. 1 cup chopped tomatoes
2. Pinch cayenne
3. Large pinch smoked paprika



(Like a burrito, see page 812.) Repeat this process until all the ingredients are used up. As you work, set the rolls on the parchment without stacking and drape with a damp towel. Serve halved or whole, with the dipping sauce.

## Pot Stickers

**MAKES** 24 dumplings (4 to 8 servings) | **TIME**: 30 to 45 minutes

Many cuisines have variations of these crisp-on-one-side dumplings: *gyoza* in Japan, *mandoo* in Korea, to name just two. The combination fry-steam cooking method is somewhat miraculous if you've never tried it. They may be filled with pork, shrimp or other shellfish, vegetables, or—as for mandoo—a mixture of kimchi and whatever else. So once you get the knack, you can have some fun with your own filling combinations. No matter what, they should be eaten immediately out of the pan.

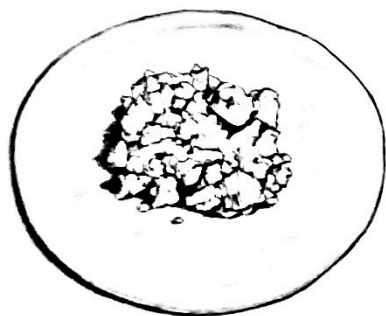
**8 ounces ground pork, chicken, or other meat**  
(about 1 cup)

**¼ cup chopped scallions**

- 1 cup well-washed, chopped leek (white and light green parts only) or chopped napa cabbage or bok choy
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon rice wine or dry sherry
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- Large pinch salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 24 round dumpling skins (to make your own, see page 509)
- Good-quality vegetable oil, as needed
- Ginger-Scallion Sauce (page 64) for serving

**1.** Put the meat, scallions, leek, and ginger in a large bowl. Add the rice wine, sugar, soy sauce, sesame oil, egg, salt, and pepper and mix gently but thoroughly. Put about 1 heaping tablespoon of filling in the center of a wrapper, then moisten the edge of the wrapper with water and fold over to form a semicircle. Press the seam tightly to seal; it's best if there is no air trapped between the filling and wrapper. Put the dumplings up on a

## Stuffing and Sealing Pot Stickers



**STEP 1** To make half-moon pot stickers, put a small amount of filling in the middle of a wrapper. Brush the edges lightly (you can use your fingertip) with water.



**STEP 2** Bring one edge of the wrapper over the filling to meet the other.



**STEP 3** Secure the dumpling with the thumb of one hand, then press the edges closed.

lightly floured plate or wax paper. (At this point, you can cover the dumplings tightly and refrigerate for up to a day, or freeze for a couple of weeks; you can cook them from frozen in just a few extra minutes.)

2. Coat a large skillet with a thin layer of vegetable oil and turn the heat to medium high. When the oil is hot, put the dumplings, one at a time, into the skillet, leaving space between them (you will probably have to cook in multiple batches). Turn the heat down to medium, then cover and cook for about 5 minutes. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water to the skillet, re-cover, and cook for another 2 minutes. Remove the lid, turn the heat to high, and cook until the water has evaporated, about 3 minutes. Remove the dumplings and serve right away with the dipping sauce.

**STEAMED DUMPLINGS** I like these lighter dumplings with Soy Dipping Sauce and Marinade (page 64). Works for the main recipe or the variation: Set up a steamer (to improvise, see page 20) in a covered pot. Lightly oil the steamer basket or plate to prevent sticking. Steam the dumplings in one or two batches for about 10 minutes per batch.

**VEGETARIAN POT STICKERS OR GYOZA** Substitute 8 ounces drained and mashed silken tofu for the meat. Reduce the quantity of leeks to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup and add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup shredded napa cabbage,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh mushrooms,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup shredded carrot, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped walnuts to the filling. Use thinner store-bought gyoza skins if you can find them. Fill and cook as directed. (Note that if you use gyoza skins, the cooking time at each stage will be a little bit shorter.)

## Bean and Cheese Empanadas

**MAKES:** 12 empanadas (4 to 12 servings) | **TIME:** About 1 hour with cooked beans

**M V**

Beans, cheese, and sturdy vegetables are traditional empanada fillings, but you can use all sorts of other

things; see the variations. Serve them hot or at room temperature, with any salsa you like (pages 55 to 58 and 71 to 74).

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour, plus a little more for dusting
- ½ cup masa harina, finely ground cornmeal, or more all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons lard or good-quality vegetable oil
- ½ cup milk
- 2½ cups well-seasoned cooked beans, like Refried Beans (page 393)
- 1 cup grated or crumbled queso fresco, Monterey Jack, or Cotija cheese

1. Combine the flour, masa harina, baking powder, and salt in a food processor; pulse for about 5 seconds. With the machine running, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the lard through the feed tube and process for 10 seconds. With the machine still running, add just enough water for the dough to form a ball, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. Don't add more water than necessary; the dough should be fairly dry. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead by hand until smooth, just a minute or so.

2. Divide the dough into 12 pieces, roll into balls, and wrap in plastic or cover with a damp towel and let rest for at least 20 minutes. (You can refrigerate the dough overnight; be sure to let it come to room temperature before proceeding.) On a well-floured surface, roll each piece into a 6-inch circle, adding flour as necessary.

3. Heat the oven to 450°F. Combine the remaining lard with the milk. Put about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the beans on a dough circle, followed by a sprinkle of cheese. Brush the edges lightly (you can use your fingertip) with water, then fold each circle over. Seal the seam and press with the tines of a fork to close. Put on an ungreased baking sheet and brush lightly with the milk mixture. Bake until the dough is golden brown, about 20 minutes. Serve immediately or at room temperature.

**CHORIZO AND CHEESE EMPANADAS** Substitute 1 pound crumbled or chopped cooked chorizo for the beans.

**SHREDDED PORK EMPANADAS** Instead of the beans and cheese, use about 3 cups Shredded Pork (page 697) to fill the empanadas. Proceed with the recipe.

## Meatballs, Three Ways

**MAKES:** 6 to 8 servings | **TIME:** About 40 minutes



These are the ideal party food because they can be rolled in advance then cooked in a matter of minutes, and need only toothpicks to serve. I've given you three flavor profiles and four ways to cook them, so you can use the recipe a dozen times and never repeat exactly the same flavors. Serve with Aioli (page 70) or Fast Tomato Sauce (page 478) as a dip, if you like.

Other ground meat you can use: pork, lamb, veal, turkey, chicken, or duck, or a combination.

- 1 thick slice or 2 thin slices white bread
- ½ cup milk
- 1 pound ground sirloin or your own ground beef (see page 686)
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and pepper

1. Soak the bread in the milk until soggy, about 5 minutes. Squeeze the milk from the bread and combine the bread with the meat, onion, Parmesan, parsley, and some salt and pepper. Cook up a bite in the microwave or a skillet and adjust the seasoning if necessary—this step is worth it until you get the hang of how much salt to add. Shape into 1-inch meatballs, handling them as gently as possible.

2. Cook the meatballs one of three ways: gently drop into a large pot of simmering stock or water for 10

minutes; put on a lightly greased baking sheet and bake in a 350°F oven for 7 to 8 minutes; or working in batches, cook in 2 tablespoons hot olive oil in a large skillet for about 8 minutes, turning every couple of minutes. Serve hot or warm.

**SPANISH-STYLE ALMOND MEATBALLS** Serve with Saffron Mayonnaise (page 70) or Fast Tomato Sauce (page 478): Omit the bread and milk. Substitute bread crumbs for the Parmesan. In Step 1, whisk together ¼ cup roughly chopped almonds and 1 egg in a small bowl; add to the meat mixture and proceed.

**MEATBALLS, VIETNAMESE STYLE** Serve with Thai Chile Sauce (page 66) or Soy Dipping Sauce (page 64): Omit the bread and milk. Use ground pork instead of beef; scallion instead of onion; cooked white rice (short-grain or sticky) instead of the Parmesan; and cilantro instead of parsley. In Step 1, beat 1 egg in a large bowl and stir in the rice. Carefully combine the remaining ingredients into the egg mixture, along with 1 tablespoon chopped fresh ginger or garlic if you like.

### **SKEWERED AND GRILLED MEATBALLS, THREE WAYS**

You can add vegetables or shrimp to the skewers too: Prepare a charcoal or gas grill for hot indirect cooking. Prepare through the end of Step 1. Put 1 to 3 meatballs on a skewer (depending on whether you're adding anything else to the skewer), brush with oil, and put on the grill. Cook, rotating carefully to cook and brown all sides, about 4 minutes.

## Chicken Wings

**MAKES:** 6 to 8 servings | **TIME:** About 1½ hours, largely unattended



These aren't quite the real-deal version credited to the Anchor Bar in—where else?—Buffalo. Those are a deep-fried, two-pan, stove-to-oven affair (with margarine as the secret ingredient, no less). This roasting technique



**2.** Put the butter or oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. When the butter foams or the oil is hot, add the scallion and sugar and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 1 minute. Lower the heat to medium and stir in the flour. Cook, stirring constantly with a whisk or a wooden spoon, until the mixture starts to turn golden and the flour smells toasted, just a couple of minutes. Add the milk and the reserved corncob broth and raise the heat to medium-high. Stir or whisk constantly until the roux is dissolved and the soup starts to thicken, about 2 minutes.

**3.** Stir in the corn kernels and any accumulated juices and bring to a boil, then adjust the heat so that the soup bubbles gently. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the corn is tender and the soup has thickened, 10 to 15 minutes. Taste, adjust the seasoning, and serve right away, garnished with croutons if you like.

**ROASTED CORN CHOWDER** Heat the oven to 400°F. Rub the shucked corn with a little olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and put on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast the corn, turning frequently, until the kernels start to brown, 15 to 25 minutes. When the corn is cool enough to handle, cut off the kernels and proceed with the recipe.

**CHEESY CORN CHOWDER** Prepare either the main recipes or the preceding variation through Step 2. In Step 3, along with the corn, add ½ cup grated cheese like Parmesan, sharp cheddar, or hard goat cheese.

## Minestrone

MAKES: 4 to 6 servings | TIME: 45 to 60 minutes



I've written this recipe so that almost anything goes. You choose the mix of vegetables. Chop them fairly small—½-inch bits—for faster cooking and easy eating. Larger chunks make it a knife-fork-and-spoon affair. Nonvegetable add-ins might include the ends on prosciutto or other types of ham.

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, peeled (see page 279) and chopped
- ½ cup chopped prosciutto or other ham (optional)
- 1½ to 2 cups hard vegetables like potatoes, winter squash, parsnips, or turnips, peeled if necessary and chopped
- Salt and pepper
- 6 cups vegetable stock (to make your own, see page 174) or water
- 1 cup peeled, seeded, and chopped tomato (canned is fine; include the juices)
- 1½ to 2 cups soft vegetables like green beans, cooked beans, zucchini or summer squash, or dark leafy greens like kale or collards, chopped
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley
- Grated Parmesan cheese for garnish

- 1.** Put 3 tablespoons of the oil into a large pot over medium heat. When it's hot, add the onion, carrot, and celery. Cook, stirring, until the vegetables soften, about 5 minutes. Add the ham if you're using it and cook, stirring, until golden, about 3 minutes more.
- 2.** Add the hard vegetables and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, for a minute or 2, then add the stock and the tomato; bring to a boil, then lower the heat so the mixture bubbles gently. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are fairly soft and the tomato is broken up, about 15 minutes. (At this point, you can refrigerate the soup, covered, for up to 2 days; proceed to Step 3 and add the tender vegetables as the soup reheats.)
- 3.** Add the soft vegetables and parsley and adjust the heat again so the mixture bubbles steadily. Cook until all the vegetables are very tender, 5 to 10 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning, add the remaining tablespoon oil, and serve right away. Pass the cheese at the table if you're using it.

**PISTOU** Pesto with a whole lot of garlic is traditional here: Stir in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup or more of freshly made Traditional Pesto or any of its variations (page 51) just before serving.

**PASTA E FAGIOLI (PASTA AND BEAN SOUP)** Use about half as much of the hard and soft vegetables and add 2 cups cooked beans—kidney, white, borlotti, chickpeas, cannellini, or a mixture—with the soft vegetables. With them, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 cup small uncooked pasta like tubetti or larger pasta broken into bits. About 5 minutes before serving, stir in a teaspoon minced garlic or more, to taste.

**RIBOLITTA (WHITE BEAN AND BREAD SOUP)** Purée 1 cup cooked cannellini beans (drained canned beans are fine) with some of their cooking liquid (or water if using canned) into a thick paste. For each bowl, toast a thick slice of rustic Tuscan or other Italian bread and set in the bottom of the bowl. In Step 3, add the puréed beans to the bubbling soup. Thin with a little more water or stock if necessary. To serve, pour the hot soup over the bread and drizzle with a little olive oil.

**MULLIGATAWNY (SPICY INDIAN VEGETABLE SOUP)** Leave this chunky and brothy or purée it: Substitute good-quality vegetable oil for the olive oil. Omit the ham. Add 1 teaspoon each ground cumin and turmeric and cook with the onion in Step 1. Add 2 tablespoons curry powder (to make your own, see page 32) along with the soft vegetables. Substitute cilantro for the parsley and omit the Parmesan.

**CABBAGE-AND-SOMETHING SOUP** Take this in any number of directions, depending on what you've got: Substitute butter for 3 tablespoons of the oil. Omit the carrot and celery and sauté 1 pound shredded cabbage (about 1 small head) with the onion instead. With the stock, add 2 potatoes, peeled and chopped, and 1 tablespoon caraway seeds, or 2 cups sliced shitake mushrooms. Garnish with sautéed apples.

## Frozen Vegetables in Soup

Yes you can—and should. Especially when they're going to cook for a long time. The frozen vegetables that work best in soups are: artichokes, broccoli, butternut squash, cauliflower, collards and kale, corn (except in the corn chowder on page 145), peas, and spinach. Stock a few bags in your freezer, complement them with fresh vegetables if possible, and you can put together a meal with little time and effort.

The rules for buying frozen vegetables in general are described on page 237. There are two good ways to use them in soup: Straight from the bag; you'll need to increase the cooking time to compensate for their chilling effect. Or to heighten the flavor you can cook the vegetables lightly in oil to thaw them before adding the liquid.

## 5 MORE TAKES ON MINISTRONE

The tomato is a given, but other vegetables are completely flexible.

- 1. Summer Minestrone:** Use fresh corn kernels, zucchini or summer squash, and garnish with chopped fresh basil, mint, or thyme.
- 2. Autumn Minestrone:** Use mostly cubes of butternut or other winter squash, and garnish with chopped fresh sage and chopped toasted hazelnuts.
- 3. Green Minestrone:** Use peas, asparagus, green beans, and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup mixed chopped fresh herbs like parsley, basil, dill, mint, chervil, and chives.
- 4. Spicy Chile Minestrone:** Use roasted, cleaned, and chopped poblanos (see page 43), minced jalapeño, a mix of potato, corn, and chayote or any summer squash, and cilantro. Garnish with crumbled queso fresco.
- 5. Sausage and Lentil Minestrone:** Replace the prosciutto with 8 ounces hot or sweet Italian sausage, casings removed and crumbled; in place of the hard vegetables, add 1 cup brown or green lentils, rinsed and picked over.

options. And best of all, even the most complicated vinaigrettes take no more than five minutes to make.

## DEMYSTIFYING EMULSIFICATION

Novices may wonder how to turn these components into a creamy, cohesive dressing. The process itself is called *emulsification*: forcing oil and water to combine. Many vinaigrettes are emulsions, as is mayonnaise. It takes some energy to bring the two liquids together. Of course this need not be your energy; it can be electrical energy powering a blender, or you can choose a more relaxed approach and not worry about forming a perfect emulsion.

Bottled dressing, trust me—or read the long list of ingredients—is neither a convenience nor better than what you can make yourself in a jar. It's usually an emulsion of inferior oil (like soy or “vegetable”) and liquid (often water, with some vinegar, especially in low-fat or “lite” dressings), seasonings (often artificial, or at least far from fresh), and preservatives.

I'm trying to convince you to make your own vinaigrette. Do it in a blender, by shaking the ingredients in a jar, by beating them with a fork or whisk, or with an immersion blender. Hand tools—like forks—won't emulsify much, though there's nothing wrong with that (or with a “broken vinaigrette,” in which the oil and vinegar are barely combined), but for a creamy, rich emulsion,

## 5 More Salad Dressings

Generally these dressings are creamier, thicker, and richer than vinaigrette, so to prevent sogginess I suggest using them to top sturdy mixed greens right before serving rather than tossing the whole salad. Or thin them—with a little oil, heavy cream, milk, lemon juice, vinegar, or just water—to make them more dressing-like than dip-like. Here's where you'll find them.

1. Tahini Sauce (page 56)
2. Blue Cheese Dressing (page 59)
3. Miso-Carrot Sauce with Ginger (page 66)
4. Real Ranch Dressing (page 71)
5. Peanut Sauce (page 75)

just use a blender, which also has the advantages of puréeing whatever solids you're adding and producing a vinaigrette that will keep in the fridge for at least several days.

## Vinaigrette

MAKES: About  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup | TIME: 5 minutes

F M V

This is my baseline ratio of oil to acid to use when making a well-balanced vinaigrette. Using good wine vinegar—red or white—will result in a little less acidity. There are dozens of ways to change the flavors, as you can see from the chart that follows.

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons sherry vinegar, or more to taste
- Honey or sugar (optional)
- 1 shallot, cut into chunks (optional)
- Salt and pepper

1. Combine the oil and vinegar in a blender and turn the machine on; a creamy emulsion will form within 30 seconds. Taste and add more vinegar, if needed, a teaspoon or two at a time until it tastes balanced to you. If it's too acidic for your taste, add just a touch of honey or sugar and taste again. Keep adjusting until it tastes right.
2. Add the shallot and turn the machine on and off a few times until the shallot is chopped within the dressing. Taste, adjust the seasoning, and serve. (This is best made fresh but will keep, refrigerated, for a few days; bring it back to room temperature and whisk briefly before using.)

**VINAIGRETTE IN A JAR** The easiest way to make dressing works for the main recipe or any of the variations in the chart on page 190. Mince the shallot (or any additional ingredients). Put all the ingredients in a jar, seal it with a tight-fitting lid, and shake vigorously. Taste, adjust the seasoning, and reshake the dressing again just before serving.

## 21 Variations on Vinaigrette

Simple additions or using different oils and vinegars—or citrus juices, with their lower acidity levels—can change vinaigrette dramatically. Use this chart to get you started with the most familiar flavor profiles, then mix and match components from around the chart and try your own ideas. For all, the methods remain the same as in the Vinaigrette recipe or variation on page 188.

VINAIGRETTE	OIL(S)	ACID	FLAVORINGS AND SEASONINGS (IN ADDITION TO SALT AND PEPPER)
<b>Mustard or Honey Mustard Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons or more good wine vinegar	1 heaping teaspoon any good mustard or about ½ teaspoon dry mustard, plus 1–2 tablespoons honey (optional)
<b>Herb Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons or more fresh lemon juice or good wine vinegar	¼ cup tender, milder fresh herbs like parsley, basil, or dill; 1 teaspoon stronger, tougher herbs like oregano, rosemary, tarragon, or thyme.
<b>Creamy Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons or more good white wine vinegar	3 tablespoons heavy cream, sour cream, yogurt, mayonnaise, or puréed silken tofu; 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, or to taste; 1 small shallot, chopped
<b>Parmesan Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice or good wine vinegar	¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese. Or try Manchego with sherry vinegar.
<b>Lemon or Lime Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	¼ cup or so fresh lemon or lime juice; 1 tablespoon warm water	Zest of 1 lemon or lime, grated or chopped (optional); lots of pepper
<b>Soy Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup good-quality vegetable oil; 1 teaspoon sesame oil, or to taste	3 tablespoons or more rice vinegar or lemon or lime juice	1 tablespoon soy sauce
<b>Roasted Garlic Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons or more balsamic vinegar	2 or more cloves roasted garlic (see page 294); 1 tablespoon honey
<b>Bacon Vinaigrette</b>	¼ cup olive oil; 2 tablespoons rendered bacon fat	3 tablespoons sherry or balsamic vinegar	1 large shallot, chopped; ¼ cup minced cooked bacon, stirred in just before using
<b>Ginger Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup good-quality vegetable oil	1 tablespoon sherry vinegar; 1 tablespoon lime juice; about 1 tablespoon warm water	1 inch fresh ginger, peeled and chopped; lots of pepper
<b>Tomato-Basil Vinaigrette</b>	½ cup olive oil	2 tablespoons or more good wine vinegar	¼ cup chopped seeded fresh tomato; 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil



VINAIGRETTE	OIL(S)	ACID	FLAVORINGS AND SEASONINGS (IN ADDITION TO SALT AND PEPPER)
Nut Oil Vinaigrette	½ cup walnut, hazelnut, or other nut oil	3 tablespoons sherry vinegar	1 large shallot, chopped (optional)
Nutty Vinaigrette	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons sherry, balsamic, or good wine vinegar	¼ cup almonds, hazelnuts, pine nuts, pecans, or walnuts, ground in a food processor; 1 clove garlic
Maple Vinaigrette	½ cup olive oil	2 tablespoons cider, sherry, or white wine vinegar	1 tablespoon maple syrup, or to taste
Avocado Vinaigrette (discolors after an hour or so)	None	¼ cup or more fresh lime or lemon juice	½ avocado (mashed if using a jar); 1 teaspoon chopped garlic or 2 tablespoons chopped onion (optional)
Dried Fruit Vinaigrette	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons sherry, balsamic, or good wine vinegar	3 tablespoons dried fruit, chopped if necessary, soaked in the vinegar for 15 minutes; 1 small shallot, chopped
Roasted Pepper Vinaigrette	⅓ cup olive oil	3 or more tablespoons good wine or balsamic vinegar	½ Roasted Red Pepper (page 318), chopped
Anchovy-Caper Vinaigrette	½ cup olive oil	3 tablespoons good wine vinegar	4 anchovy fillets with a bit of their oil; 1 teaspoon capers with a bit of their brine; 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
Coconut-Curry Vinaigrette	½ cup coconut milk	3 tablespoons or more rice vinegar or coconut vinegar	1 tablespoon curry powder
Miso Vinaigrette	3 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil	3 tablespoons rice vinegar; 2 tablespoons warm water	3 tablespoons white or light miso; 1 tablespoon soy sauce
Pomegranate Molasses Vinaigrette	½ cup olive oil	1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses; 2 tablespoons or more warm water	1 or 2 teaspoons honey
Fish Sauce Vinaigrette	3 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil	2 tablespoons rice vinegar plus 2 tablespoons lime juice	3 tablespoons fish sauce; 2 teaspoons sugar, 1 clove garlic; 1 small red chile (more or less), seeded

grapes. Skip Steps 2 and 3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When it is hot, add the garlic and anchovies, and a pinch of red chile flakes if you like, and cook for about 2 minutes before adding the broccoli raab.

## BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Believed to have been developed in Belgium (hence the name), these miniature cabbages are super when cooked properly.

**PREPARING** Trim the hard edge of the stem and remove any loose leaves. Cut, slice, or leave whole. Thinly slice raw Brussels sprouts for salad (a food processor makes this easy).

**BEST COOKING METHODS** roasting, sautéing, braising, grilling

**WHEN ARE THEY DONE?** When just tender enough to pierce easily with a skewer or thin-bladed knife; they tend to get bitter if overcooked.

**OTHER VEGETABLES YOU CAN USE** any cabbage, cut into 1- to 2-inch chunks

## Sautéed Brussels Sprouts with Bacon

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 30 minutes

Perhaps the most delicious way to cook Brussels sprouts; their affinity for bacon is legendary.

Other vegetables you can use: shredded cabbage, green or wax beans; chicory or its relatives (see page 292).

- 6 ounces bacon, chopped
- 1 pound Brussels sprouts
- Salt and pepper

**F** fast **M** make ahead **V** vegetarian

- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar or fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme (optional)

1. Put the bacon in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the pan is hot, adjust the heat so it sizzles without burning; cook until crisp and the fat is rendered, 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, trim the hard edge of the stem from the Brussels sprouts, then cut each one into thin slices or shreds; you can do this on a mandoline, with the blade side of a box grater, the slicing attachment on a food processor, or with a knife. Or cut them into quarters.
3. Add the Brussels sprouts and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water to the pan with the bacon; sprinkle with salt and pepper, turn the heat to medium, and cover. Cook, undisturbed, until nearly tender, about 5 minutes.
4. Uncover and raise the heat to medium-high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until any remaining water evaporates and the sprouts are fully tender, another 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in the vinegar and the thyme if you're using it. Serve hot.

### SAUTÉED BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH HAZELNUTS

Omit the bacon and skip Step 1. In Step 3, heat 3 tablespoons olive oil and add the sprouts. In Step 4, when the sprouts are tender, sprinkle with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped toasted hazelnuts and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh mint or dill instead of the thyme, along with the vinegar or lemon juice.

### SAUTÉED BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH CARAMELIZED

**ONIONS** Substitute 1 large onion, sliced, for the bacon. In Step 1, cook the onion in 2 tablespoons butter or olive oil until browned, then proceed with the recipe.

### BURDOCK

The root of a thistle plant—and related to artichokes—burdock is sweet and earthy; in Japan, where it's most popular (and known as gobo), it's often braised with carrots or other vegetables.

**BARBECUE- OR TERIYAKI-GLAZED TOFU** In Step 2, brush the tofu liberally with any Barbecue Sauce (page 74) or Teriyaki Sauce (page 76) and continue to cook, turning and basting, until nicely browned. Serve immediately.

## Stir-Fried Tofu with Snow Peas or Sugar Snap Peas

**MAKES:** 4 servings | **TIME:** 20 minutes



The best way to learn to love tofu is to cook it with lots of crisp vegetables. A ton of ginger and garlic help too. You can serve this with white or brown rice, of course. I also like it tossed with wide rice noodles. Whatever accompaniment you choose, get it ready before you start the stir-fry; this goes super-fast.

Other vegetables you can use: broccoli florets, chopped bok choy or asparagus, sliced carrots.

- 1½ to 2 pounds firm or extra-firm tofu, frozen, squeezed, or just patted dry**
- 1 pound snow peas or sugar snap peas, trimmed**
- 2 scallions**
- 3 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil**
- Salt and pepper**
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic**

- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger (optional)**
- 2 small dried chiles (optional)**
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce, or to taste**
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds (see page 309; optional)**

**1.** Cut the tofu into cubes no bigger than 1-inch. Slice the peas in half lengthwise if you like (pretty, but not necessary). Trim and slice the scallions, keeping the white and green parts separate.

**2.** Put 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When it is hot, add the tofu in a single layer, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and cook, undisturbed, until the pieces brown on the bottom and release from the pan, about 5 minutes. Scrape them up with a spatula, toss, and let the tofu sizzle until they're crisp in places, just a couple of minutes more; transfer to a plate.

**3.** Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil to the skillet and return it to high heat. Immediately add the scallion whites, garlic, and the ginger and chiles if you're using them and cook, stirring, for about 10 seconds. Add the peas and ½ cup water. Cook, stirring and scraping up any browned bits, until the peas turn bright green and most of the water has bubbled away, just a minute or 2. Add the tofu and soy sauce and remove from the heat. Stir in the scallion greens and the sesame seeds, if you're using them. Taste and adjust the seasoning and serve.







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## 10 ADDITIONS TO ANY STIR-FRIED TOFU

You can build on Stir-Fried Tofu with Snow Peas or Sugar Snap Peas (page 420), or try other vegetables with any of these ideas:

1. Add up to 1 cup any cooked fish, seafood, poultry, or meat (shredded, sliced, chopped, or crumbled) with the tofu in Step 3. (You might need a little more liquid or oil.)
2. Add 2 teaspoons five-spice powder (to make your own, see page 35) and/or a few star anise pods with the tofu in Step 3. This is good with hoisin sauce; see below.
3. Add 1 medium-to-large tomato, halved, seeded, and chopped, along with the white parts of the scallions.
4. Add 1 cup bean sprouts, along with—or instead of—the scallion greens.
5. Add 1 tablespoon (or to taste) sugar, honey, or other sweetener, along with the scallion greens.
6. Add 1 tablespoon (or to taste) Chile Paste (page 40) or hoisin sauce, along with the soy sauce.
7. Add 1 tablespoon (or to taste) sesame oil, along with the garnish.
8. Add 2 tablespoons fermented black beans along with the water in Step 3.
9. Add 1 tablespoon grated orange, lime, or lemon zest along with the water in Step 3.
10. Add up to ½ cup chopped cashews or peanuts with the scallion whites and garlic in Step 3.

(Chinese take-out rice is another option.) Warm, just-made rice inevitably clumps together, a lesson I learned in my early days at the stove. When cooked long grain rice is chilled—even for a few hours, though a day or so is even better—it dries out, separates into individual grains, and is perfect for sizzling in some hot oil to get that signature crisp-but-not-too-crunchy texture.

Making fried rice is akin to making other stir-fries (see page 244). The choices of vegetables and other major ingredients are almost infinite. Use the first recipe as a model, the chart that follows for some ideas to expand your options, then forge your own path.

## Simplest Fried Rice

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 20 minutes with cooked rice

**F V**

The easiest fried rice dish, very fast, very easy, and very good. It's also an excellent way to use leftover rice. See the recipe at right if you're looking for something more complex or exciting.

- 4 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil
- 1 red or green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
- 2 scallions, white and green parts sliced separately  
Salt and pepper
- 4 cups cooked white or brown long-grain rice (see page 430), chilled for at least a few hours
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce, or to taste
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil

1. Put 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When it's hot, add the bell pepper and scallion whites, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and raise the heat to high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften and brown in places, 3 to 5 minutes.

2. Remove the vegetables with a slotted spoon and swirl in the remaining 2 tablespoons oil. Immediately scatter the rice on top, separating the kernels with a spatula into an even layer. Cook, undisturbed, until the rice sputters and browns, about 2 minutes. Then stir, breaking up any lumps, until the rice is hot throughout and crisp in places, about 5 minutes. Crack in the egg and stir with a fork until it's scrambled and combined, about 2 minutes.

3. Return the vegetables to the skillet and add the soy sauce and sesame oil, and stir to combine. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve, garnished with the scallion greens.

## Fried Rice with Shrimp and Pork

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 30 minutes

**F**

What you're getting the hang of here—by adding meat and seafood to fried rice—is moving things in and out of the pan so each component browns well. For bare-bones fried rice, see the recipe at left.

- 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- 4 tablespoons peanut or good-quality vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped
- 8 ounces boneless pork shoulder, Chinese sausage, or other pork, chopped  
Salt and pepper
- 8 ounces shrimp, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh ginger
- 4 cups cooked white or brown long-grain rice (see page 430), chilled for at least a few hours

## 6 Simple Fried Rice Variations

Use the main recipe as your guide and change the ingredients as described here. For tips on different ways to eat eggs in fried rice and which oil is best, see the list on page 446, "5 Tips for Making the Best Fried Rice."

VARIATION	SUBSTITUTIONS IN STEP 1	CHANGES TO STEP 1
Fried Rice with Onion, Leeks, or Shallots	Replace bell pepper and scallion whites with 1 onion or 2 leeks or shallots, thinly sliced.	Add chopped cashews.
Fried Rice with Frozen Vegetables	Replace bell pepper and scallion whites with up to 1½ cups frozen peas, carrots, and/or corn.	Garnish with chopped fresh cilantro.
Chicken Curry Fried Rice	Replace bell pepper and scallion with whites with ½ onion, sliced. After it's soft, add 1 cup chopped cooked chicken and 1 tablespoon curry powder.	Garnish with chopped fresh cilantro and a squeeze of lime.
Fried Rice with Bok Choy and Ginger	Replace bell pepper and scallion whites with 2 cups chopped bok choy and 2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger.	Use the scallion whites as well.
Fried Rice with Fried Eggs	Omit the scrambled egg and start by frying 4 eggs in the oil. Carefully transfer them to a plate before proceeding.	Top each serving with a fried egg; garnish with chopped fresh chives instead of scallion greens.
Fried Rice with Bacon and Chiles	Omit the bell pepper and scallion whites. Start by frying 4 slices chopped bacon, and 1 chopped onion in the oil until browned. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons fat from the pan before proceeding.	Garnish with chopped fresh hot red chiles (like Thai) and the scallion greens.

- 2 eggs, lightly beaten (optional)
- ¼ cup rice wine, sherry, dry white wine, stock (to make your own, see pages 174–180) or water
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- ½ cup chopped scallions or fresh cilantro

1. If the peas are frozen, soak them in cold water to thaw while you begin cooking. Put 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When it's hot, add the onion and bell pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until they soften and begin to brown, 5 to 10 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer them to a bowl.
2. Return the pan to high heat, swirl in another tablespoon oil, and add the pork. Sprinkle with salt and

- pepper and cook, stirring, until the pieces are browned in places and cooked through, about 3 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with the vegetables. Using the oil left in the pan, repeat with the shrimp, which will only take a minute or 2 to cook. Add them to the vegetables and pork.
3. Put the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in the skillet, followed by the garlic and ginger. About 15 seconds later, begin to add the rice, a bit at a time, breaking up any clumps with your fingers as you scatter it into the pan. When all the rice has been added, make a well in its center with a spoon and pour in the eggs if you're using them; scramble them a bit, then incorporate them into the rice.
  4. Return the meat and vegetables to the pan and stir to mix them through. Add the rice wine and cook, stirring,

## 5 Tips for Making the Best Fried Rice

1. This is a good place to use peanut oil if you like a little stronger flavor.
2. If you're adding raw or cooked meat, poultry, or seafood, dice it into small pieces ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch or less) or use ground meat; cook it in a little hot oil after you remove any aromatics and before adding the rice; cook or heat it through.
3. No matter how much or how little garlic and ginger you use, they should be cooked in the oil for no more than 30 seconds before you add the rice, or their flavor will become too mild.
4. You can scramble eggs separately and cut them into the finished rice to keep them at their most distinctive.

Or beat them lightly, then stir them into the rice mix, in which case they will act as a pleasing thickening and bonding agent. Or—this is what I do—make a well in the finished rice and scramble them there, then mix them through, which retains their identity at least somewhat.

5. Some liquid in addition to the soy sauce might be necessary if the other ingredients are on the dry side; add it 1 tablespoon at a time as you stir. The most authentic choice is rice wine (which is sold at most Asian stores and keeps nearly forever), but sherry and white wine make decent substitutes. Stock is also good, and water works too, since there are already plenty of flavors in fried rice.

## 14 Super Additions or Substitutions for Fried Rice

The list of things you can add to fried rice basically fall into three categories: vegetables, protein, and seasonings.

### VEGETABLES

1. At the last minute, stir in very tender vegetables that can be eaten raw, like watercress.
2. Cook those that will take about the same amount of time as the onion (scallion, shredded zucchini, corn kernels, etc.) with or instead of the onion.
3. Cut harder vegetables—broccoli, cauliflower, eggplant, potato, winter squash—into very tiny bits, so they will cook in just about the same amount of time as the onion. (This is a good place for leftover cooked vegetables, too.)
4. Tomatoes are a special case: Cut them into small wedges and add just after the rice; any sooner and you will have tomato sauce. Not that there's anything wrong with that, and if that's what you want, add the tomatoes when the onion is about half cooked.
5. You can also garnish with raw vegetables, like pickled cucumbers (see Quick-Pickled Vegetables, page 228), chopped cabbage, or tomato wedges.

### PROTEIN

6. Add diced or ground meat (pork, beef, poultry, etc.), raw or cooked, as you would the pork (if raw) or

shrimp (if cooked) in the Fried Rice with Shrimp and Pork recipe.

7. Add chopped cleaned squid, or small or halved scallops with or instead of the shrimp in the recipe.
8. Any tofu—smoked, pressed, flavored, thawed frozen, you name it—is great in fried rice. Cut into small cubes and add as you would shrimp.
9. Hard-Boiled Egg (page 721) is another option, chopped or sliced and added right after the rice.

### SEASONINGS

10. Stir in hoisin sauce or ketchup to taste.
11. Tear 10 to 15 big leaves basil (preferably Thai) and add at the last minute.
12. Stir in up to 2 teaspoons curry powder or almost any other spice mix (to make your own, see pages 27–35) just before you add the rice.
13. Seaweed “Shake” (page 35) is good, as are toasted sesame seeds (see page 309).
14. Add minced fresh chiles at the beginning, or any Chile Paste (pages 40–46) at the end.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more as needed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened, or olive oil

**1. WITH A FOOD PROCESSOR:** Put the flour and salt in the container and pulse once or twice. Turn the machine on and add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup hot water and the butter or oil through the feed tube. Process just until a ball begins to form, about 30 seconds. Add a few drops of water if the dough is dry and grainy; add a tablespoon flour if the dough sticks to the side of the bowl.

**BY HAND:** Combine the flour and salt on a counter or large board. Make a well in the middle. Put the butter or oil in this well, along with about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup hot water. Beat the butter and water with a fork, gradually incorporating a little of the flour at a time. When it becomes too hard to stir with the fork, use your hands. When all the flour has been mixed in, knead the dough, pushing it against the counter and folding it repeatedly until it is not at all sticky and is quite stiff. Add water  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon at a time if the mixture is dry and not coming together; add flour if it is sticky.

**2.** Sprinkle the dough with a little flour and cover with plastic wrap or a cloth; let it rest for about 30 minutes. (At this point, you can refrigerate the dough, wrapped in plastic, until you're ready to roll it out, up to 24 hours.) Clean your hands, then follow Steps 3 through 8 in the

Fresh Egg Pasta recipe (page 505) for rolling, cutting, and cooking.

**ASIAN-STYLE DUMPLING WRAPPERS** Omit the butter and add more water, a little at a time, to reach the consistency described. Rest the dough as directed. Knead the dough for a minute, then cut it into 4 pieces. On a lightly floured surface, roll each piece into a 1-inch log, then cut into 1-inch pieces and roll each one out from the center to form a 4-inch round or square, adding a bit more flour if necessary. (You can also roll sheets of dough with a pasta-rolling machine, then cut it into the desired shapes; see page 504.) Use immediately or dust with flour, stack, wrap tightly, and refrigerate for up to a couple of days or freeze for up to 2 weeks. For filling ideas, see page 513.

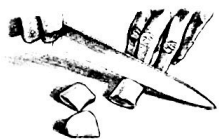
## THE BASICS OF STUFFED PASTA

In Italy alone there are dozens of different types of stuffed pastas, from simple rolls to complex folds. I'm focusing on a few basics: ravioli (squares), tortellini (folded loops), and cannelloni (large open-ended tubes), which can all be stuffed with any of the fillings that appear in the following recipes.

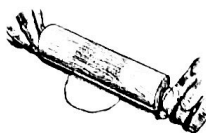
## Making Dumpling or Wonton Skins and Egg Roll Wrappers



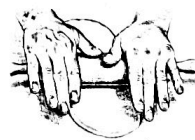
**STEP 1** Make the dough for Asian-Style Dumpling Wrappers (above). On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a log about 1 inch wide.



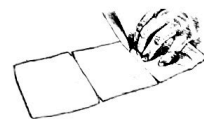
**STEP 2** Cut the log into 1-inch pieces.



**STEP 3** Roll each piece out from the center to form a thin 4-inch circle or square, adding a bit of flour if necessary.



**STEP 4** To make larger egg roll wrappers, roll the log into a rectangle, no more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick.



**STEP 5** Cut into 4-inch squares.



You can also make dumplings from spinach, sweet potatoes or other roots and tubers, fresh cheeses, or ground grains like semolina or cornmeal. Most of the recipes in this section are Italian, but Spaetzle (page 518) hails from Alsace. For Asian dumplings and wontons, see the Appetizers chapter.

## GNOCCHI TECHNIQUE

Making the lightest gnocchi requires a dough that combines potato and flour, with gentle mixing. The first time you make them you'll probably use a bit too much flour and overmix the dough, but don't be discouraged if your gnocchi aren't delicate and fluffy. You'll improve with each batch and get to the point where it's easy enough to make gnocchi for lunch.

Indenting the gnocchi with your finger or rolling them over a fork, cheese grater, or special gnocchi board is optional, but the texture helps them grab the sauce. To indent the dumplings, flour your thumb and roll it over the gnocchi. Using the fork, grater, or board takes some practice; use your thumb to roll the gnocchi over the tines or ridges—your thumb will simultaneously indent the opposite side.

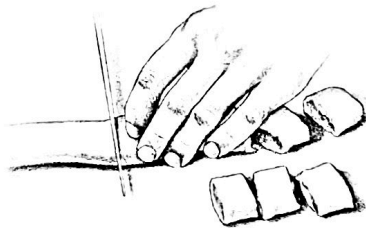
## TIPS FOR MAKING GREAT GNOCCHI

- Use freshly cooked potatoes; leftover baked or mashed potatoes are better for croquettes.
- Add the flour in small amounts so you don't add too much.
- Mix and then knead the dough gently; you're trying to not overdevelop the gluten.
- Keep your work surface well floured so the gnocchi don't stick.
- Roll the logs out quickly and don't worry too much about getting them perfectly even, which may overwork the dough. They're supposed to look handmade!
- Test-cook a piece of the dough just as it comes together; it may be closer to ready than you think.

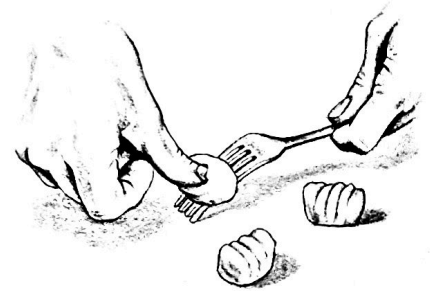
## Making Gnocchi



**STEP 1** Start by rolling a piece of the dough into a log. Use flour as needed to prevent sticking, but try to keep it to a minimum.



**STEP 2** Cut the dough into approximately 1-inch lengths.



**STEP 3** Roll each of the sections off the back of a fork to give it the characteristic ridges.

## “Twice-Cooked” Gnocchi

pan-cooking or roasting cooked gnocchi, or baking them with a premade sauce, adds color, richness, and flavor.

**To sauté:** Put a couple of tablespoons olive oil or butter in a skillet over high heat; when the oil is hot or the butter foams, add a layer of cooked gnocchi, careful not to overcrowd the pan. Cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until they brown in places, 5 to 10 minutes.

**To roast:** Heat the oven to 450°F. Toss the cooked gnocchi with 3 tablespoons olive oil or melted butter and put on a rimmed baking sheet; roast, shaking the pan to roll the gnocchi every couple of minutes, until all the sides are golden, 5 to 10 minutes.

**To bake them in a sauce:** Heat the oven to 425°F. Grease a 2-quart gratin or other baking dish and add the gnocchi. Spoon on a sauce like Fast Tomato Sauce (page 478) or the sauce from Spaghetti with Meat Sauce (page 495), or toss them in melted butter and sprinkle with cheese (or other topping; see “14 Seafood, Meat, and Poultry Dishes That Work as Pasta Sauces,” page 494). Bake until the sauce is bubbling and hot, 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the size of the dish.

## Potato Gnocchi

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 1½ hours



The classic recipe, with variations. Whenever you add ingredients to gnocchi dough, they won't be quite as ethereal, but will still be fluffy and flavorful. For the sauce, I suggest simple butter or a tomato sauce—with Parmesan of course. Or once you get into making these, you can explore using some of the other pasta sauces in this chapter.

- 1 pound starchy potatoes, scrubbed  
Salt and pepper
- 1 cup all-purpose flour, plus more as needed
- ¼ cup butter or 1 recipe any Tomato Sauce  
(pages 478–482)
- Grated Parmesan cheese to taste

1. Put the potatoes in a large pot with salted water to cover. Bring to a boil, adjust the heat so the water bubbles steadily, and cook until the potatoes are quite tender, about 45 minutes. Drain and peel—use a pot holder or kitchen towel to hold the potatoes and peel with a small knife; it will be easy. Rinse the pot, fill it again with salted water, and bring to a boil.

2. Use a fork, potato masher, or ricer to mash or rice the potatoes in a bowl. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add about ½ cup of the flour and stir; add more flour until the mixture forms a dough you can handle. Knead on a lightly floured work surface for a minute or so. Pinch off a small piece of the dough and boil it to make sure it will hold its shape; if it does not, knead in a bit more flour. The idea is to get a dough with as little additional flour and kneading as possible.
3. Roll a piece of the dough into a rope about ½ inch thick, then cut the rope into 1-inch lengths; traditionally, you would spin each of these pieces off the tines of a fork to score it lightly. As each one is ready, put it on a sheet of wax paper dusted with flour; do not allow them to touch.
4. Melt the butter (or heat the sauce) in a large skillet and keep warm. Add the gnocchi to the boiling water a few at a time; stir. You will need to work in a couple of batches so they aren't too crowded in the pot. A minute after they rise to the surface, the gnocchi are done; transfer them to the sauce with a slotted spoon. Toss with the sauce and some Parmesan cheese to coat and eat within a few minutes; these do not keep well.

**HERB GNOCCHI** Fold ½ cup chopped fresh herbs like basil, parsley, mint, dill, chives, or chervil into the mashed potatoes.

**SPINACH GNOCCHI** Stem, wash, and steam 10 ounces fresh spinach (see page 339), or thaw 5 ounces frozen spinach. For either, drain, squeeze (get as much water out as possible), and chop it as fine as you can manage. Add it to the potatoes along with the flour; add a pinch nutmeg if you like.

**SWEET POTATO OR BUTTERNUT SQUASH GNOCCHI**  
Substitute sweet potatoes or butternut squash for the potatoes. It's best to roast or steam sweet potatoes or squash, because they will absorb too much water if boiled. If you're using butternut squash, add an egg and mix it in with the mashed squash; you will likely need more flour too.

vinaigrette, combine 1 cup fruity, sweet white wine like riesling; 1 cup water; ½ cup white wine vinegar, white balsamic, or sherry vinegar; 1 tablespoon chopped garlic, and 1 thinly sliced onion in a small saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil and adjust the heat so it bubbles gently. Cook until the onion is soft, about 5 minutes. Proceed with the recipe from Step 2. Garnish with chopped fresh oregano.

## Chicken Teriyaki

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: About 20 minutes



Caramelized and sweet; no wonder many Americans love it. Serve with plain short-grain brown or white rice (page 430).

Other proteins you can use: boneless turkey thighs, pork chops, tuna steaks, sirloin steaks.

- ⅓ cup soy sauce
- ⅓ cup sake, white wine, or water
- ⅓ cup mirin, or 3 tablespoons honey mixed with 3 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 1½ pounds boneless chicken thighs

1. Turn on the broiler and position the rack about 4 inches below the heat. Combine the soy sauce, sake, mirin, and sugar in a medium saucepan, and bring to a boil. Lower the heat so the sauce bubbles steadily and cook, stirring once or twice, until it thickens. Stir in the lemon zest and remove from the heat; pour off half the sauce and reserve for serving.
2. Broil the chicken, basting frequently with the remaining sauce and turning the chicken every 2 or 3 minutes, until browned all over and cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes. Make a small cut and check; the center should be no longer raw but still juicy. Give the meat one

final baste and serve hot or at room temperature with the reserved sauce.

**GRILLED CHICKEN TERIYAKI** A little smokier: Prepare a moderate charcoal or gas grill for medium direct cooking (make sure the grates are clean) and proceed with the recipe. Move the chicken to the edge of the grill if it's cooking too fast or causing flare-ups.

**STIR-FRIED CHICKEN TERIYAKI** Toss this with boiled soba or udon noodles (page 520): Cut the chicken into strips about 1-inch wide. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat for about 2 minutes. Swirl in 1 tablespoon good-quality vegetable oil, then add the chicken. Cook until the pieces brown on one side, about 3 minutes; transfer to a plate. Turn the heat to medium. Add ¼ cup water, followed by the sake, mirin, sugar, soy sauce, and zest. Stir to combine, then return the chicken to the pan. Cook, turning the chicken occasionally in the sauce, until the liquid thickens and glazes the chicken. Taste and add a little salt if you like and serve.

## Baked Boneless Chicken

The best oven-cooked boneless chicken is baked with a little liquid and fat, so these recipes fall somewhere in between braising and roasting. Rather than browned and crisp, the results are moist, flavorful—and foolproof.

## Chicken Baked with Tomatoes

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 40 minutes

Scented with cumin and coriander, this has a Moroccan feel to it but is no more difficult than putting together the simplest tomato sauce.

4. Marinate the chicken breasts in buttermilk or yogurt, any Vinaigrette (page 188), or coconut milk (to make your own, see page 372) for up to a few hours before dredging and cooking. Be sure to scrape off as much of the marinade as you can before proceeding.
5. Add up to ¼ cup chopped fresh herbs like parsley, cilantro, chives, or a combination, or about a table-spoon chopped fresh rosemary or thyme, to the bread crumbs.
6. When you beat the eggs, add 1 to 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard.

### POACHED BONELESS CHICKEN

Of all the techniques given for boneless chicken, this is probably the most forgiving. Since the chicken is cooked in liquid from start to finish, you have a little more latitude in timing, although severe overcooking will, ironically, result in dry chicken—all the juices leach into the pot—so don't wander too far. All of these dishes create enough sauce to use on a side dish of rice, noodles, polenta, potatoes, or bread.

## Poached Boneless Chicken Breasts or Thighs

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 30 minutes



A recipe that that must be served with good bread, or at least a soup spoon to get every drop of sauce. Poached boneless thighs are the less traditional choice, with results that are richer and pleasantly chewy. Double the quantities and you'll have plenty of chicken for sandwiches and salads throughout the week.

Other proteins to use: any cutlets—pork, veal, or turkey.

- 4 tablespoons butter or olive oil
- 2 leeks, washed well and chopped, including some of the light green part, or 1 onion, chopped
- ½ cup dry white wine or water

¼ cup chicken or vegetable stock (to make your own, see pages 176 or 174) or water

2 bay leaves

1½ pounds boneless chicken breasts, tenders, or thighs

Salt and pepper

Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

1. Put 2 tablespoons of the butter or oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the butter foams or the oil is hot, add the leeks and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the wine, stock, and bay leaves; bring to a boil and cook for a minute or 2.

2. Add the chicken in a single layer and adjust the heat so the liquid bubbles gently. Cover and cook, undisturbed, until the center of the breasts are opaque or only slightly pink, 5 to 6 minutes for breasts, 3 to 4 minutes for tenders, and 7 to 9 minutes for thighs. Remove the chicken from the liquid and keep warm.

3. Bring the liquid to a boil and cook, stirring occasionally, until about ¾ cup remains, 5 to 10 minutes. Turn heat to medium-low and add the remaining butter or oil, a bit at a time. If you're using oil, add it gradually, stirring vigorously with the back of a spoon.

4. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Return the chicken to the sauce to heat through. Remove the bay leaves, garnish with parsley, and serve.

### POACHED BONELESS CHICKEN BREASTS OR THIGHS

**WITH LEMON SAUCE** More or less traditional Provençal: Omit the bay leaves and use 2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon or thyme, or 1 teaspoon dried. Before adding the extra butter in Step 3, add 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice.

### 8 MORE ADDITIONS TO CHICKEN

#### POACHING LIQUID

1. Use ½ cup cream instead of the wine; add it with the chicken and avoid vigorous boiling.



2. Replace the stock or water and all or some of the wine with any vegetable juice.
3. Add 1 cup chopped fresh tomato with the liquid.
4. Replace the leeks with 1 large shallot, sliced.
5. Omit the leeks and use 2 tablespoons sliced ginger, 2 tablespoons sliced garlic, and 4 scallions, chopped. Use all chicken stock (page 176) or water for the poaching liquid and replace the bay leaves with 1 fresh chile, like serrano or jalapeño, halved. Add 2 tablespoons soy sauce and go easy on the salt.
6. Add ½ ounce dried mushrooms, reconstituted and drained (see page 304) with the liquid and bay leaves.
7. Replace the bay leaves with 1 sprig fresh rosemary.
8. Replace the wine with balsamic, sherry, or rice vinegar.

1 minute. Add the butter or oil and swirl it around the pan. After the butter melts, but before it foams (or when the olive oil starts to look thin) turn the heat to low.

3. Add the eggs and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon. At first nothing will happen; after 10 minutes or so, the eggs will begin to form curds. Do not lose patience: Stir frequently, breaking up the curds as they form, until the mixture is a mass of soft curds. This will take 30 minutes or more. Serve right away.

## Poached Eggs

MAKES: 1 or 2 servings | TIME: 10 minutes



Some technical notes: Ragged edges don't bother me so I rarely bother to trim the edges with scissors, as some cooks do. I also no longer bother trying to rein in the whites with vinegar, since I can taste it. To poach more

than two eggs at once, use a bigger pan to avoid crowding. To make poached eggs in multiple batches, keep a second, large pot of water warm over very low heat. Make sure the temperature hovers between 145° and 150°F; as the eggs finish poaching, move them to the second pot of water and keep covered. Fish them all out with a slotted spoon when you're ready to serve.

1 teaspoon salt  
2 to 4 eggs

1. Bring 1 to 2 inches water to a boil in a small deep skillet, add the salt and lower the heat to the point where the water barely bubbles; if you measure it with an instant-read thermometer, the temperature is just under 200°F. One at a time, break the eggs into a shallow bowl or saucer and slip them into the water.
2. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes, just until the white is set and the yolk has filmed over. Remove with a slotted spoon and allow the water to drain off for a couple seconds. If you are eating the eggs right away, put them directly on the toast or what have you. If you like, drain them briefly

## Are Runny Egg Yolks Safe?

The perfect egg—for me and many other enthusiasts—is soft and tender, with a liquid yolk. But salmonella outbreaks in eggs have happened over the last 20 years; I can't deny it. So if you or anyone you cook for is very old, very young, or has a compromised immune system—or if you are worried about eggs for any reason—you should rinse and dry them before using and cook them thoroughly: Salmonella is killed in eggs if their temperature is maintained at 160°F for 1 minute or 140°F for 5 minutes. At 160°F, egg yolks are firm; at 140°F, they're not.

Precooking eggs for recipes that call for raw eggs can be a little tricky, but it's useful for mayonnaise (page 69): Put the shelled eggs in a small metal or heatproof glass bowl set over a pot of bubbling water on the stove. You don't want the water to touch the bottom of the bowl. Use a whisk to stir and an instant-read thermometer to monitor their temperature. When they reach 140°F,

adjust the heat on the burner to maintain that temperature and keep stirring for 15 minutes. (This completely changes the flavor and texture, of course so they won't whip up into meringues or behave the same way in baked goods.)

Another alternative, when you want poached eggs with runny yolks but without the risk of salmonella, is to hold them in a water bath: Keep the cooked eggs in 150°F water for at least 5 minutes. See the headnote with the Poached Eggs recipe (above) for the details.

You can also use pasteurized eggs—you'll notice the difference—which are available both in and out of their shells. Dried egg whites can also give you peace of mind, with only a little sacrifice in flavor and performance for meringues and mousses. To use, you simply mix the powder with water (the proportions are on the package) and beat as you would fresh egg whites.

on towels before serving. Poached eggs are delicate, but they can be handled as long as you're careful.

## Mix-and-Match Eggs Benedict

### BASE

- Any rustic bread, sliced thick and toasted
- Rye or wheat toast
- Breaded and Fried Eggplant (or Any Other Vegetable) (page 288)
- Grilled or Fried Polenta (page 461)
- Corn Bread (page 769), cut into squares, split, and toasted
- Buttermilk or Yogurt Biscuits (page 773), split
- 50 Percent Whole Wheat Sandwich Bread (page 790), toasted

### ON TOP OF BASE

- Sliced ham, pan-fried as in the main recipe
- Thinly sliced prosciutto or Serrano ham, as is or pan-fried as in the main recipe
- Crumbled or sliced chorizo, pan-fried as in main recipe
- Sautéed spinach (see page 242; start with about 1 pound raw for 4 people)
- Broiled or grilled shrimp (page 535)
- Thinly sliced smoked salmon or Gravlox (page 551)
- Flaked poached salmon (page 551)

### SAUCE

- Tahini Sauce (page 56)
- Salsa Roja (page 71)
- Brown Butter (page 78)
- Béchamel Sauce (page 79)
- Mornay (Cheese) Sauce (page 79)
- Fast Tomato Sauce (page 478; without pasta)

### GARNISH

- Chopped fresh chives
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Dollop of sour cream
- Chopped black olives
- Chopped fresh basil or a drizzle of Traditional Pesto or other herb sauce (pages 51–52)

or grated Parmesan, Gruyere, or Manchego on top, then cover and cook as directed.

**EGGS POACHED IN CREAMED SOMETHING** Instead of the tomato sauce, make a batch of Creamed Onions or any of the variations (page 316). In Step 1, add ½ cup more cream and ½ cup water. Never bring it to a boil; instead just keep it at a steady but gentle bubble and proceed with the recipe.

## Eggs Benedict

MAKES: 4 servings | TIME: 30 minutes

**F M**

The traditional way to make the quintessential brunch classic is with English muffins, Canadian bacon, and hollandaise sauce. But the formula is easy to vary by replacing any components. You can even make Benedict with scrambled or baked eggs instead of poached, which is obviously much easier for large gatherings. Check the chart that follows for ideas or improvise your own combinations. The only thing that requires last-minute attention is the eggs; everything else can be prepared ahead and kept warm.

- 1 recipe Hollandaise Sauce (page 80)
- 4 English muffins, split
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 8 slices Canadian bacon, about 8 ounces total
- 8 eggs
- Chopped fresh parsley for garnish (optional)
- Sweet or smoked paprika for garnish (optional)

1. Make or reheat the hollandaise, cover, and keep it warm over a double boiler or in a bowl set over a pot of simmering water. Toast the English muffins until golden; keep warm.

2. Put a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add half of the butter. When it melts and begins to bubble, add half of the bacon. Cook until lightly browned and crisped, just a minute or 2, then turn and cook on the other side. Transfer to towels to drain and repeat with the remaining butter and bacon.

3. When you're ready to serve, poach the eggs following the directions for Poached Eggs (page 725). You may need to work in 2 batches and hold the finished eggs in warm water as described in the headnote. To assemble each Benedict, put the top and bottom of a muffin on each plate, split side up. Top each with a slice of bacon, an egg, and a spoonful of hollandaise. Garnish if you like and serve.



5. Brown Butter (page 78), sprinkled with ground cinnamon, cardamom, and/or cloves
6. Creamy Caramel Sauce (page 860); not too much

## 5 FILLINGS FOR SAVORY CRÊPES

Gruyère and ham are the most common fillings for savory crêpes, but of course there are other possibilities.

1. Any grated, thinly sliced, or crumbled cheese like Gruyère, Brie, soft goat, mozzarella, cheddar, or fresh cheese
2. Cooked, drained, and chopped vegetables, reheated in butter or oil per the directions on page 242; don't bother to chop vegetables whose shape is naturally suited to rolled crêpes, like asparagus spears
3. Any thick stew of vegetables, meat, chicken, or seafood
4. Silky Baked Custard (page 735), spooned into the crêpe
5. Cooked beans or lentils

## Chocolate-Glazed Cake Doughnuts

**MAKES:** About 1 dozen doughnuts and holes | **TIME:** About 1 hour



These old-fashioned doughnuts are leavened with baking powder rather than yeast, which gives them a denser, more cakelike crumb and a satisfyingly crisp crust. This dough doesn't need to rest, making it a good choice for spontaneous breakfasts. If chocolate isn't your thing, try orange or one of the other glazes on pages 857–858, cinnamon sugar, or nothing at all.

- 1 recipe Chocolate Glaze (page 858; optional)
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling out the dough
- 1 tablespoon baking powder

- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg (optional)
- 2 eggs
- ⅔ cups sugar
- ¾ cup milk
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter, melted and cooled
- Good-quality vegetable oil for frying, plus more for greasing

1. Make the glaze first if you're using it; have it ready in a shallow bowl.
2. Combine the flour, baking powder, salt, and the nutmeg if you're using it. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until thick, then stir in the milk and melted butter. Add the flour mixture a little at a time, mixing first with a whisk and then switching to your hands once it gets too thick. The dough should be sticky but hold together; if it's too wet, add flour a tablespoon at a time until it comes together.
3. Transfer the dough to a well-floured surface and knead a few times. Roll it out to ½-inch thick; if it contracts as you roll, let it rest for a few minutes, then try again. Dip a doughnut cutter, a 3-inch cookie cutter, or the rim of a sturdy glass in flour to cut out the doughnuts; cut out the holes with a smaller cookie cutter or shot glass (save them and fry along with the doughnuts). Gather any scraps together, being careful not to overwork them, and repeat. Arrange the doughnuts on a floured or parchment paper-lined baking sheet and cover with a kitchen towel while you heat the oil.
4. Put 2 to 3 inches oil in a large pot over medium heat; bring it to 375°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with a wire rack.
5. Working in batches to avoid overcrowding, carefully add a few doughnuts to the oil. Cook until the bottoms are deep golden, about a minute, then turn them with a slotted spoon and cook on the other side for another minute. Doughnut holes cook faster, less than 30 seconds per side. As they finish, transfer the doughnuts to the prepared racks and repeat with the remaining dough, adjusting the heat as needed to keep the oil at 375°F.

**DROP BISCUITS** These don't rise as much, but they're good and you'll save a step: Increase the buttermilk, yogurt, or milk to 1 cup and drop a couple heaping tablespoons of the dough onto a greased baking sheet like big cookies. Bake as directed.

### **SWEET POTATO OR WINTER SQUASH BISCUITS**

Southern-style goodness; killer with My New Favorite Fried Chicken (page 628). Grease the baking sheet. Stir 1 cup puréed cooked sweet potato or winter squash into the butter-flour mixture. Add only enough yogurt or buttermilk to form the dough into a ball, usually between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (if your sweet potatoes are very dry, you may need the larger amount). Roll the dough a little thinner, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch. Cut into biscuits as directed (you'll get a few more), and bake for 12 to 15 minutes.

## Scones

MAKES: 8 to 10 scones | TIME: 20 minutes



Scones are really just ultra-rich and flaky biscuits, with cream as the primary liquid ingredient and usually some mix-ins like the currants in the main recipe, or other sweet or savory additions.

- 2 cups all-purpose or cake flour, plus more for kneading
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 5 tablespoons cold butter, cut into pieces
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup cream, plus more for brushing
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup dried currants or raisins (or choose from the list of additions below)

1. Heat the oven to 450°F. Put the flour, salt, baking powder, and 2 tablespoons of the sugar in a food

processor and pulse to combine. Add the butter and pulse until the mixture resembles cornmeal.

2. Add the egg and just enough cream to form a slightly sticky dough. If it's too sticky, add a little flour, but very little; it should still stick a little to your hands.

3. Transfer the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead once or twice, then press it into a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick circle and cut 2-inch rounds with a biscuit cutter or sturdy glass. Put the scones on an ungreased baking sheet. Gently reshape the leftover dough and cut again. Brush the top of each scone with a bit of cream and sprinkle with a little of the remaining sugar.

4. Bake until the scones are golden brown and springy when gently pressed, 8 to 12 minutes. Serve right away, or within a couple of hours.

## Popovers

MAKES: 6 to 12 popovers | TIME: About 45 minutes



Popovers, a one-bowl recipe that comes together in no time, are the classic accompaniment for Prime Rib Roast (page 676), though they're so easy and good—even after they've deflated—you'll want to make them all the time.

- 1 tablespoon butter, melted, or good-quality vegetable oil, plus more for greasing the muffin tin
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour

1. Heat the oven to 425°F. Grease a 12-cup muffin tin or a 6- or 8-cup popover tin and put it in the oven while you make the batter.

# Flour Tortillas

MAKES: 8 to 12 | TIME: About 1½ hours, partially unattended

Eating a freshly rolled tortilla straight from the skillet is a pleasure reserved for the home cook. Nothing about the process is difficult. You don't even need a tortilla press, although if you have one, here's a chance to use it.

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for kneading
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons good-quality vegetable oil
- About ½ cup boiling water, or more as needed

1. In a large bowl or a food processor, mix together the flour and salt. Stir or pulse in the oil. Add the water slowly, a tablespoon or 2 at a time if you're mixing by hand or in a thin stream with the food processor running, until the dough holds together in a ball.
2. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and knead until it becomes smooth and elastic, 4 to 5 minutes if you mixed by hand or about 1 minute if you used a food processor. Wrap the dough in plastic and let it rest at room temperature for at least 30 minutes or up to a couple of hours. (At this point, you can refrigerate it for up to a few days; bring it back to room temperature before proceeding.)
3. Divide the dough into 8 pieces if you're rolling by hand. On a lightly floured surface, slightly flatten each piece into a disk, then cover and let rest for a few minutes. When you're ready to cook the tortillas, use a heavy rolling pin to roll each disk as thin as possible into a circle at least 8 inches in diameter, stacking them between sheets of plastic wrap or wax paper as you work. To save time, you can continue to roll out the tortillas while the first pieces cook in Step 5.
4. If you're using a tortilla press, divide the dough into 12 pieces (you need less dough for each tortilla because it will get thinner). Shape each into a slightly flattened disk and let rest for a few minutes. Put a piece of plastic wrap or parchment paper on the inside of the press, add the dough, top with another piece of plastic or parchment, and close the press. Squeeze the clamp as

hard as you can; if you'd like it thinner, rotate the dough and repeat.

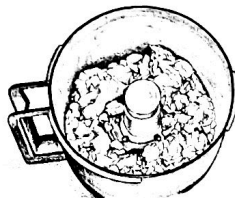
5. Line a basket or serving plate with a clean kitchen towel or cloth napkin and keep it handy. Put a large skillet or griddle (preferably cast iron) over medium-high heat for 4 to 5 minutes. Cook the tortillas one at a time until brown spots begin to appear on the bottom, about 1 minute; turn and cook the other side for 1 minute more. Transfer to the prepared basket, wrap loosely, and repeat until all are cooked. Serve immediately, or let them cool, wrap tightly, and store in the fridge for a few days or in the freezer for up to a few months.

**MOSTLY WHOLE WHEAT TORTILLAS** Substitute 1 cup whole wheat flour for 1 cup of the all-purpose flour.

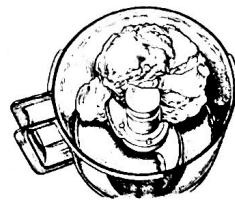
## THE BASICS OF YEAST BREAD

You can make an amazing loaf of bread on your first try. Really. If you have a food processor, you can be pulling it from the oven 2 or 3 hours from now. You can make it even faster if you push. Or you can make it slower, with so little work that you'll be amazed. And in each of these cases it'll be good, very good, better than what is served to you in most restaurants.

## Shaggy Versus Smooth Dough



**STEP 1** Dough about halfway through the mixing process; note that it still looks quite shaggy.



**STEP 2** When the dough is ready, it will be ball shaped and easy to handle.

## Shaping Boules and Rolls



**STEP 1** To make a boule, shape the dough into a ball.



**STEP 2** Continually tuck the dough under, toward the center of the bottom, stretching the top slightly so that the ball becomes smooth and taut. Pinch the seam at the bottom to smooth it over as much as possible.

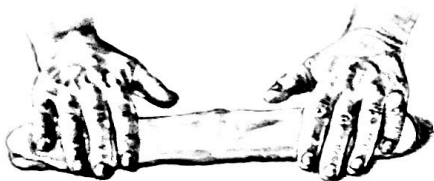


**STEP 3** Put the ball to rise in a bowl lined with a floured kitchen towel. Fold the towel over the top and let rise for at least 1 hour, preferably 2 or 3.



**STEP 4** Shape rolls as you would a small boule, then roll them on a lightly floured surface.

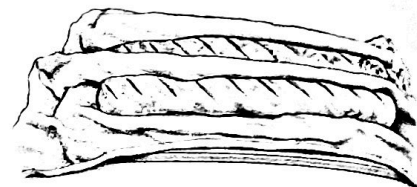
## Shaping Baguettes



**STEP 1** Roll the dough into a log.



**STEP 2** Pinch the seam shut.



**STEP 3** Let the baguettes rise on a couche made from a folded kitchen towel or tablecloth.

## Shaping a Sandwich Loaf



**STEP 1** If the dough has risen in an oiled bowl, you need no flour; otherwise, work on a very lightly floured surface. Use the heel of your hand to form the dough into a rectangle.



**STEP 2** Fold the long sides of the rectangle over to the middle.



**STEP 3** Pinch the seam closed, pressing tightly with your fingers.



**STEP 4** Fold under the ends of the loaf.



**STEP 5** Use the back of your hand to press the loaf firmly into the pan.



a towel—plastic makes the crust soggy—on the counter for up to a few days, especially if you like toast; large loaves containing some whole grain flour keep better than small ones baked with just white flour, because the whole grain contains some fat. And breads baked with added fat, like those on pages 791–794, keep well, too.

Baked bread can also be frozen; in this instance foil or plastic freezer bags are fine, because you'll need to reheat the bread anyway (see page 767).

## Jim Lahey's No-Knead Bread

MAKES: 1 large loaf | TIME: Nearly 24 hours, almost completely unattended



This innovation—the word recipe does not do the technique justice—originally came from Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery in New York City. Jim created a way for home cooks (and not only ones who are serious bakers) to nearly duplicate an artisan bakery loaf with a crackling crust, open-holed crumb, light texture, and fantastic flavor. All without kneading, fancy ingredients, or special equipment.

Since the method was first published in 2006, many people—including me—have tinkered with the formula. This is the original, simplest version. The only thing required is forethought. Ideally, you will start the dough about 24 hours before you plan to serve it. (If you want to know more about how the process works, see “The Science Behind No-Knead Bread,” page 787). After all these years I still say with confidence the results will blow your mind.

- 4 cups all-purpose or bread flour, plus more for dusting
- Scant ½ teaspoon instant yeast
- 2 teaspoons salt
- Cornmeal, semolina, or wheat bran as needed (optional)

1. Combine the flour, yeast, and salt in a large bowl. Add 2 cups water (it should be about 70°F) and stir until blended. You'll have a shaggy, sticky dough; add a little more water if it seems dry. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit for about 18 hours at room temperature (a couple of hours less if your kitchen is warm; a couple more if it's cool). The dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles.
2. Lightly flour a work surface, transfer the dough to it, and fold once or twice; it will be soft but not terribly sticky once dusted with flour. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest for about 15 minutes.
3. Using just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking, gently and quickly shape the dough into a ball. Generously coat a clean cotton kitchen towel (not terry cloth) with cornmeal, or use a silicone baking mat; put the dough seam side down on the towel and dust with more flour or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel or plastic wrap and let rise for about 2 hours. When it's ready, the dough will be more than doubled in size and won't spring back readily when poked with your finger.
4. After the dough has been rising for about 1½ hours, put a 3- to 4-quart cast-iron, enamel, Pyrex, or ceramic pot, with its lid, in the oven and heat the oven to 450°F. When the dough is ready, carefully remove the pot from

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### Slashing the Dough



Slash the top of the shaped dough with a sharp knife or razor blade to allow steam to escape.

## The Science Behind No-Knead Bread

This bread puts time and moisture to work so you don't have to. The dough uses very little yeast, but compensates for that by fermenting very slowly, giving the yeast time to multiply on its own schedule. This delivers a more complex flavor than using more yeast and fermenting faster. The dough is extremely wet, more than 40 percent water, at the extreme high end of the possible range.

You couldn't knead this dough if you wanted to. The moisture content—combined with the long fermentation time—gives the gluten in the dough (see page 788 for more on that) an environment that lets it develop its distinctive elastic, weblike structure, which traps the

carbon dioxide generated by the yeast as it feeds. The resulting crumb of the finished bread is well structured, with open holes.

By starting this very wet dough in a hot covered pot, you develop a crunchy yet chewy bakery-style crust, since the moist, enclosed environment of the pot is, in effect, the oven, and that oven has plenty of steam in it, which is necessary to create that kind of surface. Once uncovered, the crust hardens and browns and the bread is done. (And fear not: The dough does not stick to the pot, any more than it would to a heated bread stone.)

the oven, uncover it, and turn the dough over into the pot, seam side up. (Slide your hand under the towel and just turn the dough over into the pot; it's messy, and it probably won't fall in artfully, but it will straighten out as it bakes.) Cover with the lid and bake for 30 minutes. (If at any point the dough starts to smell scorched, lower the heat a bit.)

5. Remove the lid and bake for another 20 to 30 minutes, until the loaf is beautifully browned. The bread's internal temperature should be about 200°F when you

insert an instant-read thermometer. Remove the bread from the pot with a spatula or tongs and cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes before slicing.

## Rustic French Bread

MAKES: 1 boule | TIME: About 5 hours, largely unattended



This bread-making technique is more traditional than the previous recipe, and quite a bit faster. But you will be shaping the dough and creating steam in the oven, so there's a little more work involved. You could also mix and knead the dough by hand or in a stand mixer described on page 791.

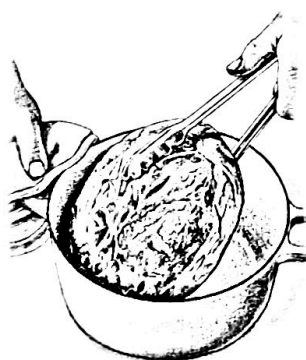
- 4 cups all-purpose or bread flour, plus more for kneading and shaping
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast

1. Put the flour in a food processor, add the salt and yeast, and turn the machine on. With the machine running, pour 1½ cups water through the feed tube in a steady stream. Process until the dough forms a sticky ball. If the dough begins sticking to the side of the bowl, you've added too much water; add more flour, 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time.

## Baking No-Knead Bread



**STEP 1** The trick is not to hesitate: Use the towel on which the dough rose to turn it over into the pot.



**STEP 2** Use tongs to lift out the finished bread.

# Vanilla Biscotti

MAKES: 3 to 4 dozen | TIME: About 1¼ hours

**M** **V**

Who says biscotti have to be dunked in something to avoid breaking your teeth? These are nice and crunchy but not rock-hard; they're great on their own *and* ideal for serving with coffee. To add nuts or anything else, see the list that follows, or try your own stir-ins.

- 4 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$  stick) butter, plus more for greasing
- 2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting and shaping
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons vanilla extract

**F** fast

**M** make ahead

**V** vegetarian

1. Heat the oven to 375°F. Grease a baking sheet with butter and dust it with flour; tap the sheet over the sink to remove excess flour.
2. Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl.
3. Use an electric mixer to cream the butter and sugar in a large bowl until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, then the vanilla; beat until well blended. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed mixture a little at a time, beating until just combined.
4. On a well-floured surface, divide the dough in half and form each half into a loaf about 2 inches wide, 6 inches long, and 1 inch high, taking care to shape them as uniformly as possible so they bake evenly. You can lightly roll the tops with a rolling pin to smooth them out. Put the loaves a few inches apart on the prepared baking sheet and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until they're golden and beginning to crack on top. (Use 2 baking sheets if the loaves will crowd each other.) Cool the logs on the sheet for a few minutes, then transfer them both to a wire rack. Lower the oven temperature to 250°F.
5. When the loaves are cool enough to handle, carefully move them to a cutting board and use a serrated knife to slice each diagonally into ½-inch-thick slices. Put the cookies back on the baking sheet, cut side down; it's okay if they are close to each other. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, turning the biscotti halfway through baking, until they dry out. Transfer to wire racks to cool. These will keep crunchy in an airtight container for up to a week.

## 7 BISCOTTI VARIATIONS

Use these ideas alone or in combination.

1. **Spiced Biscotti:** Omit the vanilla. Add 1 teaspoon ground fennel or anise seeds or 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon to the dry ingredients.
2. **Nutty Biscotti:** Reduce the vanilla to ½ teaspoon. At the end of Step 3, fold in ¼ cup chopped toasted almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, or pistachios,

or whole toasted pine nuts, into the dough before shaping.

3. **Citrusy Biscotti:** Reduce the vanilla to ½ teaspoon. Mix 1 teaspoon minced lemon or orange zest into the dry ingredients.
4. **Chocolate-Frosted Biscotti:** Reduce the vanilla to ½ teaspoon. Melt 8 ounces dark chocolate with 3 tablespoons butter. Spread this mixture onto one flat surface of the biscotti when they are dry. Cool on a wire rack until the chocolate coating is firm.
5. **Ginger Biscotti:** Omit the vanilla. At the end of Step 3, fold in about ⅓ cup minced candied ginger.
6. **Fruit Biscotti:** At the end of Step 3, fold in about ½ cup dried fruit like raisins, cherries, or cranberries, or chopped dried apricots or figs.
7. **Chocolate Chunk Biscotti:** At the end of Step 3, fold in about ¼ cup chopped any chocolate.

## Coconut Macaroons

MAKES: 2 to 4 dozen | TIME: About 20 minutes, plus time to chill



Easiest. Cookies. Ever. And quite versatile: Use up to 5 cups coconut for something lighter and chewier, or replace some or all of the coconut with nuts (see the variation). Unsweetened, untoasted, ground or finely shredded coconut is the only thing that works here. Fortunately it's commonly available; if all you can find are the ribbons, pulse them a few times in the food processor to get the right texture.

- 3 egg whites
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 cups unsweetened finely shredded coconut (see the headnote)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch salt

1. Heat the oven to 350°F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

Unfrosted cakes can stay in the pan if you'd like. No cake—frosted or not—is ever again as tender and moist as it is the day you make it.

## Pound Cake

**MAKES:** At least 8 servings | **TIME:** About 1½ hours



A classic cake whose name derives from its basic ingredients: a pound each butter, flour, sugar, and eggs. Here the formula is roughly cut in half to make one nice-size loaf, and a few extra ingredients are added to increase flavor and lighten the texture. I suggest using cake flour for extra tenderness; if you don't have it, the results with all-purpose will still be quite good.

Pound Cake is wonderful finished with any glaze (pages 857–858) or served with Fruit Sauce, Two Ways (page 862).

- ½ pound (2 sticks) butter, softened, plus more for greasing
- 2 cups cake flour or all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg (optional but very nice)
- 1 cup sugar
- 5 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1. Heat the oven to 325°F. Grease a 9×5-inch loaf pan with butter.
2. Whisk the flour, baking powder, salt, and nutmeg if you're using it together in a medium bowl.
3. Use an electric mixer to cream the butter in a large bowl until it's smooth. Add ¾ cup of the sugar and beat until it's well blended, then add the remaining sugar; beat until the mixture is light in color and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time. Add the vanilla and beat until blended.

4. Stir in the dry ingredients by hand just until the mixture is smooth and everything is incorporated; don't mix it too much and don't use the electric mixer.

5. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and smooth the top with a rubber spatula. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Let the cake cool in the pan for 5 to 10 minutes, then gently run a knife around the edges and remove the cake from the pan. Set the cake upright on a wire rack to finish cooling. Serve warm or at room temperature. When completely cool, store at room temperature, wrapped in plastic, for 3 days.

**MARBLE CAKE** A pound cake that's sure to impress: In a separate bowl, combine 3 tablespoons cocoa powder with 5 tablespoons sugar. At the end of Step 4, add about 1 cup of the batter and stir to blend. Put half the plain batter in the loaf pan; top with the cocoa batter, then the remaining plain batter. Using the handle of a wooden spoon or a spatula, move across the pan lengthwise, swirling the batters together with large strokes; repeat the movement in the opposite direction. Be careful not to overmix or the marbling effect will be lost.

**POLENTA POUND CAKE** Substitute 1 cup cornmeal for 1 cup of the flour.

**YOGURT POUND CAKE** Lighter, tangier, and even more moist, if possible: Substitute ¾ cup yogurt for half the butter.

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### 6 WAYS TO VARY POUND CAKE

Combine any of these ideas. One of my favorites is almond flour with orange zest; lemon with poppy seeds is classic.

1. Use a vanilla bean in place of the vanilla extract (see "Using a Vanilla Bean," page 899).



2. Add 1 teaspoon grated or minced lemon, orange, lime, or grapefruit zest and 1 tablespoon citrus juice. Omit the vanilla extract.
3. Add 1 teaspoon of ground spices, like cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, nutmeg, allspice, or cloves (alone or in combination).
4. Substitute 1 cup any nut meal or flour for 1 cup of the flour; use all-purpose flour for the remaining cup.
5. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons minced candied ginger.
6. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup poppy or sesame seeds.

7. Add a tablespoon or 2 sour cream, or crème fraîche or mascarpone, which will be tangier or thicker, respectively.
8. Add 1 to 2 teaspoons rose water or orange blossom water.

## Vanilla Frosting

**MAKES:** Enough frosting and filling for one 8-inch 3-layer cake, one 9-inch 2-layer cake, or 2 dozen cupcakes | **TIME:** 10 minutes



There is no easier frosting—essentially American-style buttercream—and it's flexible enough to pair well with just about any cake, cupcake, or cookie. Cream is best here, but you can use milk for a little less richness.

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, softened
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar

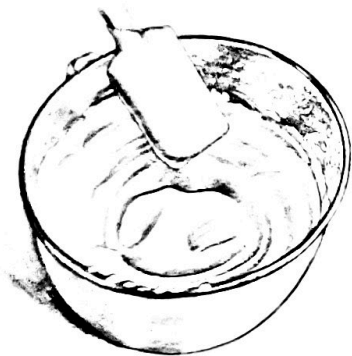
- 6 tablespoons cream or milk, plus more if needed
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- Pinch salt

1. Use an electric mixer to cream the butter in a large bowl. Gradually work in the sugar, alternating with the cream and beating well after each addition.
2. Stir in the vanilla and salt. If the frosting is too thick to spread, add a little more cream, a teaspoon at a time. If it's too thin (unlikely, but possible), refrigerate; it will thicken as the butter hardens.

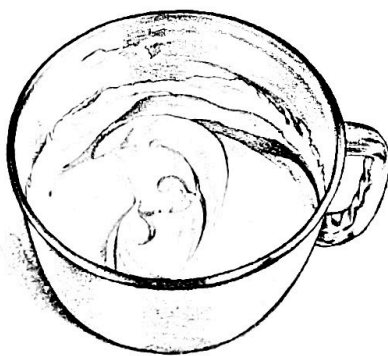
**CHOCOLATE FROSTING** Before starting, melt 2 ounces chopped dark chocolate over very low heat in a double boiler; let cool to room temperature. Add it to the frosting in Step 1, after you've beaten in about half each of the sugar and cream.

**MOCHA FROSTING** An adult frosting: Add 1 ounce unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled as in the preceding variation, to the frosting after adding about

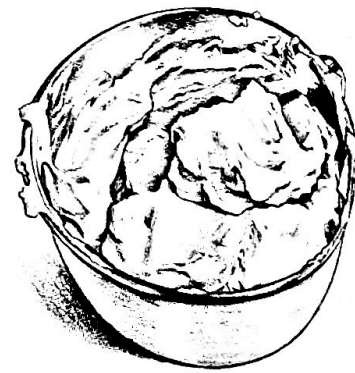
## Stages of Whipped Cream



**SOFT PEAKS:** Cream is thickened just enough so you can no longer pour it. When you dip beaters or a whisk into the bowl, the cream is not yet stiff enough to hold peaks; it just sort of flops over. But it doesn't take long from this stage to stiff peaks, so be sure to stop and check the consistency frequently.



**STIFF PEAKS:** Cream that stays on a spoon, slightly firm and stable. To assess the cream in the bowl, dip the beaters or whisk into the cream and pull up; the peak formed should stand upright with minimal drooping.



**OVERBEATEN:** If you beat whipped cream too much, it will start to look "clotted" or curdled. If this happens, try stirring in a little more cream by hand until smooth again.

half the sugar. Substitute 2 tablespoons very strong brewed coffee (espresso is best) for 2 tablespoons of the cream or milk.

**LEMON OR ORANGE FROSTING** This is very good made with half butter and half cream cheese, but it can also be made with all butter. Omit the cream. Reduce the vanilla to 1 teaspoon and add 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice or 1 tablespoon fresh orange juice. Stir in 1 teaspoon grated or minced lemon zest or 1 tablespoon grated or minced orange zest.

**MAPLE FROSTING** Thinner than the usual frosting; use for cakes or spread on pancakes, waffles, and French toast: Substitute  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup maple syrup for 2 cups of the confectioners' sugar. Omit the vanilla. Proceed with the recipe, then refrigerate the frosting to solidify it somewhat before using.

**PEANUT BUTTER FROSTING** Perfect with chocolate cupcakes or sandwiched between oatmeal cookies: Substitute  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup smooth peanut butter for 4 tablespoons

of the butter. Proceed with the recipe; this may require extra cream to get it to the right consistency.

## Orange Glaze

**MAKES:** About 3 cups, enough to drizzle on any cake or 2 dozen cupcakes | **TIME:** 10 minutes

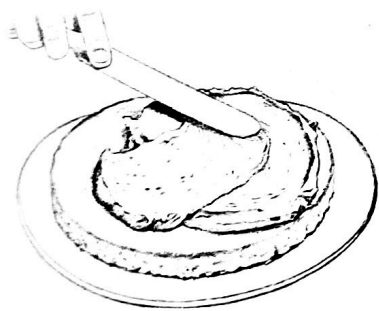
**F M V**

I barely count this as a recipe: Put some confectioners' sugar in a bowl and stir in liquid until it's the consistency of maple syrup, or thicker if you want to spread it on or sandwich it between cookies.

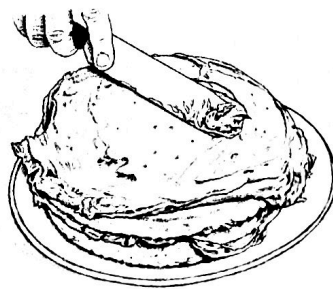
Other citrus that you can use: tangerine, grapefruit, and blood orange all work well.

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh orange juice
- 1 tablespoon grated orange zest
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar, plus more if needed
- Pinch salt

## Frosting a Cake



**STEP 1** Put the first layer rounded top down on a plate or cake stand. For a two-layer cake, spread about a third of the frosting on top, all the way to the edges. Use a table knife if you don't have an offset spatula. It's okay if the edges are a little messy; you'll smooth things out at the end.



**STEP 2** Put the other layer on top, flat bottom down. Spread another third of the frosting on top.



**STEP 3** Use the remaining frosting to cover the sides of the cake, scooping up any excess to add to the top. Smooth it if you like, or wiggle your hand a bit to make little peaks and swirls. For a three-layer cake, save about one-third for the sides and divide the remaining two-thirds of the frosting among the three layers.

Combine all the ingredients and beat until combined and smooth; it should be about the consistency of thick maple syrup—just pourable. For a thicker glaze, add more confectioners' sugar. Use immediately or store, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Beat to recombine before using.

**CREAMY ORANGE GLAZE** Substitute  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cream for half of the orange juice. Add 3 tablespoons very soft butter if you like.

**VANILLA GLAZE** Substitute cream, milk, or a combination for the orange juice. Omit the zest and use only the vanilla extract, increasing it to 1 teaspoon if you like.

**LEMON OR LIME GLAZE** Substitute  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup lemon or lime juice and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water for the orange juice. Omit the vanilla.

**MOCHA GLAZE** Substitute  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup freshly brewed coffee for the orange juice. Add 1 ounce dark chocolate, melted and cooled, or 3 tablespoons cocoa powder. Omit the zest.

**COCONUT GLAZE** Omit the vanilla extract. Substitute coconut milk for the orange juice and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup shredded coconut for the zest. Or don't add any coconut to the glaze, but top the glazed item with toasted shredded coconut instead.

## Chocolate Ganache

MAKES: About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups | TIME: 15 minutes

F M V

A luscious mixture of chocolate and cream that works as sauce, frosting, and so much more, depending on which consistency you use (see "4 More Ways to Vary and Use Chocolate Ganache" on page 859). You can substitute

milk or white chocolate for dark chocolate; just decrease the cream to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup.

1 cup cream  
8 ounces dark chocolate, chopped (about  $1\frac{1}{3}$  cups)

1. Put the cream in a small pot over low heat and heat it until it's steaming. Put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl, pour on the hot cream, and whisk until the chocolate is melted and incorporated into the cream.
2. Use right away as a sauce or coating; as it cools down, it will start to set and get stiffer and harder to spread but works well for other things (see the list that follows).

**CHOCOLATE GLAZE** Reduce the cream to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup. Add 6 tablespoons ( $\frac{3}{4}$  stick) butter,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup confectioners' sugar (or more to taste),  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla extract, and a tiny pinch salt. Proceed with the recipe, melting the butter in the cream and stirring the other ingredients into the chocolate along with the cream. Use immediately or store, covered, in the fridge for up to 4 days. Melt over very low heat or in a double boiler before using.

## Chocolate Sauce

MAKES: About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups | TIME: 15 minutes

F M V

A rich chocolate sauce, more substantial than syrup but thinner than ganache, so it's perfect for drizzling into cold or hot milk, swirling into pudding or ice cream, or turning into hot fudge sauce (see the variation).

4 ounces dark chocolate, chopped (about  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup)  
4 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$  stick) butter  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar  
Pinch salt  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## 4 More Ways to Vary and Use Chocolate Ganache

Few dessert sauces have as many uses as ganache; here are my favorites.

- 1. Ganache Cake Coating:** Put the cake on a wire rack over a rimmed baking sheet. Warm the ganache if needed; it should be slightly thicker than heavy cream so it can flow over the cake. Pour or ladle the ganache onto the cake from the middle outward, letting it flow down the sides of the cake as well. Do not spread the ganache, as it will pick up cake crumbs and ruin the smooth coating. Transfer the cake—rack, pan, and all—to the fridge until the ganache sets, about 30 minutes. Carefully transfer the cake to a serving plate. Scrape up the ganache left in the pan to use as a filling or for truffles. (See below; it will have crumbs in it so it's not suitable as a coating or sauce.)
- 2. Ganache Cake Frosting or Filling:** For a sturdy cake that doesn't crumble much. Warm the ganache if needed so it's spreadable; use a warm metal spatula to spread a layer of ganache about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick over the surface of the cake. (For a fragile cake that crumbles easily, use the "Ganache Cake Coating" above.)
- 3. Ganache Sauce:** Thin the ganache with additional cream; it should be easily pourable and not harden too much when cooled to room temperature. To test the consistency, spread a small spoonful on a plate; it should thicken but remain very soft if not saucy. Pair it with Biscotti (page 838), Bread Pudding (page 893), or of course, ice cream (pages 897-904).
- 4. Quick Ganache Truffles:** Chill the ganache in the fridge until it's solid all the way through, 1 to 2 hours depending on quantity. Wearing disposable gloves to help prevent melting, scoop out ganache a table-spoonful at a time and quickly roll it into a 1-inch ball. Line up the truffles on a plate or baking sheet. If the truffles become too soft to handle, stick them in the fridge or freezer for a few minutes. Roll them in cocoa powder, confectioners' sugar, or a mix of granulated sugar and ground cinnamon. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container between layers of wax paper, in the fridge for up to 1 day.

1. Combine the chocolate, butter, sugar, salt, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water in a small saucepan over very low heat. Cook, stirring, until the chocolate melts and the mixture is smooth.

2. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla. Serve immediately, keep warm over hot water until you're ready to serve it, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to a week and rewarm before using.

**HOT FUDGE SAUCE** This is chewy and fudgy when you put it on top of ice cream: At the end of Step 1, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup corn syrup. Bring to a boil, turn the heat to low, and cook for 5 to 10 minutes, until thick and shiny. Add the vanilla and serve hot. Or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to a week and reheat very gently before serving.

## Simple Syrup

MAKES: 2 cups | TIME: 10 minutes

F M V

Simple syrup is aptly named. All it requires is sugar, water, and some stove time. The result is an easy way to add sweetness to sorbets, granitas, iced drinks and cocktails, and macerated fruit (see page 363). Or use it as a neutrally flavored way to add moisture to plain cake layers. See the sidebar on flavoring dessert sauces (page 860) for ways to vary simple syrup, too.

**2 cups sugar**

Combine the sugar with 2 cups water in a small saucepan; bring to a boil and cook until the sugar is dissolved,



stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool to room temperature. Use immediately or store in a clean airtight container or jar in the fridge for up to 6 months.

## Caramel Crackle

MAKES: About 1½ cups | TIME: 20 minutes



The most elementary sauce, candy, or candy coating comes from cooking sugar, which hardens when it cools. But beware: This gets extremely hot and can cause bad burns, so resist any temptation to stick your finger into the hot sugar or lick a coated spoon until you're absolutely sure it's cooled. You'll need a candy thermometer. The main recipe makes a crunchy caramel that works as a candy coating or decorative garnish; for caramel sauce, see the variations.

### 7 Ways to Flavor Ganache and Other Dessert Sauces

Here are some simple ways to flavor nearly any dessert sauce. Obviously, not all of these will work with every sauce, so match flavors accordingly. Add them to taste, starting with a small amount.

1. Ground spices like cinnamon, cardamom, allspice, nutmeg, and star anise.
2. Earl Grey tea: Steep in the hot cream for about 10 minutes, then strain out.
3. Freshly brewed espresso or instant espresso powder; try with any of the chocolate-based sauces.
4. Maple syrup.
5. Any nut butter; pair with Chocolate Sauce, page 858.
6. Citrus zest, grated or finely minced; orange is nice with ganache or Creamy Caramel Sauce, at right.
7. Candied ginger, minced, or very finely minced fresh ginger; add to the Fruit Sauce, Two Ways, page 862

2 cups sugar  
Pinch salt

1. If you plan on making candy-like crumbles or garnishes, line a large rimmed baking sheet (or 2) with wax paper. Combine the sugar and salt with 1 cup water in a large saucepan or deep skillet over medium-low heat. Cook until the sugar dissolves, without stirring but swirling the pan gently, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. The mixture will bubble and gradually darken; cook until it's caramel colored and the temperature measures 245°F on a candy or deep-frying thermometer, about 15 minutes; a small spoonful of it will form a firm ball when dropped into a glass of cold water, but the thermometer is an easier and surer test.
3. While the caramel is still hot, you can carefully pour or drizzle over whatever you like for a crunchy candy coating. Or drizzle onto wax paper to make decorative garnishes. Or spread it over the paper in a thin layer, and when it cools, pound it with a rolling pin to make a candy crumble for dusting.

**CLEAR CARAMEL SAUCE** Cook in a deep pot: After Step 2, remove from heat and carefully add ¼ cup water to the hot caramel (it will bubble up). Stir until it's incorporated. Add more water if needed to reach the desired consistency.

**CREAMY CARAMEL SAUCE** Substitute cream for the water in the previous variation and add 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract if you like at the same time; add more cream if it's too thick.

**CARAMEL COFFEE SAUCE** Substitute freshly brewed coffee or half coffee and half cream for the water or cream in the above variations.

**BOOZY CARAMEL SAUCE** Use the Creamy Caramel Sauce variation and add 2 to 3 tablespoons liqueur.

# Vanilla Custard Ice Cream

**MAKES:** About 1 quart | **TIME:** About 30 minutes, plus time to chill and churn



The ultimate level of richness. A couple technical notes: To get you closer to a less rich ice milk, reduce the number of yolks to four or even three. The cornstarch variation has a surprising and wonderful texture, by the way; try it at least once. And for stir-in and flavoring ideas, see “5 More Simple Ideas for Ice Cream” (page 899) and the chart starting on page 902.

- 6 egg yolks
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Pinch salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

**1.** Combine the egg yolks and sugar in a large saucepan and use a whisk or electric mixer to beat them until thick and pale yellow, about 5 minutes.

2. Whisk the half-and-half, cream, and salt into the yolks until thoroughly combined. Put the saucepan over medium-low heat and cook, stirring constantly, until thick; if the custard ever starts to simmer, turn down the heat. It's ready when it coats the back of a spoon and a line drawn with your finger remains intact (see the illustration on page 887), this should take about 5 minutes.
3. Pour the custard through a fine-meshed strainer into a bowl and stir in the vanilla. Cover and refrigerate until it is completely cool, at least 2 hours and preferably overnight. Transfer to an ice cream maker and churn according to the manufacturer's directions.
4. Eat the ice cream right after churning or cover tightly and refrigerate for up to 20 minutes or so if you're not quite ready. After that, freeze it for up to several weeks; let it sit at room temperature or in the refrigerator until it can once again be easily scooped.

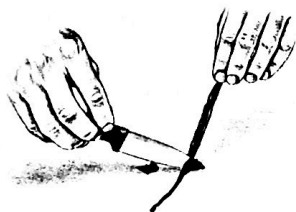
## Using a Vanilla Bean

Real vanilla beans can make a tremendous difference in many desserts. But they're expensive, so you want to get as much flavor from each bean as possible.

If you're flavoring a warm liquid, heat a piece of bean in the liquid to infuse it. To add the seeds to a batter or other mixture, split the pod lengthwise and scrape out the seeds with the tip of a paring knife; add according to the recipe. The precious de-seeded pods—providing they've never been soaked—can find a second life buried in a jar of sugar to make vanilla sugar; added to a bottle of vanilla extract (or to make your own, added to a small jar of vodka or bourbon); or steeped with your next pot of tea or coffee.



**STEP 1** To use a vanilla bean, split a whole bean or a piece in half lengthwise.



**STEP 2** Scrape out the seeds.

**SIMPLEST VANILLA ICE CREAM** Substitute 2 tablespoons cornstarch for the egg yolks. In Step 1, whisk the cornstarch with 2 tablespoons of the half-and-half to make a slurry. In Step 2, put the remaining half-and-half, cream, sugar, and salt in the saucepan. Cook, whisking frequently, until the mixture begins to gently bubble; whisk in the slurry and proceed with the recipe.

**VANILLA FROZEN YOGURT** Instead of making a custard, whisk together  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cups plain yogurt,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated or superfine sugar, and 1 teaspoon vanilla until combined. Chill for 30 minutes, then add any extra ingredients you like (see below) and churn in an ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions.

### 5 MORE SIMPLE IDEAS FOR ICE CREAM

1. As soon as the ice cream is out of the machine, swirl in cold Chocolate Sauce (page 858), any Caramel Sauce (page 860), or any fruit purée (see page 862).
2. Stir in any nut butter, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup per batch, before freezing; the churning will distribute it evenly.
3. Stir in up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chopped toasted nuts like almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, pecans, peanuts, and/or macadamias, at any point after straining the custard.
4. Stir in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup or more chopped or crushed candy or cookies after you remove the ice cream from the machine.
5. Stir in up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chopped fresh or cooked fruit—anything from raspberries, cherries, or mango to sautéed apples or poached pears—after you remove the ice cream from the machine.

## 10 More Ice Cream Flavors

The base ratio always remains the same: 6 egg yolks (or 2 tablespoons cornstarch) with 3 cups total liquid; only the type of liquid, the flavorings (substituting for the vanilla), and the sweetener change.

VARIATION	FLAVORING(S)	LIQUID	SWEETENER
Chocolate Ice Cream	5 ounces dark chocolate, chopped (melt into the hot liquid)	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup cream	½ cup sugar
Strawberry or Any Berry Ice Cream	1 cup berry purée, strained (see page 862, stir in in Step 4)	2 cups half-and-half or milk	½ cup sugar
Coffee Ice Cream	2 to 3 shots freshly brewed espresso; or ½ cup ground coffee (steep in hot liquid for 20 minutes; see page 900)	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup cream	½ cup sugar
Coconut Ice Cream	½ cup shredded coconut (toast in a dry skillet until lightly browned if you like; stir in in Step 4)	2 cups half-and-half, nondairy milk, or whole milk, 1 cup coconut milk	½ cup sugar
Pumpkin Ice Cream	1 cup canned or cooked fresh pumpkin purée, ½ teaspoon each ground cinnamon and ginger (add to the custard after straining)	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup cream	½ cup sugar
Maple-Nut Ice Cream	1 cup chopped toasted nuts. Stir in in Step 4	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup heavy cream	¾ cup maple syrup
Buttermilk Ice Cream	None	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup buttermilk	½ cup sugar
Banana Ice Cream	2 ripe bananas, sliced (steep in hot liquid for 20 minutes; see page 900)	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup cream	½ cup sugar
Ginger Ice Cream	2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger (steep in hot liquid; see page 900), ½ cup minced candied ginger (add to the custard after straining)	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup cream	½ cup sugar
Green Tea Ice Cream	1 tablespoon matcha (powdered green tea) (add to the custard after straining); or leaf green tea (steep in hot liquid; see page 900)	2 cups half-and-half or milk, 1 cup cream	½ cup sugar

# 11 More Sorbet and Ice Milk Flavors

You can make simple additions like spices, citrus zest, or chopped nuts, or substitute fresh juices for some or all of the puréed fruit. Or you can try one of these variations; the liquid option replaces the purée. To make any ice cream into ice milk, see the headnote on page 897.

VARIATION	FLAVORING(S)	LIQUID	SWEETENER
Orange, Tangerine, or Grapefruit Sorbet	1½ teaspoons grated zest; ½ teaspoon grated fresh ginger (optional)	2 cups fresh citrus juice	1 cup superfine sugar or Simple Syrup (page 859)
Lemon or Lime Sorbet	1½ teaspoons grated lemon or lime zest	1 cup fresh lemon or lime juice mixed with 1 cup water	2 cups Simple Syrup (page 859)
Raspberry or Strawberry-Red Wine Sorbet	1 cup raspberries or hulled strawberries	1 cup red wine (cook all ingredients for 10 minutes, then purée and strain)	1 cup Simple Syrup (page 859)
Vanilla-Pineapple Sorbet	1 vanilla bean (steep in hot Simple Syrup; see page 859)	2 cups pineapple purée (see page 862) or juice	1 cup Simple Syrup (page 859)
Papaya-Lime Sorbet	1½ teaspoons grated lime zest, 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice or to taste	2 cups papaya purée (see page 862)	½ cup superfine sugar or Simple Syrup (page 859)
Honeydew-Mint Sorbet	2 sprigs fresh mint (steep in hot Simple Syrup; see page 859), 2 tablespoons minced fresh mint leaves	2 cups honeydew purée (see page 862)	1 cup Simple Syrup (page 859)
Pear- or Apple-Ginger Sorbet	2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger (steep in hot Simple Syrup; see page 859)	2 cups peeled, cored, chopped pears or apples, puréed with lemon juice	¾ cup Simple Syrup (page 859)
Lime-Basil Sorbet	1 sprig fresh basil (steep in hot Simple Syrup; see page 859), 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil leaves, 1½ teaspoons grated lime zest	1½ cups fresh lime juice	1½ cups Simple Syrup (page 859)
Orange-Cassis Sorbet	2 tablespoons minced candied orange zest or 1 tablespoon grated orange zest	1¾ cups fresh orange juice, ¼ cup cassis liqueur	½ cup superfine sugar or Simple Syrup (page 859)
Chocolate or Cherry-Chocolate Sorbet	¾ cup cocoa powder; 1 cup pitted, halved cherries if you like (add in Step 1 after straining)	2 cups boiling water (mix ½ cup water with the cocoa and sugar; then add remaining ingredients)	¾ cup superfine sugar or Simple Syrup (page 859)
Espresso Sorbet or Ice Milk	3 or 4 shots freshly brewed espresso; 2 tablespoons crushed chocolate-covered espresso beans (optional; add in Step 1 after straining)	2 cups water, nondairy or dairy milk, or cream	1 cup superfine sugar or Simple Syrup (page 859)



# Peanut Brittle

MAKES: About 1 pound | TIME: About 20 minutes, plus time to cool



If you've never made peanut brittle, you will not believe how simple it is.

## Butter for greasing

2 cups sugar

2 cups roasted peanuts (salted or unsalted)

Pinch salt if you're using unsalted peanuts

1. Grease a rimmed baking sheet with butter. Put it on the counter close to the stove.
2. Put the sugar and  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup water in a medium saucepan over low heat. Cook, without stirring, until the sugar dissolves and becomes a nutty caramel color but is not yet dark brown, 5 to 10 minutes; swirl the pan if the sugar is cooking unevenly. If there's sugar clinging to the sides of the pan, use a pastry brush dipped in water to wash it back down. Watch carefully, as sugar has a tendency to burn the second you turn your back on it.
3. Stir in the peanuts and the salt if you're using it until combined. Remove from the heat and immediately pour the candy onto the prepared baking sheet and tilt the pan if it's not spreading fast enough to coat the bottom. Let cool at room temperature. To make even squares, score the brittle with a sharp knife once it's solidified slightly but before it has hardened, then cut when completely cooled. Otherwise, break it into pieces when cool. Store in a covered container at room temperature indefinitely.

**POPCORN BRITTLE** Omit the peanuts. Pop about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup popcorn kernels; you should have about 4 cups popcorn. Put the popcorn in a large heatproof bowl and pour the caramel over it. Toss to coat, working quickly so the sugar doesn't harden, and immediately spread the mixture on the prepared baking sheet, using a greased piece of parchment paper to press it into a thin and even layer if necessary.



# Caramels

**MAKES:** More than 1 pound | **TIME:** About 20 minutes, plus time to cool

**V M**

Creamy and dreamy, caramels keep for weeks.

**4 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$  stick) butter, plus more for greasing**

**$1\frac{1}{2}$  cups cream**

**2 cups sugar**

**$\frac{1}{2}$  cup light corn syrup**

**Pinch salt**

**$1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons vanilla extract**

1. Line an 8- or 9-inch square baking pan with enough parchment or wax paper to hang over the sides, then lightly grease the paper with butter.
2. Clip a candy thermometer to the side of a medium saucepan, making sure it doesn't touch the bottom of the pan. Cook the cream over medium-low heat until it just starts to steam. Add the sugar, corn syrup, butter,

and salt all at once. Cook, stirring frequently, until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a boil and cook until it reaches 245°F (firm ball stage).

3. Remove from the heat, stir in the vanilla, and pour into the prepared pan. Let cool to room temperature. Use the parchment to lift the block of caramel out of the pan and use a sharp knife to cut it into small squares, dipping it in hot water once or twice between strokes. Wrap each square in a small piece of parchment or wax paper (this is a good project to do with kids). These keep for weeks but are best eaten fresh.

**CHOCOLATE CARAMELS** Omit the butter if you like. Chop 4 ounces dark chocolate. Add it to the cream with the other ingredients; stir almost constantly until it melts and the sugar dissolves. Proceed with the recipe.

**CHEWY CARAMELS** A bit of baking soda adds air bubbles that make a lighter and chewier caramel: Increase the cream to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  cups. Add 1 teaspoon baking soda along with the vanilla.