

10 More Restaurant Recipe Hacks: **Make Your Restaurant Favorites at Home**



Part

Two



In today's busy world, it seems like many families turn to restaurants for their meals but who can afford the high prices of eating out all the time? The recipes in this cookbook will turn your life around. They taste almost the same as restraint versions but better. Your children and even your teenagers will show up for dinner and bring a friend, too. You won't have to say "dinner's ready" more than once and they'll all come running to eat any of the recipes in this book.

Even though these are "copy cat" recipes, they're not exactly like the "real thing" in that they have less fat, less salt, and fresher ingredients than their restaurant counterparts. So, in many ways these will be even better than the so called, "real thing." Next time you do go out to eat you'll be sad that you didn't just make it yourself.

It all starts with a family favorite; meat loaf and ends with fried green beans. So you know everything in between will be delicious too. You'll be the talk of the office with your homemade leftover meat loaf sandwiches, or your restaurant style chicken salad sandwich. And, you know what? They can try to top you by ordering in, but it won't be near as good.

Why? Because your food is made with love in the comfort of your home surrounded by even more love, and best of all, you control the ingredients. That makes your version of your favorite restaurant meals even better, because they are inherently healthier due to making them from home. They'll have less fat, less salt and less sugar so you can truly have your cake and eat it too.

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Crowd-Pleaser Meatloaf (Cracker Barrel Meatloaf)

Yield: 8 servings

You're either a meatloaf person or you're not. So they say. It's pretty much a guarantee if you make this meatloaf your family will now become meatloaf people. It turns out perfect every single time, and has just the right flavors you remember from childhood. That's why it's such a popular order at this country style restaurant. People love it. You and your family will too, but from the happy comfort and warmth of home.



Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 chopped onion
- ½ diced bell pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 large can tomatoes (approx 18 oz can)
- ½ cup grated biscuit crumbs
- Ketchup

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mix ground beef, onions, green bell peppers, eggs, salt, pepper, tomatoes, and biscuit crumbs completely with gloved hand in large bowl. Divide into loaf pans, pressing down with spoon.

Bake at 300 degrees Fahrenheit for 60 minutes.

Remove loaf pans from oven. Invert loaf over 8-inch wire rack to drain grease and juice. Top each loaf with 1/2 cup of catsup. Slice and service.

Adapted from: <http://www.recipelion.com/Restaurant-Recipes/Cracker-Barrel-Style-Old-Country-Store-Meatloaf>

Grilled Chicken Salad With Apples (Cracker Barrel Applefest Grilled Chicken Salad)

Serves 2

What's not to love about this recipe? Anything that puts chicken with apples is a winner. Then to add the universally loved bacon, oh my! All that combined with the candied pecans and the crumbled blue cheese makes this sandwich a huge winner and big seller too.



Ingredients

- 2 chicken breasts, skinless and boneless
- 1/2 cup raspberry walnut salad dressing
- 1 bag iceberg, radish, carrot, romaine mixed salad greens
- 2 firm crisp, sweet-tart, red eating apples cut into chunks
- Lemon juice
- 4 crisply cooked and drained strips of bacon
- 2 tablespoons crumbled blue cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped glazed/candied pecans
- Extra raspberry walnut salad dressing or apple cider vinaigrette for dressing

Instructions:

Put about 1/2 cup of salad dressing into a Ziplock type plastic bag.

Add the chicken, seal and smash the chicken all through the dressing to coat chicken pieces evenly.

Place bag in refrigerator to marinate overnight.

When ready to make the salad, grill the chicken until cooked all the way through.

Slice it thinly and set aside, keeping it warm.

Divide salad greens between two plates.

Place the apple chunks in a ring all around the outer edges of each plate, with red skin side facing outward.

Top the salad with nuts.

Placing the chicken slices in the center, sprinkle blue cheese crumbles over the top.

Break or crumble the bacon, whichever is your preference.

Sprinkle or toss over the top of the salad.

Serve with apple cider vinaigrette or another fruity, sweet salad dressing on the side.

Adapted from: <http://crackerbarelathome.blogspot.ca/2014/06/applefest-grilled-chicken-salad.html>

Cap'n Crunch Chicken & Spicy Creole Mustard Sauce (Planet Hollywood Cap'n Crunch Chicken)

Serves: 4

Some secrets are so shocking that when you figure them out you are dumbfounded. This is one of those times. But, have some trust, the recipe turns out super delicious and you don't realize it's cereal in there. The spices blend to perfection and make your mouth super happy. Your family will call you a genius if you make this for dinner. They'll beg for it later, so be prepared.



Ingredients

Chicken Crunch Mixture

- 2 cups Cap'n Crunch cereal
- 6 eggs
- 2 cups corn flakes
- 1 cups milk
- 2 1/2 cups flour, all-purpose
- 25 to 30 chicken tenders
- 3 tablespoons onion, granulated
- Vegetable oil for deep frying
- 3 tablespoons garlic, granulated
- Creole mustard sauce, recipe follows
- 1 tablespoon pepper

Instructions

Grind cereals until crumbly in food processor; leaving some chunks a bit bigger than most. Using a shallow pan, spread crumbled cereal mix. Combine flour, onion, garlic and pepper in a bowl.

Combine the eggs and milk in another bowl.

Thoroughly dredge chicken in seasoned flour. Dip floured chicken in egg mixture, coating evenly. Dredge coated chicken in cereal mixture, coating well.

Arrange on wax paper. In deep fryer, preheat oil to 325 degrees Fahrenheit.

Once oil is heated to desired temperature; deep fry chicken in batches until golden brown, about 3 1/2 minutes. Drain on paper towel.

Serve with spicy Creole Mustard Sauce (recipe below).

Spicy Creole Mustard Sauce

Yield: 2 cups

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 2 tablespoons horseradish
- 2 tablespoons garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon water
- 2 tablespoons celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons green pepper, chopped
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon Tabasco sauce

- 1/4 cup hot mustard
- Salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons yellow mustard

Instructions

Combine green onions, horseradish, garlic, red wine vinegar, onion, water, celery, cider vinegar, green pepper, Worcestershire sauce, mayonnaise, Tabasco sauce, hot mustard, salt, cayenne pepper, and yellow mustard. Mix well.

Adapted from: <http://bestcopycatrestaurantrecipes.blogspot.com/search/label/Planet%20Hollywood>

Coney Island Beef Chili Dogs (A&W Chili Dogs)

Serves: 8

You can do a lot more with this Dog Sauce than use it on hot dogs. It would be great over fries, a baked potato, or even gasp, eaten alone. So, don't feel like you're stuck just making a Coney Island Beef Chili Dog, no you can make a lot more with it. But, we're not totally sure why you'd want to. But just in case.



Ingredients

- 8 beef frankfurters
- 8 hot dog rolls
- A few tablespoons Coney Island Sauce - recipe below
- 1 tablespoon white onion, chopped
- 1/2 tablespoon shredded mild cheddar cheese (optional)

Ingredients for Coney Island Chili Dog Sauce

- 1 pound ground chuck or ground beef
- 1 six ounce can tomato paste
- 1 cup water
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 1 Tablespoon prepared yellow mustard
- 1 Tablespoon onion, dried and minced
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
- 1/2 heaping teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

Making the Coney Island Chili Dog Sauce:

Instructions

Brown the ground chuck in a 2 quart saucepan, breaking meat into very small pieces. While cooking, lightly season meat with salt and pepper. Do not drain the fat. Add the tomato paste, water, sugar, yellow mustard, onion, chili powder, and Worcestershire sauce.

Simmer for 30-45 minutes, uncovered, until it thickens. Stir occasionally. Allow to cool, cover, and refrigerate until time to slather on your frankfurters

Cooking your frankfurter

Instructions

In a 2 quart saucepan, bring water to a rolling boil. Removing the saucepan from the heat, add frankfurter to the water. Cover and let sit about 10 minutes. After the frankfurter is done, microwave the chili dog sauce until steaming. Microwave hot dog roll for 10 seconds to warm.

Adapted from: <http://bestcopycatrestaurantrecipes.blogspot.com/2009/08/chili-dogs.html>

Sweet and Smoky Barbeque Ribs (Famous Dave's Pit Barbecue Ribs)

Serves 4

Who doesn't like smoked, saucy, gooey, tender ribs? It seems so easy to go out to eat these delectable treats but the truth is you can make them at home and they might even taste slightly better. After all, you get to pick the cut of meat, you get to pick all the other ingredients and heck you can even adjust the recipe to suit yourself. Plus, the smell of these ribs smoking is not to be missed. Everyone will be amazed and impressed. You don't have to tell them it's a copycat, it's our secret.



Ingredients for Rub

- 2 packed cups light brown sugar
- 1 cup Kosher salt
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup garlic seasoning
- 1/4 cup chili powder
- 1/4 cup lemon pepper
- 1/4 cup onion salt
- 1/4 cup celery salt
- 2 tablespoons ground black pepper, coarse
- 2 tablespoons whole celery seeds
- 1 teaspoon cloves, crushed
- 1 tablespoon cayenne
- 1/2 cup Mrs. Dash Original Blend
- 1/4 cup salt

Ingredients for Ribs

- 2 x 4 to 5 pound racks spareribs
- 1/2 cup Italian salad dressing
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper, coarse
- 1/2 packed cup brown sugar
- 1 cup dried onion, minced
- 1 cup Rib Rub - above
- Sweet and Smoky Barbeque Sauce - below
- Green hickory or water-soaked hickory chunks

Instructions

Thoroughly mix brown sugar, Kosher salt, sugar, garlic seasoning, chili powder, lemon pepper, onion salt, celery salt, black pepper, celery seeds, cloves, cayenne, Mrs. Dash Original Blend and salt. Store mixture in airtight container.

The day before you will be smoking the ribs, trim all excess fat from the ribs. Place ribs in a large Ziploc type plastic bag. Pour in the Italian dressing and turn bag over several times to coat all meat well after making sure bag is well sealed. Refrigerate for 4 hours, turning occasionally.

Remove meat and wipe dressing off. Sprinkle each rib with pepper, 1/4 cup of the brown sugar and 1/2 cup of the onion flakes. After wrapping each rib in plastic, refrigerate overnight.

The next morning remove ribs from wrap and wipe sludge off the meat. Generously coat both front and back of ribs with Rib Rub. Using your hands; rub seasoning into meat and set aside.

Get 15 charcoal briquettes red hot; using a chimney charcoal starter. Place coals on one end of grill, placing 1 pound of green hickory or chunks around coals. Keep internal temperature of the grill at 200 degrees Fahrenheit to 225 degrees Fahrenheit.

Place ribs with bone side down making sure they are not directly over hot coals. Every hour, add more charcoal and hickory chunks as needed. The smoking process will take 6 hours.

Remove ribs from grill and wrap in aluminum foil after 3 hours. Hold in covered grill at 180 degrees Fahrenheit to 200 degrees Fahrenheit until fork tender, about 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Next, build a hot bed of coals over the entire bottom of grill. Watch closely because this next step goes quickly. Place the ribs back on grill to add charred flavor. As soon as the meat becomes bubbly, take it up off the grill. Make sure to burn off bone side membrane.

Adapted from: <http://bestcopycatrestaurantrecipes.blogspot.com/search/label/Famous%20Dave%27s>

Italian Sausage Soup With Kale (Olive Garden Zuppa Toscana Soup)

Kale is a cruciferous superfood, and this is a super delicious way to prepare it. Eating kale has shown to reduce cholesterol, reduce cancer risks, and help detoxify the body. Due to the importance of kale you're going to start seeing it everywhere. It's that important. This is a good foray into the world of kale. The fat in the soup will actually help your body absorb the important nutrients found in this green. Eat your greens. Eat your soup.



Ingredients

- 1 pound Italian sausage
- 5 to 7 bacon slices
- 5 medium potatoes, russet
- 2 cups chopped kale, bite sized pieces
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 quart water
- 2 -14 ounce cans of chicken broth

- 1/2 large onion, diced
- 2-3 minced garlic cloves
- 2 teaspoons red pepper flakes
- Salt
- Pepper

Instructions

Using a baking sheet, crumble the sausage. Preheat oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit and bake until no longer pink, about 30 minutes. Drain fat and grease off using paper towels. Fry or bake the bacon and crumble into small pieces.

Slice the potatoes between 1/8 inch and 1/4 inch, making the slices about the same size so they cook evenly.

Using a large pot, toss the potatoes, onion, garlic, chicken broth, and water in together and cook on medium heat until the potatoes are cooked through. Add the sausage, bacon, red pepper flakes, and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer, stirring occasionally, for another 10 minutes.

When the potatoes start breaking apart into smaller bite sized pieces because they are so tender, turn the heat to low and add in the kale and heavy cream. Let the soup heat through and serve.

Adapted from: <http://www.momontimeout.com/2011/11/olive-garden-zuppa-toscana-soup/>

Sweet and Savory Chicken Salad Sandwich (Arby's Chicken Salad Sandwich)

Serves 4 to 8

Once in a while a restaurant really gets it right. They put certain ingredients together that pop in your mouth and create feelings of ecstasy. The problem is, you keep wanting it again and again. Well, with this easy to make chicken salad, you can have it anytime you want by just keeping some made and on hand chilling out in the fridge waiting for a snack attack.

Ingredients

- 8 ounces cooked & cubed chicken breasts
- 8 ounces mayonnaise
- 2 ounces finely chopped celery
- 2 ounces chopped pecans
- 4 ounces chopped red delicious apples
- 4 ounces chopped red seedless grapes
- 4 to 8 slices thick honey-wheat bread, or bread of your choice
- 2 to 4 leaves of lettuce



Instructions

Combine chicken, mayonnaise, celery, pecans, apples and grapes and mix well.

Each sandwich will take two pieces of bread and one lettuce leaf. Take one piece of bread and slide on a lettuce leaf. Add the chicken salad mixture on lettuce leaf using 2 scoops for each sandwich and slap other piece of bread on top.

Adapted from: <http://www.food.com/recipe/copycat-of-arbys-chicken-salad-sandwich-388944>

Crispy Zucchini Sticks with Creamy Dip (White Spot Zoo Sticks)

Serves 2

"Zoo sticks" are a long-time favorite appetizer at the Canadian restaurant chain, White Spot. The crispy zucchini sticks are served with cream "zoo dip" and are quite amazing. If you don't want to deep fry, you can spray the sticks with oil and bake them at 350 F for about 20 minutes, or until golden brown...but the fried version really is the best.



Ingredients:

- Vegetable oil for frying
- 1 large zucchini, chopped into 1/4 inch sticks
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 beaten egg
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1/2 cup regular bread crumbs
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1/3 cup ranch dressing

Instructions:

Heat oil in deep fryer or pot on stove to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mix flour, salt and pepper and place in shallow dish. Beat eggs and milk in another shallow dish. Place bread crumbs in a third shallow dish. Coat the zucchini sticks in each shallow dish starting with the flour mixture, then the eggs and finally the bread crumbs.

Mix the sour cream and ranch in a small dish and set aside. This will be the dip for your zucchini sticks.

Place in hot oil and fry until golden brown, about 3-4 minutes. Remove sticks and place on paper towel for a couple minutes to drain oil. Serve with dip and enjoy.

Adapted from: <http://deep-fried.food.com/recipe/zoo-sticks-140635>

Pecan-Topped Pumpkin Cheesecake (The Cheesecake Factory Pumpkin Cheesecake)



Servings: 12

It's really hard to properly enjoy a dessert like this after a full meal. That's why they hope you'll spend 6 to 8 bucks on a slice, better yet, take home a whole cake. But, you can make it at home for a fraction of the cost, and you can be assured that your ingredients are the freshest and healthiest too. Even though this is supposed to be a "copy cat" it's superior in many ways because you choose where the ingredients come from, and you know they're the real thing and fresh.

Ingredients

- 12 tablespoons melted unsalted butter
- 2 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs

- 2 3/4 cups sugar
- Salt
- 2 pounds room temperature cream cheese
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 15-ounce can pure pumpkin
- 6 large room temperature, lightly beaten eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ginger, ground
- 1/4 teaspoon cloves, ground
- 2 cups whipped cream, sweetened
- 1/3 cup roughly chopped, toasted pecans

Instructions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit with rack in the center position. Using some of the butter, coat a 10-inch springform pan.

In a bowl, mix the rest of the butter with the graham cracker crumbs, 1/4 cup of the sugar and a pinch of salt. Packing it tightly and evenly, press the crumb mixture into the bottom and up the sides of the pan.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until golden brown. After cooling on a rack, wrap the outside of the springform pan with aluminum foil. Place the wrapped pan into a roasting pan.

In a medium pot, bring water to a boil.

While waiting for water to boil, using a mixer; beat the cream cheese until smooth. Add the rest of the sugar and beat until just light. Scrape down bowl sides and beaters as needed. Whip in the sour cream. Add the pumpkin, eggs, vanilla, 1 teaspoon salt and the spices. Whip until just mixed and once done, pour into the cooled crust.

Without pulling the rack out, gently place the roasting pan in the oven. Pour the boiling water into the roasting pan until it comes about halfway up the side of the springform pan. Bake the cake about 1 hour 45 minutes, or until the outside of the cheesecake sets but the center is still loose.

Turning off the oven; open the door briefly to let out some heat. After leaving the cheesecake in the oven for 1 more hour, carefully remove the springform pan from the roasting pan.

Cool on a rack for at least an hour. Run a knife around the edges to loosen it somewhat, and then cover pan and place in refrigerator for at least 8 hours or even overnight.

30 minutes before serving, bring the cheesecake to room temperature. Unlock and remove the springform ring. Place a spoonful of the whipped cream on each slice. Top with a sprinkle of the toasted pecans.

Adapted from: <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchens/almost-famous-pumpkin-cheesecake-recipe2/index.html>

Fried Green Beans (T.G.I. Fridays Green Bean Fries)

Serves 2 to 4



Need a way to get some greens down your family? Well, this is the way. It's not that hard to do either. Also, even if frying sort of takes the goodness out of them, it sure puts in the flavor. Hey, it's better than fried Twinkies. Plus, it can get your family at least thinking about eating their veggies. Right?

Ingredients

For the Dip:

- 1/2 cup ranch dressing
- 1/2 cup cucumber -peeled, seeded & chopped
- 1 tablespoon drained horseradish
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon distilled white vinegar
- 2 teaspoons wasabi powder, found in the spice aisle or with the Asian foods
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- Kosher salt

For the Beans:

- 2 cups chicken broth, low-sodium
- 1/2 pound trimmed green beans
- 1 egg, large
- 1/2 cup milk

- 1 cup Wondra instant flour
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper, freshly ground
- Peanut or vegetable oil, for frying

Instructions

Make the dip:

Using a blender, puree the dressing, cucumber, horseradish, milk, vinegar, wasabi powder, cayenne pepper, and salt to taste. Once it is smooth, cover and store in refrigerator until ready to serve.

Fix the beans:

Using a large bowl, fill it with ice water.

In a saucepan over high heat, bring the broth to a boil. Stir in the green beans and cook them about 5 minutes or until tender. Using a slotted spoon, remove the beans. Transfer beans to the ice water to stop the cooking. Drain and pat them dry after they have cooled in the water.

In a shallow bowl, mix the egg and milk with a whisk.

In another bowl, add 1/2 cup flour.

In yet another bowl, mix breadcrumbs, the other 1/2 cup flour, onion powder, garlic powder, cayenne, and salt and pepper to taste, blending well.

Line parchment paper on a baking sheet.

Place the green beans in the flour, toss around to coat and then shake off the excess flour. Dip the beans one at a time in the egg mixture. Dredge the floured beans in the breadcrumb mixture. Place each bean on the prepared baking sheet.

Place pan in freezer for about 30 minutes, or until the coating is set.

In a deep pot over medium heat, heat 3 inches of oil until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Fry the green beans in batches for 1 to 2 minutes, or until golden brown.

Using tongs or a skimmer; transfer the beans to a stack of paper towels to drain. Serve along with the dip.

Adapted from: <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchens/almost-famous-green-bean-fries-recipe/index.html>

Now it's Time to Get Cooking!

Start making these recipes once a week to help bring family dinner night back to the table. Then stretch the enjoyment by taking leftovers to work for lunch. You won't be tempted to go out to an expensive restaurant with these meals at the ready. You'll not only save money, but may also lower your blood pressure and lose a few pounds even while enjoying the same restaurant quality foods that you won't miss at all while using these recipes.

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