

The ISC Global Pandemic Cookbook



Photo by Michał Kępień

2020





People need **comfort** in challenging times...

The coronavirus pandemic has wreaked unimaginable havoc on lives around the world. As we all hunker down at home and try to stay safe and sane, one thing remains constant: we all need to eat.

Internet Systems Consortium, Inc. (ISC) is a US nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to developing software and offering services in support of the Internet infrastructure.

At this difficult moment in human history, we recognize more than ever the need to maintain connections – not just via our BIND 9, ISC DHCP, and Kea DHCP software, but our human connections as well.

ISC's staff members live in 11 different countries around the world: the US, the UK, Brazil, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark, Poland, Romania, Czechia, and Australia. Although

we all work remotely and only see each other in person a few times a year, we are able to stay connected to each other via the technological tools at our disposal: primarily email, group chats, and videoconferencing. We come from many different backgrounds and cultures, and we love learning more about each other.

As we all “shelter in place” at home with our families, trying to keep everyone safe, many of us – like others around the world – have been cooking and baking as a way to both fill the time and share our love with those around us. Food is a daily need, but also a way to express our feelings for each other.

So we thought, while we're creating all these masterpieces in the kitchen, why not share some of them with our users, customers, and friends? And here you have the “fruits” of that effort: the first (and hopefully last) ISC Global Pandemic Cookbook.

It is in no way comprehensive, and you may not even get a complete meal out of it (we're heavy on the desserts), but these recipes

come from all over the world and are all foods that we and/or our families enjoy. Most of us (with [one exception](#)) are not professional photographers, so our photos are just as “homemade” as our recipes.

We hope that by reading our cookbook and making some of our recipes, you will learn a little more about ISC and its people, and maybe feel a bit more of a connection with us. Just as the Internet is a global network, we are all part of the global community. It's more important than ever to maintain both our Internet and our interpersonal connectivity.

We wish everyone the best; be safe and well. (And wash your hands!)

The Staff of ISC, May 2020

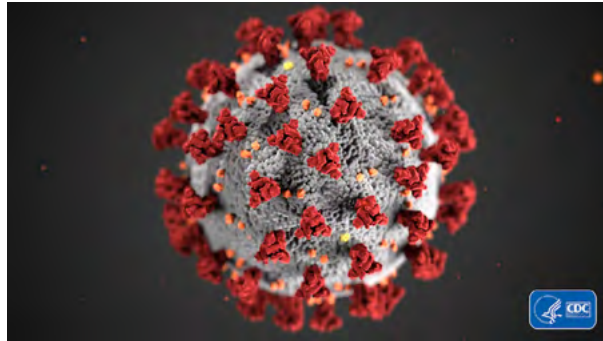


Image via CDC/Wikimedia Commons

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Some Notes on This Cookbook

We sincerely hope that you enjoy making these recipes and learning a bit more about the people of ISC. The sole intention of this cookbook is as a fun, lighthearted diversion from the scary pandemic going on around us today. The recipes are from a variety of cuisines and represent varying levels of difficulty to prepare. We mean no offense to anyone and apologize in advance for any errors or omissions.

Measurement notes

Our co-workers are worldwide, and measurement standards vary from place to place. Some countries use metric measurements, some use imperial, and some use a combination of both. For each recipe, the original recipe amounts from the contributor are included, followed by converted amounts in parentheses (). We apologize if we got any of them wrong; the cookbook editor is American and deeply regrets any confusion. You may want to verify any converted amounts yourself to be safe.

Some abbreviations used in the cookbook

tsp: teaspoon

tbsp: tablespoon

oz: ounce

lb: pound

ml: milliliter

l: liter

cm: centimeter

g: gram

kg: kilogram

F: Fahrenheit

C: Celsius

Breakfast

Blintz Souffle

Suzanne Goldlust, Virginia, United States

Suzanne works in ISC's marketing department. She's not much of a chef in general, but she has a handful of go-to recipes and this is one of them: it's easy and delicious. Blintzes are a traditional Eastern European Jewish pancake filled with cheese or fruit, usually available in the freezer section of the grocery store.



Suzanne Goldlust

Ingredients

- 1 dozen frozen blintzes (fruit-filled or cheese)
- 1 stick (1/4 lb, 113 g) melted butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 cups (340 g) sour cream
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla
- 1 tsp (5 g) salt
- 1/4 cup (50 g) sugar
- 1/4 cup (59 ml) orange juice

Melt butter or margarine in a 9" x 13" (22 cm x 33 cm) glass pan in the oven, set at 350 F (175 C). While butter is melting, beat eggs in a bowl and combine with all ingredients except blintzes (including excess butter after pan has been coated). Arrange blintzes in glass pan and pour the batter over. Bake at 350 F (175 C) for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Can be made in advance and frozen.



Photos by Suzanne Goldlust

Bread

Cecile's Honey Yeast Rolls

Michael McNally, Alaska, United States

Michael works in ISC's Support department, sharing his wisdom with both his colleagues and our customers. Michael enjoys hiking, boating, and camping and delights his coworkers with beautiful photos of his Alaskan surroundings. Given where he lives, Michael usually has some long stretches of inclement weather, which he often fills with yummy baking projects like this one.



Michael McNally

Ingredients

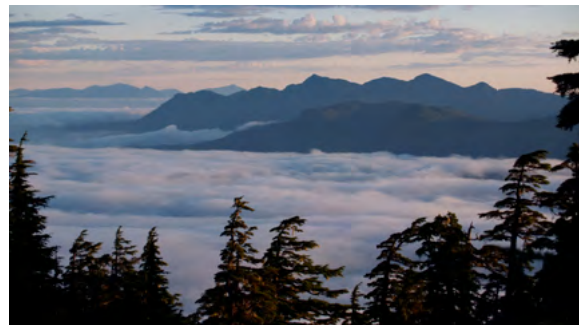
2 envelopes instant yeast
(approximately 4 1/2 tsp, 15.75 g)
1 cup (approximately 240 ml) WARM water
3/4 cup (177 ml) vegetable oil (such as canola)
1/2 cup (118 ml) honey
1 tsp (5 g) salt
1 cup (240 ml) HOT water
2 large eggs
approximately 7 cups (875 g) unbleached all-purpose flour

Back when I worked for a small local telephone company and ISP, the crew used to have a monthly potluck lunch in the break room. By far the most popular treats, month after month, were the sweet soft yeast rolls brought in by Bill F., one of the splicers, and baked by his wife Cecile. Cecile came from a southern state and her cooking clearly reflected the traditions of that part of the country.

I saved the recipe and make a batch to share with family and neighbors on special occasions.

The recipe makes a huge batch of rolls but you can make the dough and refrigerate it after the initial rise, using enough to make a pan at a time and reserving the rest of the dough for meals in the next several days (but they are best baked within 1-3 days). Refrigeration will slow the pace of rising, but to ensure the best texture in your finished product you should still keep an eye on the refrigerated dough and punch it down whenever it doubles. You do not want the rolls to become over-risen or the gluten strands to become over-developed, as the rolls will become tough.

Yield: It depends on how you divide up the dough to form into rolls, but the recipe will pretty easily make 50-60 medium-sized rolls. Consider making half a batch if you are not trying to feed a whole crowd of people.



In a small bowl, dissolve the yeast in the warm water and watch for it to activate and show signs of bubbling.

In a separate large mixing bowl, combine the vegetable oil, honey, salt, and hot water until the honey and salt are dissolved.

Add the eggs to the oil and honey mixture and blend well. Once the eggs are mixed in, add the yeast mixture from the first step.

To this base add half of the flour. By this point, the mixture should be a soupy liquid. As you continue adding the remaining half of the flour, keep an eye on the dough. By the time you have added about 6 cups (750 g) of flour, the dough should be stretchy but quite sticky. Continue adding flour until the dough is no longer very sticky -- it will be slightly tacky, but you should be able to touch it and withdraw your finger and have most of it come off. If the dough is still very sticky, continue adding flour, 1/4 cup (30 g) at a time, until the dough is workable by hand.



When you are satisfied with the dough, dump it out onto a smooth board or other solid surface and use your hands to work it into a large ball, stretching the dough with your hands beginning at the top and folding around to tuck underneath, stretching the skin of the ball as you go. Rotate the ball and continue this process of folding and stretching until the ball is fairly robust. If the dough is still too sticky, dust it lightly with additional flour and incorporate it as you continue to stretch and tuck to form a ball.

Once you have a well-formed ball of dough, place it in a large bowl that has been VERY lightly greased with butter, margarine, or vegetable oil. Cover with plastic wrap and leave out to rise at room temperature until doubled in size, approximately 60-90 minutes.



When the dough has doubled in size, turn it out onto your board again and punch it down, squeezing out most of the air and folding it over to knead gently.



At this point divide the dough up into portions depending on the size of the pan you plan to bake in. I find that the amount of dough made by the recipe above will easily make four 9" x 9" (22 cm x 22 cm) pans of 16 rolls (4x4) apiece, or can make two to three 9" x 13" (22 cm x 33 cm) pans of 24 rolls (6x4). Select an appropriate amount of dough (e.g. 1/4 of the recipe for a 9" x 9" pan) and return the rest to your large bowl. Then using your hands, a knife, or a bench scraper according to your preference, divide the dough you are working into roll-sized portions. In turn, take each portion and repeat the process of forming into a well-shaped ball by repeatedly folding over the sides and top and tucking under the bottom, rotating, and repeating until the balls hold their shape reasonably well. Before placing them in the pan give them a VERY light coating of oil -- I place about 2 teaspoons of oil on a plate and use my fingers to spread it, then take each finished dough ball and wipe it lightly in the oil to give it just a bit of oil to separate it from its neighbors.



Space the formed rolls out in a very lightly-greased pan so that they are close but not touching, and set them out for one final rise (until they nearly touch) before baking.

Bake in a pre-heated 400 F (200 C) oven for 12-15 minutes, until the rolls begin to brown on top. If desired, after removing from the oven brush the tops lightly with a small amount of melted butter.



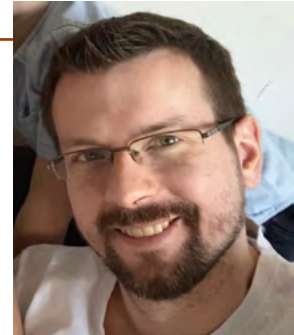
Photos by Michael McNally

Bread

Simple Bread

Michał Kępień, Warsaw, Poland

Michał is one of ISC's BIND 9 software developers and heads up our Quality Assurance team. He is also our Chief Latte Officer. When he's not wrangling our other engineers to make sure our software is as good as it can be, he enjoys baking with his wife and two young children.



Michał Kępień

Ingredients

500 g (1.1 lb) of wholemeal flour (or any flour designated as fit for bread baking)

1 packet of instant yeast

1 tbsp (14 g) of salt

1 tbsp (15 ml) of vegetable oil

your favorite seeds (sunflower & pumpkin seeds work nicely)

a bit of vegetable oil + breadcrumbs to prepare the loaf pan



Start by pouring 500 ml of hot water into a dish large enough to hold all the ingredients. Water should be hot enough to prevent you from holding your hand in it for more than a few seconds. No need to get second-degree burns, though!

Add instant yeast.



Mix using your hand or a spoon until a uniform mixture forms.

Add flour.



Mix using your hand until a uniform mixture forms.



Add 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil into the mix. No need to be super-precise here.

Add a bit of salt. Use 1 tablespoon at most – if you overdo it, your bread might become inedible!

Mix in the oil and salt. Cover the dish with aluminium foil and leave it in a warm place for ~30 minutes to give the mixture time to aerate a bit.



Cover the loaf pan with a thin layer of vegetable oil.



Coat the loaf pan with a thin layer of breadcrumbs.



Remove the aluminium foil after ~30 minutes and mix in your preferred seeds. Keep it light or the mixture might become too heavy to bake nicely. (This step is completely optional if you don't like seeds in your bread.)



Transfer your mixture to the loaf pan. Use a wooden spatula to even it out. Add some more seeds on the top if you like.



Bake for 10 minutes at 220 C (425 F) with convection/air assist. Then lower the temperature to 195 C (385 F) and bake for another 45 minutes. After that, turn the oven off and keep the bread inside for another 5-7 minutes. Finally, take it out of the oven and out of the pan to cool down. Enjoy!



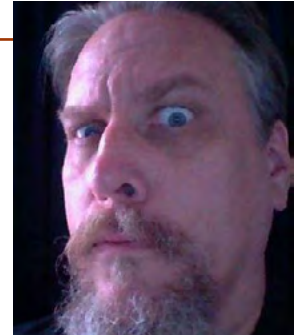
Photos by Michał Kępień

Bread

Kinda-Sorta French Baguette

Evan Hunt, California, United States

Evan is one of ISC's BIND 9 software engineers; he is also very fond of anagrams and other wordplay. In his spare time he enjoys writing plays and baking. This baguette recipe may not be up to French bakery standards, but it should be something that most people can make with what they have on hand at home during the lockdown.



Evan Hunt

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup (118 ml) warm water
- pinch of sugar
- 1 tsp (5 g) salt
- 1/4 tsp (1.25 g) yeast
- 1 cup (125 g) flour

This is an excellent way to use all that flour you hoarded, without using too much of the yeast that sold out before you could hoard it.

Start this recipe just before you go to bed at night, with a bowl containing the warm water, sugar, and salt. Dust the top with the yeast:



Now stir in 1 cup of flour. The amounts here aren't exact; you're just looking for a soft and sticky dough. If it doesn't hold its shape it's too wet; if it's dry on the surface it's too dry. You want it to incorporate all the flour and look damp and shiny:



Okay, you're done with the dough now. You don't have to stir past the point that the flour is mixed in, and you don't have to knead. Just cover it up, put it on top of the fridge or whatever, and ignore it. 12 hours later it looks like this:



Now get your hands really wet and slippery. Scoop the whole ball of dough out of the bowl, make it into a long snakey shape, and lay it down diagonally on a cookie sheet with parchment paper or a silicone mat.



Now, and **ONLY** now, preheat your oven to 460 F (240 C), convection if you have it. While the oven is preheating, the dough will regain some of the volume it lost while you were shaping it.

When the oven is ready, take a spray bottle full of water – one of those garden misters that people get for houseplants – and spray the surface of the dough to make it wet and shiny. Put it in the oven, and pour a quarter cup of water into a pan on the bottom of the oven to make it steamy in there. This helps develop the crust.

Every 2-3 minutes, open the oven and spray the crust again, and toss in another quarter cup of water. Do that until ten minutes have passed. (You can keep doing it for another ten minutes if you feel like it, but at that point it's optional.) After a total baking time of twenty minutes, take it out and put it on a rack to cool. Voilà, you've made something that vaguely resembles French bread!

A proper French baker would probably be snooty about the technique here, but this takes very little work and makes a fine substrate for butter. I've been making one pretty much every night since the lockdown started.



Photos by Evan Hunt

Soup

Taco Soup

Suzanne Goldlust, Virginia, United States

Suzanne loves this hearty soup because it's simple and delicious. A large pot of this filling, vegetarian stew can last for days and can easily be customized with whatever ingredients you have on hand. You have frozen corn instead of canned? Great. You prefer red beans to black? Go for it. Want to throw some veggie "meat" crumbles or some quinoa or lentils in for some extra protein? It's all good. You could even use chicken broth as the base if you're a carnivore.

Ingredients

32 oz (950 ml) vegetable broth

4-5 tbsp (60-70 ml) olive or vegetable oil

2 cans (approximately 16 oz, 450 g) each of:

corn kernels

diced tomatoes with garlic and onions

black beans, drained

white (cannellini) beans, drained

refried beans

taco seasoning mix to taste

Dump everything in a pot, mix well, and simmer over low to medium heat for one hour. Serve with sour cream, shredded cheese, tortilla chips, and/or whatever else you like.



Photos by Suzanne Goldlust



(Perhaps you also have a cat who likes corn kernels?)

Fluffy Matzah Balls

Suzanne Goldlust, Virginia, United States

Matzah (sometimes spelled matzo) balls are another traditional Eastern European Jewish dish that's a huge favorite with Suzanne's two sons. These soup dumplings are easy to make, light yet filling, and very satisfying.

Ingredients

4 large eggs
2 tbsp (30 ml) chicken fat or vegetable oil
1/2 cup (118 ml) seltzer or club soda
1 cup (125 g) matzah meal (if that's not available, you can use panko with a pinch of salt, or ground-up plain crackers)
salt and pepper to taste

Mix the eggs well with a fork. Add the chicken fat or vegetable oil, soda water, matzah meal, and salt and pepper and mix well. Refrigerate for several hours.

Dip your hands in cold water and make about 10-12 balls, slightly smaller than Ping-Pong balls. (They will expand when cooked.)

Bring water to a boil in a large pot. Add salt and place the matzah balls in the water. Cover and simmer about 30 minutes or until soft.

Matzah balls are traditionally served in a clear chicken broth, but vegetable broth works well too. (See Elmar's recipe on the next page if you need one!) Leftover matzah balls can be refrigerated or frozen in the soup.



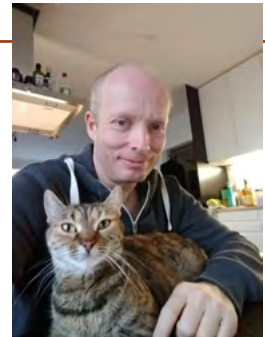
Photos by Suzanne Goldlust

Soup

Chicken Soup/Boiled Chicken

Elmar Bins, Vienna, Austria

Elmar joined the ISC team in 2019 as a network engineer in our DNS Operations group. When he's not busy practicing his foxtrot or playing with his two cats, Elmar likes to cook – the spicier, the better. This recipe is fairly mild, by his standards, except maybe for the gin.



Elmar Bins

Ingredients

- 2 chicken legs
- 2 carrots
- 1 parsnip
- celeriac (celery root;
"Knollensellerie" in German)
- 2 onions
- leeks or spring onion greens
- a few bay leaves
- a few black peppercorns
- a few juniper berries (or some gin)

Well, I wanted chicken for a chicken salad; also, stock is nice, so let's see what we have...



Hmm... no whole chicken, but I have chicken legs (the big ones) that will do nicely. Also, I am out of juniper berries...BUT! There's juniper in gin, right?

If you want, you can sear the onions now (dry in the pot) to give them and the broth colour. Totally optional.



Now let them all take a bath in a sufficiently sized pot; use ****cold**** water, or you will fail. As you can see, I did not sear the onions, and I just chopped everything coarsely. I also made a few cuts in the chicken legs. Don't forget to put a glug of gin in if you don't have juniper berries!

Oh, and do not add salt.

Now, bring all this to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and put a lid on; if you get foam on top, remove it with a slotted spoon or a sieve, so your broth stays clear.

I let it simmer for about an hour; just check the meat.

Discard the veggies and spices; they have done their job. You are now left with the braised chicken legs and a nice broth, which you can use, or reduce, or freeze, or all of the above...

Goal achieved!



Photos by Elmar Bins

Condiment

Mayonnaise

Jeff Osborn, New Hampshire, United States

Jeff is ISC's president. He usually spends much of the year traveling around the world to attend the meetings of various Internet governance bodies, but now that he has all this time at home he's indulging his loves of cooking and spending time with his family. He says that once you've tried his homemade mayonnaise recipe, you'll never go back to store-bought again.



Jeff Osborn

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1 pint (475 ml) safflower oil
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) finely minced onion or shallot
- 3 tablespoons (45 ml) malt vinegar
- salt to taste

Beat egg thoroughly with an electric mixer. While mixing, very slowly add the oil in a drizzle. It should look like mayonnaise within a very short time; if the oil and egg aren't combining into a creamy texture, stop adding the oil and let the mixer run awhile. If you add the oil too fast, it will fail to emulsify, and look like spoiled yogurt. Take your time, and stop pouring every 15 seconds or so, while the mixer runs, to let it emulsify.

When all the oil is in the bowl, beat for another minute. Fold in the onion or shallot, malt vinegar, and salt. Taste and adjust salt as necessary.

This mayonnaise will keep in the refrigerator in a jar for weeks, and is especially good on fresh, ripe tomatoes directly from the garden.



Photo by Suzanne Goldlust



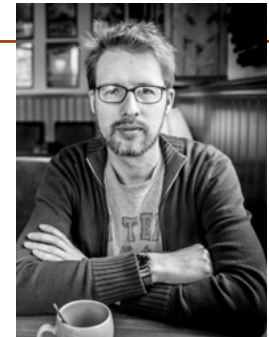
Photo by Ryan Quintal on Unsplash

Main Course

Kale Hash (Boerenkoolstamppot)

Matthijs Mekking, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Matthijs is a BIND 9 software engineer at ISC. When he's not programming, he is a professional photographer, mostly of cultural and artistic events. He brings his skill and attention to detail to the kitchen with this hash recipe: not a new hash function, but a traditional Dutch dish eaten in winter (or anytime you need a hearty meal).



Matthijs Mekking

Ingredients

1 kg (2.2 lb) floury potatoes
600 g (21 oz) fresh kale leaves (no stumps)
25 g (2 Tbsp) butter
4 smoked sausages (rookworst or vegetarian sausage)
gravy
salt and pepper

Peel the potatoes and cut into 2 cm pieces.

Put the kale in a large pan and put the potatoes on top. Add water until the potatoes are just covered. Bring to a boil and cook over medium heat for 20 minutes. You know it is ready when you can stick a fork through the potato.

In a separate pan, boil water. Then remove the pan from the heat. Put the sausages in the water for 20 minutes under a lid.

Drain the potatoes and kale.

Mash the potatoes with the kale. Stir in the butter until it has melted. If needed, add water to get the desired thickness.

Divide the kale hash over the plates. Cut the smoked sausage into slices and place on top. Serve with gravy and season with salt and pepper. Serves four people.



Photo from <https://www.mitra.nl/>

Main Course

Mapo Tofu

Elmar Bins, Vienna, Austria

Elmar likes spicy food. REALLY spicy food. In fact, he says, “If you don’t like spicy, don’t go for this. It’s not for you. Eat pasta!” But, he adds, “This is a classical dish of Sichuan cuisine. It is tofu cubes in a Sichuan hot sauce, flavoured with Sichuan pepper (quite spicy and very numbing, you need this sensation), a bit of meat for umami (optional), and that’s basically it.” Grab your fire extinguisher and get ready for a hot meal!

Ingredients

300 g (10.5 oz) soft tofu – don’t repeat my mistake and use silken tofu. I managed to not break it, but it was too mushy; I had to use a spoon instead of chopsticks.

30 g (1 oz) ground pork (I clobbered a piece lying around but store-bought is fine); optional, can be replaced with 1/4 tsp (1 g) of MSG (monosodium glutamate).

4 cloves garlic

1 tsp (5 g) hot chili powder (e.g., cayenne)

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) Sichuan peppercorns (cannot be replaced by something else!)

2 tbsp (28 g) Doubanjiang chili bean sauce

3/4 cup stock (remember our [chicken stock](#)? But tbh, even a stock cube plus water works.)



This little cast-iron baby pan is perfect to roast the peppercorns in dry heat. Preheat the pan until it’s hot, then reduce the heat and shake until the pepper smells fragrant and leaves tiny splotches on the walls of the pan. Then put them into the mortar and let them cool before you grind them very finely.

Slice the tofu into 2.5 cm (1 in) cubes. To firm it up a bit and infuse it with some saltiness, we are going to blanch it.

Bring quite a bit of salt water to a simmer, put the tofu in carefully and simmer away for 5 minutes. Take the pot off the heat and keep the tofu in the water until needed.



Hello, baby pan – let’s fry and brown some meat (hot pan, a bit of oil, reduce heat to medium-high). Break the meat up so it browns better (no black bits please). If you use MSG instead of meat, don’t add it yet; add it with the pepper later.

Once the meat is browned, add the bean sauce and fry it alongside until fragrant, then mix and set aside.



Now take that big wok of yours (or a big nonstick pan) and coat it with oil. Carefully cook that finely minced garlic in a bit of oil. Don’t burn it or you will have to start over – burnt garlic is unbearably bitter.



Once the garlic is fragrant, you may wish to throw in a dash of Chinese cooking wine to kill the heat and because... Chinese cooking wine! It goes onto everything!

Then add the stock to stop everything from cooking.

Now very quickly make a slurry from 1 tsp (5 g) cornstarch and 2 tsp (30 ml) of water. Just mix; it’s used to thicken the sauce and give it a nice sheen.



What your tofu is really craving now is a nice hot bath in the big pan. So, drain it carefully and add it to the pan, alongside the very finely ground Sichuan peppercorns (if too coarse they will ruin the dish, so put in a bit of elbow grease here!).

Adjust salt levels with salt or soy sauce; it should taste a little undersalted.

Bring this to a simmer and let it do its thing for 3-5 minutes, carefully moving the tofu around but not stirring (or it will break). Then add the cornstarch slurry a bit at a time until the consistency is about right – thick and saucy. Turn the heat off and finish with a bit of Chinese cooking wine (because...) and a teaspoon of toasted sesame oil. Carefully mix to combine.



My plating here is awful, but I assure you, it tastes much better than it looks. I recommend rice alongside, or the intensity will kill you.

Enjoy!



Photos by Elmar Bins

Main Course

Steak Tartare

Ondřej Surý, Malá Hraštica, Czech Republic

Ondřej is ISC's Director of DNS Engineering. In addition to the BIND 9 work he does for ISC, Ondřej keeps very busy packaging various software for Debian and Ubuntu. He and his wife and children live in the Czech countryside, where they grow much of their own food. He enjoys a nice steak tartare for Sunday lunch.



Ondřej Surý

Ingredients

90 g (3-4 oz) tenderloin (vacuum-aged beef)

1 egg yolk

1 tsp (5 g) finely chopped onion (red if you like)

pinch of salt

pinch of paprika (sweet spice)

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) ketchup

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) mustard

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) chives

Extras:

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) virgin olive oil

1 tsp (5 ml) dry red wine

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) Dijon mustard

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) capers

Mix the basic ingredients and then add the extras to your liking. The better ingredients you use, the better the result.

This is usually served with bread covered in garlic, fried in plenty of oil, but for a low-carb option it could be served with wine (or salad greens). ;-)



Photo by Ondřej Surý

Main Course

Potato Pancakes

Marcin Siodelski, Gdańsk, Poland

Marcin, his wife, their four children, and their pets spend lots of time outside. Marcin, who is one of our DHCP software engineers, is into long-distance running (marathons and up!), biking, sailing, gardening, and pretty much any other outdoor activity. His wife, Agnieszka, does most of the cooking for their family but they enjoy making this recipe together.



Ingredients

2 kg (4.5 lb) potatoes
1 onion
1 egg
3 tbsp (15 g) of flour
oil for frying
salt



Peel and **finely** grate the potatoes and the onions. Mix the potatoes, onion, egg, and flour. Add as much salt as you like.

Heat the oil in a pan. Drop one tablespoon in the hot oil to make one thin pancake.

Fry the pancakes on high heat, flipping them to make them crispy on both sides. They taste best when served right after frying. They can be served with any sauce you like, or with salt or sugar.

Hint: for grating the potatoes and the onion you can use a food processor rather than doing it manually. But the recipe we provide was created 70+ years ago when they probably did not exist yet. ;-)



Photos by Marcin Siodelski

Main Course

Cheese, Bread, and Egg Dish

Vicky Risk, California, United States

Vicky is ISC's Director of Marketing and Product Marketing. She and her daughter enjoy eating the many fruits and vegetables that grow in their backyard. Especially during this lockdown, they've been finding comfort in simple but yummy recipes like this one, that are easy to make with what's already in your kitchen. She remembers her mom serving it when she was young.



Ingredients

5 slices stale bread, or roughly equivalent amount in heels and scraps. (Stale bread is better than fresh, because it absorbs more of the liquid.) I used a combination of stale sourdough, sliced whole wheat that had been in the freezer, and some homemade bread that didn't turn out very well.

2 cups (480 ml) milk

3 eggs (roughly one per 1/2 cup [120 ml] of milk, if you are scaling up or down)

1 1/2-2 cups (350-450 g) grated cheese or roughly 6 slices (cheddar is best)

small amount of butter for greasing the casserole dish

Optional:

1/2-1 cup (125-240 g) frozen corn

freshly grated nutmeg (powdered might be okay, I have never tried it)

pepper

Mix the milk and eggs with a fork in a separate bowl.

Butter the bottom and sides of a casserole dish.

If you want to incorporate some frozen corn (so it feels like there are vegetables in the dish), spread the frozen corn in the bottom of the casserole.

Tear the bread into chunks and lay them in a single layer on top of the corn. There is no need to pack the bread in tightly; just arrange the chunks in a layer.

Sprinkle cheese or layer on 2 slices of cheese.

Pour 1/3 of the egg and milk mixture over the bread.

Repeat with another layer of torn bread, a layer of cheese, and 1/3 more egg and milk mixture.

If there is any left, do a final layer, finishing with cheese on top.



Do not fill the casserole dish all the way to the top, because this is going to rise in the oven.

Let the whole thing sit for a bit so the bread can soak up the milk, while you preheat the oven to 350 F (175 C).

While it is sitting and soaking, if the bread on top is not getting moist from the milk, use a spoon to push it down a bit or consider pouring a small amount of additional milk on the driest bits.

Bake 40 minutes at 350 F (175 C). It should puff up a bit, and of course the cheese should brown. Cut into an edge with a spoon to make sure there is no unabsorbed liquid; if there is, it needs to cook longer.

Variations:

Resist the impulse to add kale or carrots or anything like that. This is not the best dish for hiding vegetables. If it comes out well, the outside is crusty and cheesy, and the inside is soft like a souffle or light pudding. If you pack it full of vegetables you lose the texture. Just steam some broccoli and have that on the side. I like to add corn because it adds a bit of sweetness, but I put it on the bottom so it doesn't ruin the texture or prevent it from rising.

I am all for swapping ingredients normally, but I also think this is nowhere near as good with Swiss or mozzarella in place of the cheddar. It would probably taste fine, but would not rise and get fluffy.

For an adult audience, you might add either chopped green chilies or freshly grated nutmeg and ground pepper because this is otherwise fairly bland.



Vicky's mom, Cynthia, was a big fan of Julia Child's and enjoyed fancier cooking, but this recipe was popular with Vicky and her five siblings.



Photos by Vicky Risk

Main Course

Dem Skrillz Y'all (Shrimp Stew)

T. Marc Jones, California, United States

T. Marc, ISC's Director of Sales, is originally from Baltimore but has lived in the Bay Area of California for many years. When he is not hard at work selling software support contracts, T. Marc can usually be found at either the gym or the racetrack (real or virtual), indulging his love of fast cars. Maybe you've even seen him on the Netflix show, "Fastest Car"! Here's a little recipe he's thrown together in his own signature style.



T. Marc Jones

Ingredients

3 bell peppers -- one green, one yellow, one red -- like a traffic light

1 big can of sweet corn

2 little cans of cut black olives

1 big can of tomato sauce

1 little can of tomato sauce

2 things of skrillz (shrimps)

olive oil

Old Bay seasoning straight outta Baltimore

hot sauce – the good kind

a kitchen

some pots

some pans

a knife

a spoon



Cut up the peppers and then put them into the pan with oil and saute them until they are ready (you will know when they are ready).



Open the can of corn and drain out all the liquid and then put the corn into a dish.

Open the cans of olives and drain out all the liquid and then put the olives into a dish.

Open the big can of tomato sauce and pour it into a pot. It's all liquid so you don't need to drain out the liquid.

Put the corn and the olives into the pot with the tomato sauce.



Put a whole gang of that Old Bay into the pot (you will know how much).

Put the peppers into the pot because now they are ready.

Take the skrillz out of the things and wash them -- once they are washed cut the tails off all but one of the skrillz.



Put the skrillz into the pot and add a whole 'nother gang of that Old Bay.

Pour in some of the little can of tomato sauce 'cause you need the sauce.



Let the whole thing cook until it's ready (you will know when it's ready).

Make some rice -- main ingredients, rice and water -- 20 minutes.

Check the skrillz -- are they ready? (You will know when they are ready.)

Has it been 20 minutes? The rice is now ready.

Skrillz are ready to eat -- add the hot sauce and get down!



Photos by T. Marc Jones

Main Course

Chana Dal Zucchini

Elmar Bins, Vienna, Austria

This dal is one of Elmar's favorite Indian dishes. He says, "It's creamy, nutty, and it has to be very very spicy or the flavor just isn't right. If you are not into spicy food, you *can* use less heat, but I would recommend you just eat something else." Some of these ingredients may not be in your pantry during the pandemic, but you can always save the recipe for later.

Ingredients

200 g (7 oz) chana dal (dry weight), soaked overnight, water discarded

3 fresh tomatoes or one 450 ml (15 oz) can, unflavoured! (I absolutely never made that mistake)

100 g (3.5 oz) grated zucchini/courgette

300 g (10.5 oz) water

3/4 tsp (3.5 g) black mustard seeds

3-5 dried hot chilies (more if you like it spicier); don't use fresh ones, they don't work in this recipe

some ghee (clarified butter)

a pinch of asafoetida powder

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) hot chili powder (e.g., cayenne)

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) curcuma

1 tsp (5 g) fine salt

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) garam masala

1/2 tsp (2.5 g) coriander powder

fresh coriander

I learned this dish from an old friend of mine sometime in the nineties; he would cook it (and more) for his birthday every year. He allowed me to copy the recipe from the stained photocopy of an old Indian cookbook he used. I learned over the years that this recipe really only tastes the way it should if you go strictly by the recipe; hence, this will include measurements, which I am usually not at all keen on in the kitchen.



The evening before, take a large bowl, put 200 grams of chana dal (dried peeled split chickpeas) in it, and almost fill it up with water. Cover and let it just sit around to soak (minimum 8 hours).

Have yourself a nice glass of French wine while you're doing this, because... cooking is enjoyable. So is French red. And use a proper glass!



Start by putting the ghee in your pan and melt it, then throw the mustard seeds and chilies in and fry over medium high heat. I recommend putting a lid on and using the hood – the chilies make the air unbreathable. Shake the pan to avoid burning. The mustard seeds will start popping; this is your sign to move on with your life and this recipe. Reduce the stove setting to medium.



Now throw the zucchini and tomatoes in and add the pinch of asafoetida. Mix and simmer for 3-5 minutes to break this stuff up a bit.

Now add the rest – chili powder, curcuma, salt, and the soaked and drained chickpeas. (If you like your chickpeas softer, add a pinch of baking soda.) Now add the water (roundabout 300 g [10.5 oz], but go by feel there).



This should now simmer consistently with the lid on. Make sure it does not boil wildly. Stir a few times to break things loose from the bottom.



After 20 minutes, take the lid off and continue simmering to reduce. You will need to stir more and more now, or you will get burnt bits and will have to throw everything away. So stay there. Stir! Turn the heat down bit by bit as the stuff reduces. If you're feeling adventurous, you could even wash (until the water stays clear, you know the drill) and cook your basmati rice now.

Be careful, in the end this dries up quickly! Once you have reached this consistency, turn the heat all the way down and stir in the garam masala and coriander powder. Taste and fix salt levels and spiciness.



And now – put it into a bowl, throw coriander leaves on top, and serve. With rice. And chutney. Moar chutney!

Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm :-)



Photos by Elmar Bins

Main Course

Bornholmsk Stegt Saltsild (Bornholm Roasted Salt Herring)

Peter Davies, Copenhagen, Denmark

Peter is one of ISC's newest staff members, having joined the support team in 2019. Although Peter is Welsh by birth, he met his Danish wife nearly 40 years ago and has lived in Copenhagen for many years. He says he isn't much of a cook and normally tries to avoid kitchen work – other than peeling potatoes, which he finds strangely relaxing. This is his favorite Danish dish.



Peter Davies

Ingredients

5 kg (11 lb) herrings (the large herrings caught late in the year are best)

800 g (28 oz) salt

2 large onions

salt and sugar to taste

pickled beetroot and mustard

rye meal

lard for frying

For the salted herring:

Gut, clean and remove the scales from the fresh herrings and layer them with the salt; they should be covered in salt. Use a non-plastic container that does not react with salt (preferably wooden).

Keep them cool for at least 2 months (check once in a while that they haven't gone off).

Or, just buy some proper salted herring at the store (don't use rollmops!).

Take the salted herrings and discard the head, tail, and bones. Place them in fresh cold water for 2 to 24 hours to remove some of the salt.

Thinly slice the onions and fry them gently (add salt and sugar as desired).

Dry the herrings gently, coat them well in rye meal, and fold.

Fry them hard in lard, holding them down at the start, so they don't open up.

Serve the warm herrings on slices of dark rye bread buttered with lard (Russian black bread is a good alternative, but not pumpernickel), with the fried onions, finely chopped pickled beetroot, and a dollop of sweet whole corn mustard on top.

This dish is always accompanied by lager ale and ice cold schnapps.

Velbekomme! (Bon appetit!)



Photo from <https://www.enhimmelskmundfuld.dk/>

Main Course

Fried White Cabbage with Onions

Marcin Siodelski, Gdańsk, Poland

This simple but hearty vegetable recipe is a common Polish dish.

Ingredients

1 medium head of white cabbage
2 large onions
oil
2 tsp (10 ml) of tomato concentrate
(can be more if you like)
salt
pepper
caraway seeds

Chop the onions and the cabbage into long, thin pieces. Cover and braise them in the hot oil until the cabbage softens. Add salt, pepper, tomato concentrate and caraway seeds to taste and stir.



Photo by Marcin Siodelski

Main Course

Roast Beef

Ondřej Surý, Malá Hraštice, Czech Republic

More meat from Ondřej!

Ingredients

vacuum-aged beef (rib eye or sirloin)

salt

black pepper

brown sugar (optional)

virgin olive oil

Clean the excess ligaments and fat (the meat should look more or less clean on the surface).

Cover the surface of the meat in salt, black pepper, and brown sugar (if desired).

In a thick-bottomed metal pan large enough to hold the chunk of meat, heat the olive oil until it's lightly smoking.

Quickly fry the meat on all sides; you'll know when each side is done when it stops sticking to the pan. Remove the meat and put it into a baking pan. Preheat the oven to 85 C (185 F).

Using a meat thermometer in the shortest side of the meat (going with the grain), roast the meat until the internal temperature reaches 52 C (125 F).

Remove the meat from the oven and allow it to cool. When cooled, slice it into thin strips and enjoy.



Photo by Ondřej Surý

Main Course

German-Style Chicken Salad

Elmar Bins, Vienna, Austria

Although Elmar's tastes cover the world of cuisines, this traditional German recipe is a favorite for both him and his cats, Uganda ("Gandi") and Philomena ("Phili"). He says, "This salad is made super fast and easy from mostly canned material, so check your pantry. It can be varied, but it has some basic characteristics: it is fruity with a splash of sourness to give it a salad feel, it has a creamy consistency, and we usually eat it on or with bread."

Ingredients

meat from 2 chicken legs, braised, cold ([see Elmar's soup recipe!](#))

half a can of fruit salad (but only a teeny bit of juice!)

a small can of peas+carrots (discard the juice, or drink it...)

10% fat greek yoghurt

50% fat mayo

some salt

some sugar

some vinegar

almost no black pepper

You can also throw in pineapple pieces, mandarin pieces, asparagus chunks – whatever's available.



Make a nice sauce from the yoghurt, mayo, some cream cheese (if you have some), and a bit of the fruit juice. Season with salt and a little bit of pepper (I oversalt it a bit, because...ingredients). If it needs sugar, toss in some sugar. Then throw everything in and mix carefully but thoroughly. Taste, adjust salt levels, and add some acidity from the vinegar to bring it all together.

Now you can put the lot into a nice bowl, and garnish with greens (I found a tomato lying around that also wanted to model).

A little tip: Make sure you don't undersalt the salad. It really needs it.

Done!



Photos by Elmar Bins

Main Course

Peanut Butter and Seville Orange Marmalade Toast

Cathy Almond, Cornwall, England

Cathy is the senior engineer on our Support team. She is also a competitive rower and an active participant in a local choir, not to mention a new grandmother, all of which keeps her much too busy to cook. But she makes a mean PB&J, which makes a filling and sustaining breakfast or other meal.



Cathy Almond

Ingredients

sliced bread – good quality wholemeal and sourdough are both excellent choices. The toasted slices need not to be too light and fluffy or you will have trouble spreading the peanut butter.

peanut butter – the crunchier the better. I used one of my favourite artisan brands that I was delighted to find in stock at our local village grocery store.

good quality marmalade – I think the combination works most successfully with thick-cut and dark ‘Olde English’-style Seville marmalade (I used the produce of a small local business), but please do experiment with other alternatives. I particularly like this recipe made with orange and whisky marmalade.

butter or spread – just a little to taste.



Toast your bread. It needs to be firm enough not to disintegrate when spreading the peanut butter – particularly if yours has a stiff consistency.

On one side, add a thin layer of butter or spread. (Do this whilst the toast is still warm so that it melts into the surface.)

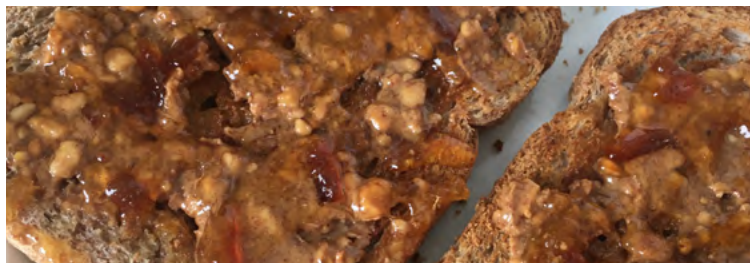
On the same side, now carefully spread a layer of peanut butter. If yours is particularly unmalleable, then it may be easier to pat small dollops rather than attempting to use a traditional spreading technique with the knife.

Aside: the reason the peanut butter goes on to the toast first is not a local Cornish custom (you may have heard arguments over whether to put the cream or the jam on your scone first when treating yourself to a traditional cream tea). It is simply better engineered this way:

- a) It's easier to spread peanut butter on the rough surface of toast directly than it is on top of slippery marmalade.
- b) Peanut butter tends to stick to the top of your mouth when eating it on toast – having the upper layer be the marmalade one prevents this unpleasant awkwardness.

Finally, add a thin but complete layer of marmalade on top of your peanut butter.

Serve warm and cut into smaller pieces for easy-handling.



Photos by Cathy Almond

Main Course

Fried Rice

Elmar Bins, Vienna, Austria

Here's another of Elmar's very non-German but very yummy recipes. He says, "Fried rice is the perfect vehicle for using up leftovers or just making a nice hearty dish with the least amount of work. You can replace almost every ingredient here with something else; just make sure you cook what you use to the perfect consistency."

Ingredients

70 g (2.5 oz) of pork cutlet, cubed to 7 mm (1/4 in)

sugar, salt, cornstarch, oil for marinade

dried, soaked, drained shiitake mushrooms

1 yellow carrot

1/4 zucchini (courgette)

2 cloves garlic

the same amount of ginger

frozen peas

1 egg

a heap of leftover basmati rice (any rice will do), should be quite dried out



Here you see the meat already in its marinade – 1 tsp (5 g) sugar, 1/2 tsp (2.5 g) salt, 1/2 tsp (2.5 g) cornstarch, and a splash of neutral oil. Mix to coat and set aside for 20 minutes.

Dice the carrot, mushrooms, and courgette to pea size, and very finely dice the garlic and ginger.



The meat was a bit shy and didn't want to be photographed while frying; you can see it resting already. (Fry it in a hot pan with a bit of cold oil, medium high heat, until nicely browned.)

Add oil to the pan and gently cook/fry the garlic and ginger over medium heat until fragrant. Put them somewhere (I put them in with the meat).

Fry carrots and mushrooms in oil over medium high heat. After two minutes, add the courgette and peas. Fry everything for a minute, then put it aside.



Somebody once said that fried rice without an egg is like a fish without a bicycle. Don't let this happen! Beat the egg with a splash of water and drop into the nicely oiled hot pan. Spread it out, and when almost done, put it aside on a separate plate.



Put some oil into the pan and drop the cold rice in. For the next five minutes, over medium high to high heat, mix it, stir it, break up clumps, and make sure nothing sticks. I tried to get some browning on the rice, and even put more oil in, but to no avail. It might have been too moist still.

Well, when you're satisfied, put everything in, break up the egg, and give all this a good stir fry. Turn the heat off, and finish with some Chinese cooking wine, some soy sauce, and a splash of sesame oil.

And this is what you get for these ten minutes of work – amazing!

Don't be afraid to experiment with what you use in fried rice. I guess everything is debatable but the rice and the egg....



Photos by Elmar Bins

Main Course

Duck and Red Cabbage with Apples

Marcin Siodelski, Gdańsk, Poland

Although Marcin claims that he doesn't do much cooking, he somehow ended up getting his wife to contribute quite a few recipes for this cookbook. And we're grateful!

Ingredients

1 duck
baking apples
salt
pepper
marjoram

For the cabbage:

1 small red cabbage
2 apples
salt
pepper

Season the duck with salt, pepper, and marjoram both outside and inside. Cut the apples into quarters. Stuff the duck with apples.



If you like baked apples, you can also add them under the duck. Warm the oven to 180 C (350 F). Cover and bake the duck until it softens and blushes. If there is too little sauce from the duck itself, pour a small amount of apple juice on the duck while baking.

Chop the cabbage and grate the apples, and put it all into a pot. Add a little water, salt, and pepper. Cover the pot and simmer the cabbage with the apples until the cabbage softens and the apples become translucent. Add some water while simmering if needed, and add some sauce from the duck to the cabbage before serving. Goes well with potato puree.



Photos by Marcin Siodelski

“All Hands” Brownies

Brian Conry, Arkansas, United States

Brian is a longtime member of our Support team and an avid board-game player. He doesn't do much cooking himself but he and his wife, Cara, have a tradition of making these delicious brownies for ISC's annual All Hands in-person meeting. They're always a big hit with our staff and we think you'll like them too.



Cara and Brian Conry

Ingredients

1 1/3 cups (113 g) cocoa powder
– we use a mix of 1/3 “Onyx black cocoa” and 2/3 “Hershey’s Special Dark cocoa”
2/3 cup (99 g) all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp (3 g) kosher salt
4 large eggs
2 tsp (9 g) vanilla extract
1 cup (198 g) sugar
1 cup (227 g) dark brown sugar
1 cup (227 g) butter

Sift/whisk together the cocoa powder, flour, and salt. Set aside.

Separately, whip the eggs at medium speed until light in color and texture.

Add the vanilla to the eggs.

Blend the sugars together, then reduce the mixer speed and add them to the eggs.

Add the butter and remaining dry ingredients to the egg and sugar mixture in three alternating doses starting with the wet and finishing with the dry.

Preheat oven to 350 F (175 C). Line a 9” x 13” (22 cm x 33 cm) pan with parchment paper and pour the brownie batter in. Bake approximately 30-35 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Allow brownies to cool and slice with a plastic knife.



Photo from <https://www.healingwholenutrition.com/>

Dessert

Stroopwafel Ice Cream

Matthijs Mekking, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Matthijs loves making and eating ice cream, and enjoys experimenting with lots of variations on the base recipe. For this special occasion he has paired ice cream with stroopwafel, a famous Dutch wafer cookie. He reminds us, “Because ice cream is a dairy product, you will need to keep things as hygienic as possible. Make sure your equipment is sparkling clean and WASH YOUR HANDS frequently!” Good advice in these coronavirus-filled times.

Ingredients

2 cups (500 ml) whole milk
1 cup (250 ml) heavy cream
3/4 cup (150 g) white caster sugar
a pinch of (sea) salt
3 large egg yolks
1 tsp (5 ml) vodka or gin (optional)

For the caramel sauce:

1 cup (250 ml) heavy cream
1/2 cup (100 g) butter
3/4 cup (150 g) granulated sugar
water

Last but not least:

200 g (9 oz) stroopwafels (I use mini stroopwafels that I can also use as topping)

Makes about 1 quart (1 l)

You will need the basic kitchen tools like a saucepan, spatula, whisk, mixer, mixing bowl, and measuring cups.

You will also need to prepare an ice bath to expedite the chilling of the custard. To do so you can fill a large bowl that can fit your mixing bowl, or an empty sink, with some cold water and ice cubes.

And you will need an ice cream maker. Technically you can do without one, but it requires more effort. Without an ice cream maker you will need to freeze the ice cream for a couple of minutes, take it out the fridge, stir it for a couple of minutes, and repeat the process for about an hour.



Warm the milk, caster sugar, and salt in a saucepan. Don't let it boil. Remove from the heat, cover, and let it cool off for about 30 minutes.

Whisk the egg yolks in a bowl.

Slowly pour the warm mixture into the egg yolks, whisking constantly, to avoid the risk of cooking the yolks into scrambled egg. Then pour the egg yolks and mixture back into the sauce pan.

Stir the mixture constantly with a spatula over medium heat, scraping the bottom as you stir, until the mixture thickens to a custard and coats the spatula. Don't let it boil. You can test the custard by running your finger across the spatula and seeing if it leaves a trail.

Whip the heavy cream in a bowl until stiff.

Prepare an ice bath and put the bowl with cream in it. Pour the warm custard into the bowl and stir it with the cream until cool.

Chill the mixture in a refrigerator for about two hours.

Add two teaspoons of vodka or gin. This is entirely optional and is done solely for the purpose of making the ice cream less firm: home freezers are usually colder than commercial ice cream freezers, and the alcohol helps make the ice cream softer.

Churn the mixture for about 30 to 60 minutes (depending on your ice cream maker).

To make the caramel sauce:

Moisten a cooking pan with water to keep the sugar from sticking.

Heat the granulated sugar in the wet cooking pan until it turns caramel colored.

Stir in the cream, then stir in the butter.

Finally:

Break all but a few stroopwafel cookies into very small bits. The remaining cookies can be used as topping.

When the ice cream reaches the desired consistency, pour in the cookie bits and let it churn for a few more minutes.

Pour in the caramel sauce and let it churn for just a few more seconds.

Before serving, add one or two mini stroopwafel cookies as a topping.



Photos by Matthijs Mekking

Dessert

Banana Pudding with Meringue Topping

Eddy Winstead, North Carolina, United States

Eddy is ISC's sales engineer. He is an experienced trainer and public speaker and enjoys his normally heavy travel schedule of customer visits and NANOG conferences, but he's happy to be locked down at home now with his wife and children. This Piedmont/Eastern North Carolina recipe – straight from Eddy's mom – is a Deep South staple for gatherings, back when gatherings used to happen.



Ingredients

- 1 cup (201 g) sugar
 - 2 tbsp (16 g) flour
 - 2 cups (480 ml) milk
 - 4 egg yolks
 - 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla
 - bananas, sliced
 - vanilla wafers
- For the meringue:*
- 4 egg whites
 - 8 tsp (32 g) sugar
 - 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla

Combine all the pudding ingredients and cook them for 10-15 minutes in a double boiler. When it reaches a custard consistency, pour it over a layer of sliced bananas and vanilla wafers.

For the meringue, beat the egg whites until they stand in stiff peaks. Add sugar and vanilla, beating constantly. Spoon onto pudding base.

Bake in a preheated oven at 350 F (175 C) for about 10 minutes, until the meringue begins to brown on top.

Enjoy!



Photo by Jess Bailey on Unsplash

Banana Bread

Michał Kępień, Warsaw, Poland

Banana bread may not be a particularly “Polish” recipe, but it sure is delicious!

Ingredients

4 ripe bananas
75 g (1/3 cup) butter
1 egg
50 g (1/4 cup) sugar
1 tsp (5 g) vanilla sugar
300 g (2 1/3 cups) flour
1 tsp (5 g) baking soda
pinch of salt
bit of butter + flour to prepare the loaf pan



Melt the butter and pour it into a large bowl. Slice the bananas and add them to the melted butter. Mash it all together using a fork.

Beat an egg and add it to the mixture. Also add the sugar and vanilla sugar. Mix well with a fork.

Add flour, baking soda, and salt, and mix well.

Cover a loaf pan with a thin film of butter, then add a thin layer of flour on top. Transfer the mixture to the loaf pan.



Bake for ~60 minutes at 170 C (340 F) *without* convection/air assist. Use a toothpick to check that it is baked all the way to the bottom before taking it out of the oven. Enjoy!



Photos by Michał Kępień

Dessert

Ranger Cookies

Michael McNally, Alaska, United States

Home is beautiful wherever you are, right? But some homes are more beautiful than others, and Michael's surroundings in Alaska are simply amazing. He grew up in Michigan, where a friend shared this recipe, and these were his family's favorite cookies. He says, "It's a good thing that it makes a fairly large batch because my seven siblings and I were pretty competitive to see who could sneak the most." We're sure they'll be a big hit for your family too.

Ingredients

2 sticks (8 oz, 225 g) of butter, softened
2 cups (450 g) firmly packed dark brown sugar
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract
2 large eggs
2 1/2 cups (350 g) all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp (10 g) salt
1 tsp (5 g) baking soda
1/2 tsp (3 g) baking powder
1 cup (90 g) oatmeal
1 cup (80 g) shredded or flaked coconut
1 cup (170 g) semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 cup (30 g) Rice Krispies or similar puffed-rice cereal (essential!)

Combine butter, sugar, and vanilla and beat until smoothly blended.

Add eggs and fold until smooth. Avoid over-beating the eggs if possible.

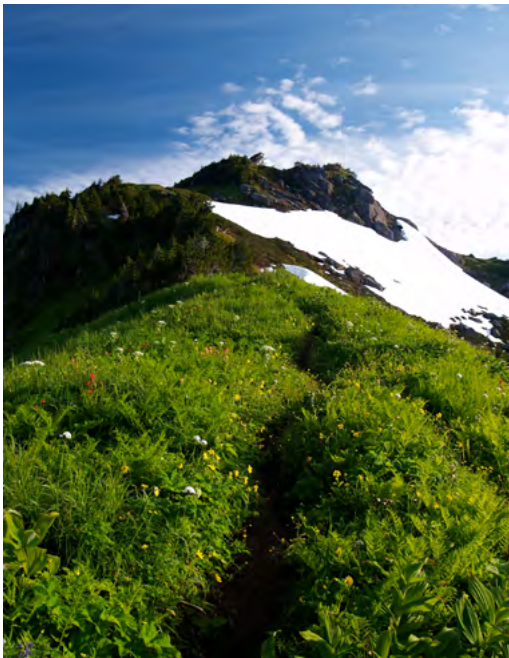
Fold in flour, salt, baking soda, and baking powder and mix until well-incorporated.

Then, in order, add the oatmeal, coconut, and chocolate chips, and gently fold in the puffed rice cereal by hand.

Optional but recommended: chill dough in refrigerator for at least 4 hours.

When you are ready to make the cookies, preheat the oven to 375 F (190 C). Drop cookies on a baking sheet in rounded balls approximate 1" to 1 1/4" (2-3 cm) -- cookies should be on the small side. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until they become light golden-brown. They are good across a fairly wide range of doneness but they are exceptional when you bake them to the point where the outside has just a bit of crunch while the inside remains delectably chewy. It may take you a bit of trial and error (and tasting of sample cookies) to identify this point.





Photos by Michael McNally

Dessert

Cheesecake

Marcin Siodelski, Gdańsk, Poland

This recipe was shared by a family friend of Marcin's more than 30 years ago, and it's still just as delicious today.

Ingredients

1 kg (2.2 lb) cream cheese
200 g (7 oz) softened butter
10 eggs, separated
1 cup (201 g) sugar
1 packet vanilla pudding powder
1 tsp (5 g) baking powder
vanilla sugar



Blend the cream cheese with the butter and sugar. Add egg yolks, pudding powder, and baking powder.

In a separate bowl, add one teaspoon of sugar to the egg whites and whip.

Mix everything together gently.

Bake at 170 C (340 F) for approximately 1 hour.

After baking, sprinkle the cheesecake with the vanilla sugar.



Photos by Marcin Siodelski

Cool Whip Pie

Eddy Winstead, North Carolina, United States

Our non-US readers may not be familiar with Cool Whip. Its manufacturer describes it as “Non-Dairy Whipped Topping,” which essentially means imitation whipped cream. You could certainly make this pie with real whipped cream – and it would probably taste better – but then you wouldn’t be getting the true flavor of Southern US cooking.

Ingredients

15 oz (450 g) crushed pineapple, drained

juice of 2 lemons

1 cup (130 g) chopped pecans

14 oz (420 ml) sweetened condensed milk

8 oz (240 g) Cool Whip (or whipped cream)

1 9” (22 cm) graham cracker pie crust

Mix all the other ingredients together and spoon into pie crust. Chill until set. Garnish with nuts or fresh fruit as desired.



Photo from <https://www.myfoodandfamily.com/>



Photo from <https://www.tasteofhome.com/>

Dessert

French Pastry with Apples

Michał Kępień, Warsaw, Poland

Once again, Michał has decided to treat us with something not technically Polish, but we are a global community and there's no reason to restrict ourselves to national boundaries. His family enjoys this yummy dessert and yours will too. This version calls for "ready-to-use" ingredients, although you could always make them from scratch if you want to keep yourself busy for a while. After all, we've got a lot of time to fill at home these days!

Ingredients

375 g (13 oz) premade French pastry

6 tbsp (75 g) roasted apples or chunky applesauce

1 tbsp (16 g) flour

2.5 tbsp (30 g) sugar

1 tsp (5 g) ground cinnamon

1 egg

For the frosting:

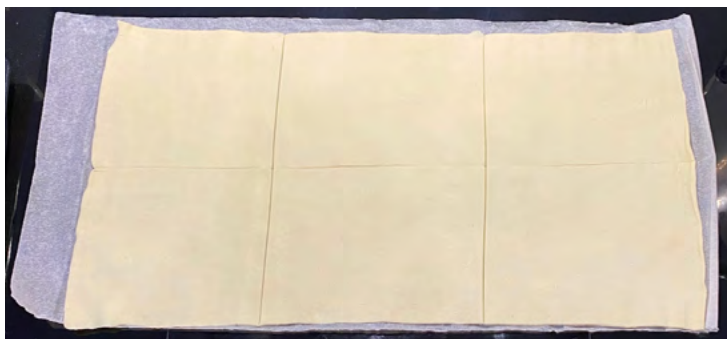
2 tbsp (30 ml) hot water

1/2 cup (64 g) powdered (confectioner's) sugar



Mix apples, sugar, ground cinnamon, and flour in a bowl. (You can skip the extra sugar if your roasted apples are already sweetened!)

Unroll the French pastry. Divide it into 6 equal pieces using a knife. Ideally, every piece should be square, but "close enough" is fine.



Put 1 tablespoon of the apple mixture in the middle of one of the pieces of French pastry. Create an egg wash by beating an egg with a tablespoon of water. Paint the edges of the French pastry piece with egg wash using a brush.



Form a triangle by folding the opposite corners of the French pastry piece. It might take a bit of wrestling if the piece is not square, but there's no need to worry too much about how the result looks.

Create a pattern on the edges by gently pushing down on the pastry with a fork. As you can tell from the photo below, it doesn't need to be perfect.

Repeat the process for the other five pastry squares.



Put a sheet of parchment paper on a baking pan and transfer your gorgeous French pastries there. Then coat them generously with egg wash using a brush.

Make three shallow cuts on each pastry to allow air to escape during baking.

Bake at 220 C (425 F) *without* convection/fan assist for ~20 minutes.



Ours came out slightly burnt, though perfectly edible.



OPTIONAL BONUS: FROSTING (it's easy!)

Mix the hot water and powdered sugar in a cup until completely blended. Pour over the warm pastry and enjoy!



Photos by Michał Kępień

Dessert

“Gingerbread” Honey Cake

Marcin Siodelski, Gdańsk, Poland

This special recipe is a Christmas treat for Marcin and his family.

Ingredients

250 g (1 1/4 cup) sugar

250 g (3/4 cup) honey

300 ml (10 oz) water

100 g (1/2 cup) butter or margarine

0.5 kg (1 lb) flour

1 large teaspoon baking soda

1 large tablespoon gingerbread spices (ground cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg)

3 eggs, separated

Mix the sugar, honey, water, and butter together until dissolved. Set aside to cool.

Mix the flour with the baking soda and spices. Pour the cooled honey mixture in and stir.

Add the yolks one at a time and continue stirring.

Whip the egg whites and gently stir into the cake batter.

Bake in a 30 cm (12 in) nonstick loaf pan for about 1 hour at 170 C (340 F).



Photo from <https://hollytrail.com/>

From all of us at ISC, thank you for reading!
We hope you've enjoyed our pandemic
cookbook. Be well, stay safe, and wash your
hands!

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