

Recipes from Thyme for Tea

From *Widow's Tears*, China Bayles #21

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Tomato Quiche with Basil and Green Onions

Quiche is a perfect dish for a light lunch or a quick supper. Served with soup and a small salad at Thyme for Tea, it's extra-special!

Single pie crust (use your favorite recipe)

1 teaspoon finely minced rosemary

Filling

3 green onions, tops and bottoms, finely chopped

1/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

1/4 cup oil

2 cups loosely packed fresh basil leaves

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

2 cloves garlic, cut in half

5 large eggs

1/2 cup evaporated milk or half-and-half

1/2 cup ricotta cheese

1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon freshly grated Parmesan cheese, divided

6 to 8 slices tomato, thin

To make the crust: Heat oven to 425°F. Prepare pie crust, adding minced rosemary to flour mixture. Roll out dough. Place in 9-inch pie plate or quiche dish and flute the edge. Bake 10 minutes. Set out to cool. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F.

To make the filling:

Sprinkle chopped green onions over bottom of pie shell and top with mozzarella cheese. In a food processor or blender, combine oil, basil, pepper, and garlic. Blend at high speed until smooth; set aside.

In a large bowl, beat eggs with an electric mixer until foamy. Add evaporated milk or half-and-half, ricotta cheese, and 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese. Beat on low speed to blend well. Continuing to beat, gradually add oil-basil mixture. Pour over cheese and onions in pie shell.

Bake 20 minutes. Remove from oven and top with tomato slices. Return to oven and bake an additional 25 minutes, or until center is firm (if serving hot). Immediately sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese. If serving warm or cold, remove from oven when center is barely firm: it will firm up as it cools.

Spring Green Bisque with Spinach and Basil

Luncheon soups have a special flavor when they come straight from the garden to your table. But this one is also good when the greens come from your neighborhood market.

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 small onion, diced

1 clove garlic, minced

2 cups fresh or frozen peas

2 cups fresh spinach leaves, washed, ribs/stems removed, chopped
3/4 cups fresh basil leaves, coarsely chopped
2 cups broth (chicken or vegetable), divided
1 cup sour cream
Salt, pepper to taste
1/4 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

In a large pan over medium heat, sauté onion and garlic in the olive oil until the onion is soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. (Be careful not to burn the garlic.) Add the peas, spinach, and basil. Cook, stirring, until the peas are thawed and the spinach and basil leaves are slightly wilted. Pour mixture into a blender or food processor. Add 1 cup of the broth and puree, adding more broth if necessary. Return the pureed mixture to the pot. Stir in the remaining broth, sour cream. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cook over medium heat until hot but not boiling. Place soup in four bowls. Garnish with chopped red bell pepper and grated parmesan.

Ruby's Romaine Salad

A treat to look at, as well as a taste treat!

Greens: spinach, Romaine, red leaf lettuce, other greens
1 roasted red sweet pepper
Sliced fresh mushrooms
Sweet red onion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Orange-Ginger dressing

To roast the pepper, slice it in half, remove the seeds and stem, and place under the broiler, peel-side up. Broil until the skin chars. With tongs or a fork, quickly place in a dish and cover tightly; allow to steam for a few minutes. Then pull off the charred skin and chop. Tear greens into bite-size pieces and arrange in 4 serving bowls. Add chopped peppers, sliced mushrooms, sliced onion, and Parmesan cheese. Toss with dressing.

Orange-Ginger Dressing

1/2 cup canola oil
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
4 tablespoons orange juice
2 tablespoons green onion tops, chopped
2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
1 teaspoon sugar
salt and pepper to taste

Place all ingredients in blender and mix until well-blended. Cover and chill for several hours to blend flavors.

Two-Bean Soup with Herbs

A hearty bean soup is welcome for lunch or supper. You can use your own home-cooked dry beans, or make it quicker and easier with canned beans. Pair with hot cornbread for an extra treat.

3 tablespoons olive oil
3 cups chopped onions (about 2 medium)
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh rosemary
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon ground bay
5 cups chicken or vegetable broth
2 cups cooked Great Northern or cannellini beans or 2 16-ounce cans, drained
2 cups cooked garbanzo beans (chickpeas) or 2 16-ounce cans, drained
Salt, pepper to taste
1/4 cup green onion tops, chopped
Sour cream

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in large pan over medium-high heat. Add onions and garlic and sauté until onions are soft, about 12-15 minutes. Add herbs and blend. Add broth and beans. Bring soup to boil; reduce to medium-low and simmer until flavors blend, about 10 minutes. In batches, transfer soup to blender and puree until smooth; return to pan. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle hot soup into 4-6 bowls. Top with green onions and a dollop of sour cream.

Garden-Style Cornbread

Cornbread is a traditional partner with bean soup. This garden-style cornbread, chock full of veggies, has a lot going for it!

2 tablespoons butter, for the baking pan
1 1/3 cups yellow cornmeal
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup buttermilk
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 green onion, top and white part, chopped
1 cup grated zucchini, unpeeled
1/2 cup seeded, finely chopped sweet red bell pepper
1/2 cup seeded, chopped tomatoes
2 tablespoons chopped green chile or jalapeño pepper
3/4 cup fresh or canned sweet corn
1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9" x12" baking pan or a large cast-iron skillet. In a mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk, eggs, and oil and mix well. Add the liquid ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix well. Fold in the vegetables and grated cheese. Pour the batter into the pan and bake for 35 minutes, until a tester comes out clean.

Rose-Geranium Pound Cake with White Chocolate Glaze

This traditional recipe has appeared on tea-tables for several hundred years and is a special favorite with herb gardeners. If you don't have rose geranium leaves, try peppermint, lemon, or lemon-rose. They're all deliciously fragrant.

6 pesticide-free rose-geranium leaves
3 1/2 cups sifted cake flour
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups unsalted butter, softened
1 2/3 cups sugar
8 egg yolks
1/2 cup half-and-half
2 teaspoons rosewater (use vanilla if you've substituted another geranium)
8 egg whites
1 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 340°F. Butter and flour a 10" tube pan (angel food cake pan). Line bottom with 6 geranium leaves.

Sift together flour, cocoa and salt. Mix well and set aside. In large mixer bowl, beat butter at medium speed until creamy. Gradually add 1 2/3 cups sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Set aside. In small mixer bowl, beat egg yolks at high speed until thick and lemon-colored, about 5 minutes. At medium speed, gradually beat egg yolks into butter-sugar mixture. Add sifted flour mixture alternately with half-and-half, beating until smooth after each addition. Beat in rosewater or vanilla. Set aside.

In a large bowl, beat egg whites at high speed until soft peaks start to form. Gradually add 1 cup of sugar, beating until stiff glossy peaks form. Fold this meringue into batter. Pour into prepared pan, spreading evenly. Bake on bottom rack of oven for 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 hours, until tester inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in pan set on rack 10 minutes. Remove from pan. Carefully remove leaves. Cool on rack.

White Chocolate Glaze

4 ounces white chocolate
Pesticide free rose-geranium leaves and blossoms for garnish

Melt white chocolate in top of double boiler over hot water, stirring often until smooth. Place cake on serving plate. Drizzle glaze over top. Garnish with rose-geranium leaves and blossoms.