

## Brie Cherry Pastry Cups

These fancy appetizers are a snap to prepare, and will look very festive on your holiday table. You can also fill the mini fillo cups with any other fillings you like.

36 mini fillo cups (I used Athens brand)

½ cup cherry preserves

4 oz. Brie cheese cut in ½" cubes

¼ cup chopped pecans

2 Tablespoons minced chives

Method: Arrange fillo cups on a large baking sheet. Spoon ½ teaspoon preserves into each cup. Top with cube of Brie; then sprinkle with nuts and chives. Bake in 375 degree F. oven for 3-5 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve immediately. Nutrition info. per individual cup: 40 calories, 2 gm fat, .5 gm sat. fat, 5 mg. cholesterol, 25 mg. sodium, 5 gm carbohydrate, and 1 gm protein. This recipe was adapted from Taste of Home, and the original recipe called for high-fat frozen puff pastry. This revised recipe saves about 20 calories per cup, and is also much simpler to prepare!

## Lightened Up Sweet Potato Casserole

This recipe was lightened up by substituting fat free evaporated milk for the butter and milk that the original recipe called for. I also switched to a healthier (and simpler!) topping of some plain granola. This dish would be convenient to make ahead of time, just add the granola when ready to bake. If your family really loves sweet potatoes, you may need to double the recipe since this recipe makes small servings. For a shortcut, you can purchase the fresh, cubed sweet potatoes which are often available in the pre-cut produce section.

4 cups peeled and cubed fresh sweet potatoes

½ cup white sugar

2 eggs beaten

½ teaspoon salt

½ cup fat free evaporated milk

½ teaspoon vanilla

1 cup granola for topping (I used the homemade recipe from the September show, minus the raisins)

Method: Cook sweet potatoes in boiling water to cover until potatoes are very tender. Drain and mash until smooth. In medium bowl, mix the sweet potatoes, sugar, eggs, salt, evaporated milk, and vanilla until smooth. Transfer to a greased 8" baking dish. Cover evenly with the granola. Bake in 325 degree oven for about 30 minutes or until heated through and granola is beginning to brown. Makes about 12 small serving, ¼ cup each. Nutrition info per serving: 140 calories, 3.5 gm fat, no saturated fat, 35 mg. cholesterol, 150 mg. sodium, 25 gm carbs, and 2 gm fiber, and 130% of your daily requirement for Vitamin A. Recipe adapted from [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com)

## Lightened Up Corn and Bean Bake

Scalloped Corn and Green Bean Casserole are both family favorites on many holiday tables. If you are looking for something new, why not combine them into this tasty casserole? The original recipe, using canned vegetables and full-fat ingredients, had twice as much fat, twice as many calories, and three times as much sodium.

- 1 16 oz. package frozen corn
- 1 16 oz. package frozen cut green beans
- 2 cans (10 ½ oz. each) reduced-fat, reduced-sodium cream of mushroom soup
- 1 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 cup reduced-fat shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 small green pepper, diced
- 2 cups French's fried onions for topping

**Method:** Cook corn and green beans until just tender. Set aside. In medium skillet sprayed with non-stick coating, sauté onion, celery and green pepper until tender. Add a little water if needed to help them steam. In large bowl, combine canned soup, sour cream, yogurt and cheese. Stir in cooked corn and beans, and sautéed onion mixture. Pour into a 9 x 13" baking pan, which has been coated with non-stick spray. Top with onion rings. Bake, uncovered, in 350 degree F. oven for about 40 minutes until heated through and bubbly around edges. Makes 12 generous servings. Nutrition info. per serving: 220 calories, 11 gm fat, 4.5 gm saturated fat, 15 mg. cholesterol, 430 mg. sodium, 22 gm carbs, 3 gm fiber, and 8 gm protein. This dish is also a good source of calcium. Recipe adapted from Taste of Home.

## Roasted White and Sweet Potatoes with Sage

If you have room in the oven, this dish makes a wonderful accompaniment, particularly if you are wishing for a simpler meal – this is two side dishes in one! If you don't have fresh sage, you can sprinkle some ground sage on the potatoes. Another idea: if you should be lucky enough to have some of the purple potatoes left from the Farmer's Market, you can use them in place of half of the sweet potatoes for a three-color potato dish.

1 pound white potatoes, peeled and cut in  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch cubes  
1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds fresh sweet potatoes, peeled and cut in  $\frac{3}{4}$ " cubes  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt  
30 medium fresh sage leaves, chopped  
Black pepper as desired

Method: Heat oven to 425 degrees F. Combine all ingredients in large bowl. Toss to coat. Spread mixture in single layer on large rimmed baking sheet. Roast until potatoes are tender and browned around the edges, stirring occasionally, about 40 minutes. Makes 6 generous servings, nutrition info. per serving: 200 calories, 9 gm fat, 1.5 gm saturated fat, 0 cholesterol, 220 mg. sodium, 28 gm carbs, 3 gm fiber, and 3 gm protein. Recipe adapted from [epicurious.com](http://epicurious.com)

## Slow Cooker Mushroom Stuffing

The USDA recommends that turkey should not be stuffed, but the stuffing should be left out of the bird and baked separately. Here's an easy way to free up your oven, and produce a very moist, tasty stuffing at the same time. If you have one of the new slow cookers with a cover that latches, it is also perfect for transporting to your family gathering.

12-13 cups cubed bread, (I used half wheat and half white, about 7-9 slices of each)  
6 tablespoons trans-fat free margarine  
8-10 oz. fresh mushrooms, sliced, I used an 8 oz. package  
2 cups diced onion  
2 cups diced celery  
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 and ½ teaspoons ground sage  
1 teaspoon onion powder  
½ teaspoon thyme  
½ teaspoon black pepper, or to taste  
1 quart chicken or turkey broth  
2 large eggs, beaten  
Cooked, chopped giblets, if desired

**Method:** Place cubed bread in 2 rimmed baking sheets and bake in 350 degree F. oven for about 30 minutes or until crisp, stirring occasionally. Remove from oven, cool, and store in a plastic bag until ready to use.

In a large skillet, melt margarine. Add onion, celery, and mushroom, and cook until vegetables are tender. Stir in spices and 1 cup of the broth and cook for one more minute.

In large bowl, combine dried bread cubes and vegetable mixture. In a separate bowl, beat eggs and combine with remaining broth. Stir into bread/vegetable mixture until evenly moistened. Add cooked diced giblets if using. Place into greased slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for one hour, then reduce heat to low and cook from 4 to 8 hours more until heated to at least 165 degrees F., adding more broth if needed. Makes 12 cups of stuffing, or about 16 - ¾ cup servings: Per serving: 130 calories, 5 gm fat, 1 gm sat. fat, 25 mg. cholesterol, 580 mg. sodium, 16 gm carbs, 3 gm fiber, and 5 gm protein (without any giblets used). Recipe adapted from King Arthur Flour, Holiday 2010 issue of The Baking Sheet.

## Spinach Salad with Cranberries

Here is a very festive looking salad, full of healthy ingredients, that requires almost no preparation! What more could you ask?

8 oz fresh spinach

½ cup crumbled Feta cheese, or goat cheese, or your favorite

¼ cup thinly sliced red onion

½ cup dried cranberries, such as Craisins

2 Tablespoons toasted sliced almonds

Dressing:

½ cup bottled balsamic vinaigrette dressing, well shaken, I used Paul Newman's

2 tablespoons orange juice

1 teaspoons grated orange zest

Method: Tear spinach into bite size pieces and place in serving bowl, or arrange salads on individual plates. Sprinkle on cheese, red onion and cranberries. Mix dressing ingredients and pour over salads. Garnish each serving with sliced toasted almonds. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings. Nutrition info per serving: 180 calories, 10 gm fat, 3.5 gm sat. fat, 15 mg. cholesterol, 470 mg. sodium, 20 gm carbs, 3 gm fiber, and 5 gm protein. Recipe from Ocean Spray Craisins.