

## Great Southern cornbread

"First thing I do is put the grease in my iron skillet, then I put it in a hot oven..."

That's how every good Southern cornbread begins. If you've ever lived in the South, or if you've spent time chatting or exchanging email with a Southerner, you probably know how particular they are about their cornbread. Considered a staple here, real Southern cornbread is near and dear to the hearts of all.

Cornbread was being made by Native Americans long before the first Europeans settled the Americas. The earliest cornbreads were called "pone", from the Algonquin word "apan", and were a simple mixture of cornmeal, salt, and water. No one really knows why cornbread recipes differ so much between the Northern and Southern states. Northern cornbreads use significant amounts of sugar and flour, while Southern cornbreads use very little or none at all.

In Southern Cooking (1928), Mrs. Dull advises: "If the batter is too thin, the muffins will be sticky; if too stiff, dry and tough. No flour is used in corn sticks, muffins or egg-bread. The real Southern cornmeal is sufficiently fine to hold the bread together. The bran is sifted from the meal".

Here in the South the supermarket shelves are stocked with a variety of cornmeal products, including self-rising meal, cornbread mixes and different grinds. If you can't find self-rising meal in your area, add 2 teaspoons of baking powder and 1/2 teaspoon of salt for each cup of regular meal.

### Cornbread Tips:

\* Sprinkle a little cornmeal in the hot pan before adding the batter. It will brown and add a crispier texture.

\* For a crusty cornbread, make sure there is a good "layer" of oil or shortening in the pan.

\* A tablespoon of mayonnaise can be substituted for the egg.

\* You can use all cornmeal, or lessen the amount of flour in the recipe.

\* Use muffin or cornstick pans (preferably iron), to vary the shape.

\* Instead of baking, fry the batter like pancakes.

### Broccoli Cornbread

2 boxes Jiffy™ corn muffin mix  
4 eggs, beaten  
1 1/2 sticks melted margarine (6 ounces)  
1 pkg. (10 oz) chopped broccoli, thawed and drained  
1 medium onion, chopped

1 cup cottage cheese  
Combine all ingredients and pour into greased 9- by 13-inch baking dish. Bake at 375° degrees for 35 to 40 minutes, or until brown.



Photo courtesy googleimages.com  
This delicious-looking slice of pie may not be the best choice for diabetics. But for those who need to watch their sugar intake, try the recipe on this page.

## Sweet potato pie without the sugar

By Betty Bryant

Contributing columnist

1 package cream cheese  
2 eggs, beaten  
3/4 cup Splender  
2 9-inch graham cracker crust  
2 packages instant sugar free vanilla pudding  
3/4 cup milk  
2 cups mashed sweet potatoes  
dash cinnamon  
1 1/2 cup cool whip  
1/2 cup nuts

Mix cream cheese and eggs, Splender, beat until fluffy. Spread in pie crust and bake 20 minutes. Cool. Stir together pudding mix, milk until smooth and thick. Add potatoes, add cinnamon. Mix well. Fold in 1 cup cool whip. Spread potatoes mixture on cool pie. Put remaining cool whip on top of pie. Add nuts.

Got a great recipe to share?

Send yours in today!

## Crock pot cooking for winter days

(ARA) – Cold winter nights are here and nothing says comfort like coming in the door and smelling a delicious and nutritious dinner just a moment away.

Crockpots, the wonderful invention of the late 1970s, make all that possible. First introduced by Rival under the trademarked name Crock-Pot®, they are a busy family's lifeline. Put the ingredients in the crock the night before, stick it in the fridge, turn it on before you leave for work, and by the time you walk in the door at night, it's done. Crockpot's insulator properties keep the cooking temperature even so it doesn't require constant

attention.

Many professional chefs are big fans of crockpots. Chef Ken Goodman, department chair for Culinary Arts at The Art Institute of New York City says "Nothing beats the crockpot for convenience, and with its slow, gentle cooking action, you can get beautiful, braised meats just loaded with flavor."

Among his favorite crockpot recipes is Crockpot Coffee Bean Pot Roast.

"Add your leftover fresh brewed morning coffee to the meat, vegetables and tomatoes, cook for 8 to 10 hours and you'll have an absolutely delicious meal waiting for you

when you get home," says Chef Goodman.

For something slightly more exotic, but just as easy, Chef Goodman likes a simple Crockpot Lamb Stew. "It's all about the slow cooking, and giving the meat and vegetables time to release all their flavors," he adds.

At the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Chef Odette Smith Ransome extols the virtues of crockpot cooking to her students. "Many of my students cook for their whole families, even though they are full-time students," she says. "I encourage them to use crockpots and experiment with different kinds of spices and vegetables" adds Chef Smith Ran-

some.

Chef Smith Ransome's crockpot cooking tips include:

\* Only fill the crockpot 3/4 full with liquid to avoid spill over when the food comes to a full boil. This is especially important if you won't be home when the crockpot is on.

\* A hot cooking trend now in restaurants is slow cooking and comfort foods. This is the bread and butter of the crockpot cooking approach. Pretty much whatever Grandma did can be done in a crockpot. Try some of her recipes and see for yourself.

\* When seasoning dishes for a crockpot, make sure to taste and season at the end of the cooking cycle as well. Spices can lose their strength as they cook.

Chances are you already have a crockpot sitting in your basement. If you haven't tried it recently, dust it off, add some ingredients and turn it on. The end-product will be better tasting, better for you, and more satisfying than take-out or pizza any night of the week.

Recipes Courtesy of  
Chef Ken Goodman  
The Art Institute of  
New York City

## Crockpot Coffee Beef Pot

Serves 4 to 6  
2 to 3 pounds beef shoulder or boneless chuck roast  
6 each carrots — peeled & diced  
1 lb. red skin potatoes, diced  
8 ozs. whole peeled canned tomatoes with juice, crush with your hands  
8 ozs. freshly brewed black coffee  
8 ozs. water  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Trim exterior fat from beef and season with salt and pepper. Place carrots and potatoes in the bottom of your crock pot. Place the beef on top of the vegetables and add remaining ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours or until tender.

Remove the beef and let it rest for 15 minutes before slicing. If desired, thicken the broth by whisking together six ounces of flour with six ounces of water to a smooth paste and then slowly whisk it into the hot liquid.

For more recipes visit The Art Institutes Web site at [www.artinstitutes.edu/nz](http://www.artinstitutes.edu/nz).

## How to choose the right seafood

(MS) — Do you know that one to two servings of fish per week can have measurable health benefits according to many doctors and dieticians? This is due in large part to the omega 3 oils found in many types of seafood, including salmon, tuna and other heartier fish. Omega 3 oils are valuable in the fight against coronary disease, high blood pressure, arthritis, asthma and depression. What's more, seafood is one of the only types of food that contains these oils in high quantities.

Despite its many health advantages, people oftentimes do not consistently add seafood to their list of home-cooked foods. One reason may be that they believe seafood is difficult to prepare. On the contrary; cooking seafood can be as easy as some of your standard menu items, particularly if you rely on products and recipes that will make creating winning dishes that much easier. In fact, it can be as simple as removing a fillet from an individual vacuumed package and placing it on the grill, in the oven or in the microwave.

### Choosing Seafood

• Always choose seafood that is bright, shiny, with most of its scales intact and adhering tightly to the skin. Each species has characteristic

markings and colors which fade and become less pronounced as the fish loses freshness. If you do not have a seafood merchant in your area, consider seafood that has been prepared and packaged to maintain freshness and flavor.

• Try to cook fresh seafood within a day or two of purchase.

• Seafood typically cooks faster than meats and poultry. Sometimes you can enjoy a seafood dish within minutes of cooking. Therefore, it's great in a pinch or when you're in need of a fast meal.

• Seafood is often lighter fare than meats, making it particularly appealing for warm-weather entertaining or for the health-conscious.

For convenient menu planning, consider Morey's Marinated Wild Alaskan Sockeye Salmon. It's ready-to-cook and comes already marinated in a blend of enticing backyard barbecue seasonings. Serve with your favorite vegetable or rice dish. To add a little more zest to a boring salad or pasta dish, add a cooked salmon fillet and toss.

Learn about more great menu ideas using Morey's and other easy to make seafood products at [www.symphonyof-seafood.com](http://www.symphonyof-seafood.com).

Good luck,  
Kristen!  
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