



Recipes

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

For family and consumer science foods class or for a club activity break the students up into several cooking groups. Have each group choose a different type of EGG cooking method that they would like to prepare from the list below (take into consideration some dishes will take much longer than others).

- Baked Custard
- Baked (Shirred) Eggs
- Basic Quiche
- Crepes
- Eggs Cooked in the Shell
- Fried Eggs
- Meringues
- Omelets
- Poached Eggs
- Scrambled Eggs
- Soufflé

Each group will then cook their dish. Once the cooking is complete, compare the different recipes - appearance, smell, taste, etc.



BAKED CUSTARD...

The Old-Fashioned Way

CUS-TARD (kus'terd) *n.* [*<L. crusta, crust*] 1. a mixture of eggs, milk, sugar, etc., cooked or baked.

Sound too technical to be that tender, delicious, comfort-in-a-cup, probably first served to you by your *Grandma*? With just a few staple ingredients (most of them in your refrigerator right now) you can put together this easy and nutritious dessert.

Eggs, milk, a dash of salt and some sugar and vanilla (for a sweetened custard) are all you need. The usual proportion is one egg and two tablespoons sugar to one cup of milk. Or you can substitute two egg yolks for one whole egg. The preparation couldn't be simpler! Just follow the step-by-step directions. Bake the custard in cups or a baking dish. You can sprinkle it with nutmeg, top with a simple sauce or created an elegant *Crème Brulee* with caramelized sugar.

And custard isn't just for dessert. Stir vegetables chopped meat or cheese into the egg-milk mixture for a main dish. You can even bake custard in your covered electric skillet or pressure cooker. Just follow manufacturers' directions.

The few calories in custard (197 per serving) certainly aren't empty. When you serve custard you're supplying high quality protein, vitamins and many important minerals. And because custards are so easy to eat and digest they are often recommended for infants and convalescents.

Read on for steps to success for perfect baked custard.

HERE'S HOW FOR PERFECT CUSTARD

- **Heat the milk** before blending with the beaten eggs for a shorter cooking time and evenly baked custard.
- **Add the hot milk gradually** to the beaten eggs, so they will not overcook.
- **Use a one-quart liquid measuring cup** or other container with a pouring spout to portion custard mixture into baking cups.
- **Test for doneness** by inserting a knife near but not at the center of the custard. If the knife comes out clean, the custard is done. The very center may not be quite done but the heat retained in the mixture will continue to cook it after you take it from the oven.

- **Set the cups in the baking pan before** pouring in the custard. Then put the pan with cups on the rack in the oven and pour in the hot water.
- **Pour hot water into the pan** around the custard to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the top of the custard. The hot water bath may seem a bother but is important for evenly-baked custard with satiny-smooth texture.
- **Use the proper oven temperature.** Too high a temperature will make the custard weep; at too low a temperature the custard will not cook.
- **Time baking carefully.** Too long and the custard will be rubbery and water. Too short a time and the custard will not set.
- **Take the custard out of the water bath** as soon as it tests done; otherwise the hot water will continue to cook it even after removal from, the oven.
- **Serve** custard warm, or chill to serve cold. Be sure to cover and refrigerate any leftovers.

6 STEPS TO A PERFECT BAKED CUSTARD

1. Beat together 4 eggs, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt until well blended.
2. Heat 3 cups milk until very warm. Gradually stir into beaten eggs. Blend in $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla.
3. Place six (6 oz) custard cups *or* $1\frac{1}{2}$ -quart casserole in a large baking pan. Pour custard into cups or casserole. Sprinkle top(s) with nutmeg.
4. Set baking pan on rack in oven. Pour very hot water into pan to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of top of custard.
5. Bake in preheated 350°F. oven until a knife inserted near center comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes for custard cups or 35 to 40 minutes for casserole. Remove immediately from hot water.
6. Serve warm or chilled. If desired, sprinkle baked custard with brown sugar and broil sugar just until it melts and bubbles.

CRÈME CARAMEL RECIPE

6 servings

The burnt-sugar topping for this elegant dessert is a little tricky but well worth the trouble.

- 1 cup sugar, divided
- 3 eggs
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 cups milk, heated until very warm
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

In small saucepan over medium heat, cook $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, stirring constantly until melted and deep golden brown. Remove from heat and immediately pour 1

tablespoon melted sugar into each of six custard cups. Set prepared cups in large baking pan. Blend together eggs, egg yolks and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar. Gradually stir in milk. Blend in vanilla. Pour into prepared custard cups. Put pan on rack in oven, then pour very hot water into pan to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of top of custard. Bake in preheated 350° F oven until knife inserted near center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Remove promptly from hot water. To serve warm, let stand 5-10 minutes at room temperature. Gently loosen custard from cups at sides with spatula and invert onto serving plate. To serve cold, chill and unmold.

CUSTARD PIE RECIPE

6 servings

The Amish are credited with the first written copy for this simple but delicious eggs and milk pie.

- 4 eggs
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 9-inch pie shell, unbaked
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

Beat eggs. Blend in milk, sugar, vanilla and salt. Place pie plate with prepared shell on oven rack. Pour egg mixture into shell. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Bake in preheated 350° F oven until knife inserted halfway between center and outside edge comes out clean, 40-50 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Serve warm or chilled. Will keep up to 2 days when stored covered in refrigerator.

NOTE: If using a frozen pie shell, it must be deep-dish size.

PASTRY SHELL RECIPE

single crust 9-inch

The egg lends a tenderness and a rich gold color to this flaky pastry.

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shortening
- 1 egg yolk
- 4 to 5 tablespoons ice water
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice

In large bowl stir together flour and salt. Cut in shortening until pieces are size of small peas. Blend together egg yolk, 4 tablespoons ice water and lemon juice with fork. Add liquid to flour mixture, mixing lightly with fork until dough just sticks together. Add more water, if necessary. Press into a ball. On lightly floured

surface or pastry cloth, rolling from center to edge, roll into 1/8-inch thick circle about 10 inches in diameter. Gently fit loosely into 9-inch pie pan or plate. Trim edge and flute, as desired.

For baked shell: prick bottom and sides with fork. If using metal pie pan, bake shell in preheated 450°F oven until golden brown, 8-10 minutes. If using pie plate, bake shell at 425°F. Cool on wire rack.

SURPRISE BAKED CUSTARD

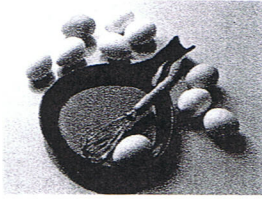
6 servings

For an excitingly different baked custard place one surprise ingredient in each cup before pouring in the basic custard mixture.

One tablespoon each:

- chopped nuts
- raisins
- flaked coconut
- fruit preserves
- drained canned fruit cocktail
- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon instant coffee (stir into custard).

For custard baked in casserole use six tablespoons of any one of the first five ingredients or stir in $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoons instant coffee.



BAKED (SHIRRED) EGGS . . .

Baked eggs can be in individual casseroles placed in a pan of hot water or water bath or; eggs baked in a dish often lined with flavoring foods, such as bacon or pate, and topped with cream, gravy or a sauce. Most commonly, eggs are baked in nests of other foods, such as vegetables or hollowed-out rolls, or shirred in milk or cream. In a covered pan which holds in steam, eggs can also be "baked" top of range, nestled in grains and/or vegetables, for meal-in-one convenience.

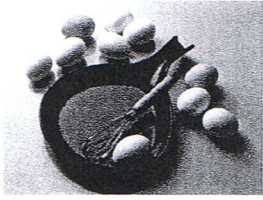
4 STEPS TO BAKED EGGS

1. For 1 to 2 servings, break and slip 2 eggs into greased ramekin, shallow baking dish or 10-ounce custard cup.
2. Spoon 1 tablespoon skim or 1% low-fat milk, half and half or light cream over eggs.
3. Bake in preheated 325°F oven until whites are completely set and yolks begin to thicken but are not hard, about 12 to 18 minutes, depending on number of servings being baked.
4. For eggs "baked" top of range, in omelet pan or skillet over medium heat, thoroughly heat grains, vegetables or sauce. With back of spoon, make indentations (about 2 inches in diameter) in heated foods. Break and slip an egg into each indentation, or into sauce. Cover. Cook until whites are completely set and yolks begin to thicken but are not hard, about 15 to 19 minutes.

HINTS

- For individual servings, use baking dishes that just fit the eggs plus the flavoring food or liquid - ramekins, custard cups, individual soufflé dishes or small oval bakers. Grease or spray the dishes if the eggs are to be broken directly onto the dish.
- When baking eggs in other solid foods or in liquids, preheat the solid or liquid before adding the eggs for faster and more even cooking.
- Check the eggs after about 10 to 12 minutes baking time. When done, the whites should be completely set and the yolks beginning to thicken but not hard. Spooning a liquid over the eggs or sprinkling them with shredded cheese can help prevent drying.

Modified from American Egg Board



BASIC QUICHE . . .

A quiche is, quite simply, an unsweetened custard pie. Despite its fancy French name, a quiche is a wonderful foil for leftovers, a fact well known to smart restaurateurs who often menu it as the "quiche of the day" and fill it with whatever undersold the previous day. It can be flavored with virtually any chopped, well-drained food ranging from the most pedestrian to the most chic.

3 STEPS TO A BASIC QUICHE

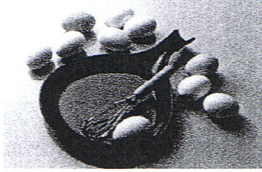
1. For 6 servings, sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup (2 to 4 oz.) reduced fat shredded cheese and $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 cup chopped, drained cooked vegetable, meat, fish, seafood, or poultry into 1 (9-inch) baked pie shell.
2. In medium bowl, beat together 6 eggs, 1 cup skim or 1% low-fat milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon herb or other seasoning and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, if desired, until well blended. Pour over cheese and vegetables.
3. Bake in preheated 375°F oven until knife inserted near center comes out clean, about 30 to 40 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

NOTE: If a frozen pie shell is used, a deep-dish style is needed.

HINTS

- Since it is generally baked in a crust which serves as insulation for the delicate custard, a quiche does not require a water bath.
- To prevent a pastry crust from becoming soggy, line the unbaked shell with aluminum foil, fill with pie weights, uncooked rice or dried beans and cover the rim of the shell with the edges of the foil. Bake in preheated 450°F oven until lightly browned at the edges, about 10 to 15 minutes. Lift out the foil and weights. Cool on a wire rack. Then, proceed with the recipe. This is sometimes called baking the crust "blind."
- The crust needn't be pastry, though. To suit modern-day fat concerns, try a quiche baked in a "crust" of complex carbohydrates. Combine any of the following with a beaten egg and press onto the bottom and up the sides of a lightly greased quiche dish or 9-inch pie plate: $1\frac{1}{2}$ cup to 2 cups cooked rice or orzo; 2 packages (10 oz. each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed, well-drained and pressed; 2 cups cooked, cooled mashed potatoes; $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups dry bread crumbs; or 2 can (19 oz.) garbanzo beans, drained, rinsed and mashed. For individual quiches, roll out slices of bread, use to line custard cups and toast in the oven before filling.

Modified from American Egg Board



CREPES . . .

Thin, Tender, Delicious, Easy, Elegant!

Crepe is a very thin pancake, easy to make, versatile and elegant. A crepe can wrap around almost any filling you can think of, including leftovers. And these skinny pancake packages can come to the table for dessert, appetizers, lunch, dinner or brunch.

To celebrate something extra special, have a Crepe Party! Any number of people can learn and participate. Do it at home, or in a meeting room, for groups of all sizes. Small or large, your party will be inexpensive and impressive.

A Crepe Party is good fun and, once you're organized, easy on the hostess. It may sound (or even look) chaotic, but it is really nothing more than group crepe making.

First, develop and perfect your own crepe-making skills, so you can demonstrate for the group. Then once you've shown them how, they are on their own. Just remember that fun and participation are the key words.

Here is how a party works. You set up a cooking station where guests cook a crepe or two each (from already prepared batter, of course). After each person has cooked her crepe he/she fills it with one or several of the fillings you provide. You need one cooking station for every 10 to 15 people. Use the Timetable, Supplies list and recipes that follow as your guidelines - and start planning your successful Crepe Party!

TIMETABLE FOR PLANNING YOUR CREPE PARTY

1. Select meeting spot several months in advance.
2. Send out publicity and invitations several weeks before.
3. Get guest count 1 to 2 weeks before.
4. Make a list, order food and supplies 1 week in advance.
5. Buy food: staples 2 to 3 days in advance, perishables the day before.
6. Set up tables and station 3 to 4 hours before.
7. Chop and prepare filling ingredients 2 to 3 hours before.
8. Prepare crepe batter and refrigerate 2 to 3 hours before.
9. Put batter and fillings at cooking station $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before.
10. Welcome guests, take care of introductions.
11. Demonstrate the art of Crepe Creation.
12. CREATE!

BASIC CREPE RECIPE

2 cups batter, 12 crepes

3 eggs

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

3 tablespoons butter, melted

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

Blender Method: Combine all ingredients in blender container. Blend about 1 minute. Scrape down sides of blender with rubber spatula, if necessary. Blend until smooth, about 30 additional seconds. Refrigerate batter for 1 hour.

Mixer, Rotary Beater or Whisk Method: Combine eggs, milk, water and butter in mixing bowl. Beat until combined. Add flour and salt. Beat until smooth. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

DESSERT CREPES

2 cups batter

3 eggs

1 cup milk

3 tablespoons butter, melted

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

Follow directions for Basic Crepe Recipe, adding sugar with other ingredients.

QUANTITY CREPE RECIPE

6 $\frac{1}{2}$ qts. Batter, about 100 crepes

Eggs	36 Large eggs or 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ pints
Salt	2 tablespoons
Flour	2 pounds
Milk	3 quarts
Butter, melted	1 pound

Beat eggs and salt until frothy. Add a small amount of flour, whip until smooth. Continue alternately adding small amounts of flour and milk, whipping until smooth after each addition. When all flour and milk have been added, slowly add melted

butter while whipping constantly. Cover batter and chill for at least 1 hour before making crepes.

NOTE: The exact number of crepes you can bake from this or any other batter depends on a variety of things; the batter itself, the size and the type of crepe pan you use, and your skill in pouring or dipping the batter.

4 STEPS TO PREPARING A CREPE

1. For the first crepe, brush the pan lightly with melted butter or use a cooking spray. Heat pan on medium-high heat until hot enough to make a drop of water dance. Pour in just enough batter (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) to cover bottom of pan.
2. Quickly tilt and tip pan to move batter over the bottom. Pour off any excess batter. Do not worry if the crepe has holes; just add a drop or two of batter to patch.
3. In just seconds the edges should be a golden brown and the top dry.
4. Loosen the crepe's edges with a spatula, if necessary. Then a simple flip of the wrist will remove the crepe from the pan. If you want, turn and brown the other side. If your crepe pan does not have a non-stick finish you may need to brush it with melted butter or cooking spray after each 2 to 3 crepes.

FILLINGS

Use your imagination when it comes to filling a crepe. Anything can be enclosed. There is no limit to the exciting possibilities. Leftovers are perfect crepe fillings. You can dice meat or vegetables to fold in a crepe. Sauce leftovers with white sauce, gravy, or canned soup for extra special crepe fillings. Vegetables are great in crepes. Try some of the new specialty or sauced frozen vegetables, or crisp-cook some from your own garden or freezer. Everyday ingredients can go in crepes to - like frankfurters, peanut butter and jelly, egg salad, or fruit flavored yogurt. Crepes filled with sweet things make magnificent desserts. Try orange marmalade, ice cream, strawberries and whipped cream, any flavor of pudding, canned pie filling or any fruit.

USE YOUR IMAGINATION FOR FOLDING A CREPE. HERE ARE SEVERAL FOLDS YOU MAY WANT TO TRY . . .

- The most popular crepe shape is the fold-over. Place the crepe, best-looking side down. Spoon filling in center. Fold one side over, covering the filling in the center. Fold over the opposite side, overlapping first fold. This shape is versatile because it is easy to do and shows off the filling.

- The roll-up is a good shape, especially for a soft spreadable filling. Place the crepe, best-looking side down. Spread the filling on one side of the crepe. Starting on one edge roll until entire crepe is in a log shape.
- The pocket fold keeps the filling tucked inside the crepe. Place crepe, best-looking side down. Spoon filling into center. Fold one side slightly overlapping filling, then fold the other side, overlapping the first side. Fold top and bottom almost to middle.
- The stack or gateau makes an impressive dessert, appetizer or main dish. Crepes are stacked with filling between layers. Lay crepes flat, spread filling over each crepe, leaving about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch border around edge. Stack until desired height.

HANDLING BAKED CREPES

Crepes are a great time saver because they keep well in the refrigerator or freezer, can be made in quantity and used as needed.

For immediate use, simply stack crepes, as they are baked, on a deep dinner plate, pie plate or other similar container. Keep crepes covered with foil, plastic wrap or a large pan and store at room temperature.

For use within a day or two, wrap stacked crepes well in foil or plastic and refrigerate until about an hour before ready to serve.

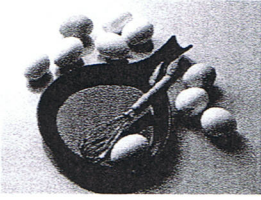
To freeze simply stack between layers of waxed paper and put in a sealed container for up to several weeks.

THE SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED FOR EACH STATION ARE . . .

1. One heat source (butane burner, hot plate, or burner of your range).
2. One crepe pan.
3. One butter plate and knife or cooking spray.
4. One pancake turner.
5. One ladle for each bowl of crepe batter (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
6. One serving plate per person.
7. Crepe batter.
8. Assortment of fillings.

The bowls of crepe batter and fillings can go between each 2 to 4 stations.

Modified from American Egg Board



EGGS COOKED IN THE SHELL. . .

HARD COOKED EGGS

Whether hard- or soft-cooked, this method is incorrectly called boiled eggs. Although the cooking water must come to a boil, more tender, less rubbery eggs without a green ring around the yolk are produced, and less breakage occurs, when the heat is turned off or the pan removed from the burner, allowing the eggs to cook gently in hot water.

Since, they are easy to chew and digest, soft-cooked eggs have long been served to children and the elderly. Western Europeans regularly present soft-cooked eggs in an egg cup, often using an egg scissors, a unique tool to cut off the top of an egg - shell and all - so the egg can be eaten directly from the shell. Crunchy toast fingers or "soldiers" accompany the soft, comforting eggs.

Chopped, sliced or wedged, hard-cooked eggs are the basis of egg salad and add protein and a happy glow to tossed and composed salads and casseroles. Chopped yolks and whites comprise Eggs Goldenrod and Polonaise Sauce. Whole hard-cooked eggs become comforting, familiar deviled eggs or zingy, newly rediscovered pickled eggs. Simply sprinkled with an herb or more fancily coated in sausage for Scotch eggs, hard-cooked eggs are nature's own hand-held snack food. And, young and old alike enjoy using hard-cooked eggs as an art medium at Easter.

7 STEPS TO HARD-COOKED EGGS

1. Place eggs in single layer in saucepan. Add enough tap water to come at least 1 inch above eggs.
2. Cover. Quickly bring just to boiling. Turn off heat.
3. If necessary, remove pan from burner to prevent further boiling. For hard-cooked eggs, let eggs stand, covered, in the hot water about 15 minutes for Large eggs. (12 minutes for Medium, 18 minutes for Extra Large).
4. Immediately run cold water over eggs or place them in ice water until completely cooled.
5. To remove shell, crackle it by tapping gently all over.
6. Roll egg between hands to loosen shell.
7. Peel, starting at large end. Hold egg under running cold water or dip in bowl of water to help ease off shell.

To segment eggs evenly, various styles of egg slicers and wedgers are available. For chopped eggs, rotate a sliced egg 90° in the slicer and slice again. No slicer? A sharp pastry blender and a bowl work, too. When a wedger's wires are drawn down only partway, an egg can be opened to hold a stuffing or resemble a flower.

SOFT-COOKED EGGS

Let eggs stand, covered, in hot water, about 4 to 5 minutes. Immediately run cold water over eggs or place them in ice water until cool enough to handle.

To serve out of shell: Break shell through middle with knife. With teaspoon, scoop egg out of each shell half into serving dish.

To serve in egg cups: Place egg in cup small end down. Slice off large end of egg with knife or egg scissors and eat from shell with spoon.

HINTS

- Piercing, puncturing the large end of the eggshell with a sharp tool before cooking, may allow some air to escape to help avoid cracking and water to enter which may make peeling easier. But, piercing also creates hairline cracks in the shell through which bacteria can enter after cooking, making piercing a food safety concern. Unless sterilized, the piercer, thumbtack, pin or needle itself can introduce bacteria.
- To avoid a harmless, but unsightly, greenish ring around hard-cooked yolks, avoid overcooking and cool the eggs quickly after cooking by running cold water over them or placing them in ice water (not standing water) until they are completely cooled. The ring is caused by sulfur and iron compounds naturally reacting at the surface of the yolk. It is usually brought on by overcooking or a high amount of iron in the cooking water. Once the eggs have cooled, refrigerate them in their shells until use.
- Very fresh eggs may be difficult to peel. The fresher the eggs, the more the shell membranes cling tenaciously to the shells. Though many techniques to make peeling easier have been tried, the simplest method is to buy and refrigerate eggs a week to ten days in advance of hard cooking. This brief "breather" allows the eggs to crackle the shells until they have a fine network of lines all over. Eggshells usually come off much more readily, without tearing the whites, when they are in small pieces rather than large chunks.
- Hard-cooked eggs in the shell can be refrigerated up to one week. Hard-cooked eggs out of the shell should be used immediately.
- Coddled eggs made by very briefly immersing an egg in the shell in boiling water are not sufficiently cooked to satisfy today's food safety concerns. Eggs cooked in coddlers (porcelain, heat-proof glass, pottery or ceramic cups

with screw-on lids) submerged in simmering or boiling water should be cooked until the whites are completely set and the yolks have begun to thicken but are not hard.

- Shell cracking is most likely when eggs are cooked for too long and/or at too high a temperature because steam builds up more rapidly than the eggs can "exhale" it. Too rapid cooking is why eggs cannot be cooked in the shell in the microwave - they will very likely explode. Overcooking produces enough steam to rupture the shells; proper cooking alleviates the problem. Cracking is particularly likely to occur if more than one layer of eggs is cooked at a time in rapidly moving boiling water which causes the eggs to bump against one another.

EGGS WITH LEGS (DEVEILED EGGS)

6 servings

This recipe is called "Eggs with Legs" because of its portability. You know that no two people make deviled eggs the same way - some use sour cream and salsa; some may and dill. What is so terrific is that this method is not only cleaner and easier, but also more fun. Kids will love doing it too.

6 hard-cooked eggs

2 tablespoons mayonnaise, dairy sour cream or plain yogurt

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon prepared mustard

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon juice, herb or seasoning blend

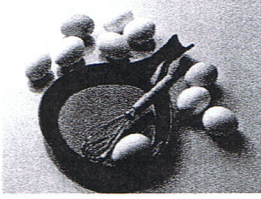
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper

1. Hard-cook 6 eggs (follow *7 Steps to Hard-Cooked Eggs* above).
2. Cut eggs in half lengthwise. Place yolks in 1-quart zip-lock plastic bag.
3. Place remaining ingredients in bag with yolks. Press out air.
4. Close bag. Knead until contents are thoroughly blended.
5. Push contents toward corner. Snip about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch off corner of bag.
6. Squeezing bag gently, fill reserved whites with yolk mixture. Chill to blend flavors.

NOTE: If you are toting deviled eggs to a location, prepare the yolk mixture in the bag as instructed. Tote the egg white halve in another bag. Pack both bags on ice or commercial coolant in an insulated bag or cooler to keep them cold. Remember to pack scissors. You will need them to cut the corner off the filling bag so the yolk mixture can be piped into the egg white halves on site.

Modified from American Egg Board



FRIED EGGS . . .

Is anything more evocative of breakfast than a bright sunny-side up egg? Many Americans are so fond of fried eggs that they are quite particular about how they prefer them - basted (with hot fat), steam-basted (with water in a covered pan), over easy (lightly cooked on the second side), or over hard (fully cooked on both sides). While some prefer their eggs cooked over high heat, brown, lacy, crisp edges signify overcooked protein. Cooking slowly over gentle heat better preserves nutrients and also helps ensure even heat penetration, an important food safety consideration.

HINTS

- Very fresh eggs produce the best shape - an elongated oval with a thick white closely hugging, rather than spreading around, a high-standing yolk.
- A nonstick pan eliminates or, with cooking spray, reduces the need for added fat. The steam-basted method requires just a tad of fat to lightly grease the pan and the microwave method, none at all.

3 STEPS TO PREPARING FRIED EGGS

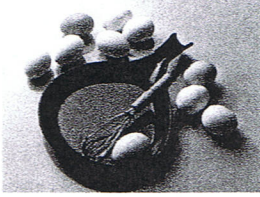
1. For 1 to 2 servings, in 7-to 8-inch omelet pan or skillet over medium-high heat, heat 1 teaspoon to 2 tablespoons butter or cooking oil (or use cooking spray) until just hot enough to sizzle a drop of water. If a very large pan is used, more butter will be needed. Break and slip 2 eggs into pan. Immediately reduce heat to low.
2. Cook slowly until whites are completely set and yolks begin to thicken but are not hard, covering tightly with lid (adding 1 teaspoon water after edges turn white for steam-basted, if desired), spooning butter over eggs to baste or turning eggs to cook both sides).
3. For over easy or over hard, gently lift eggs with pancake turner and flip upside down into pan to cook second sides.

STEAM-BASED: Reduce butter to just enough to grease pan or use light coating of cooking spray and/or nonstick pan. In 7- to 8-inch omelet pan or skillet over medium-high heat, heat butter until just hot enough to sizzle a drop of water. Break and slip eggs into pan. Immediately reduce heat to low. Cook until edges turn white, about 1 minute. Add 1 teaspoon water. (For more eggs, decrease preparation

slightly for each additional egg being cooked). Cover pan tightly with lid to hold in steam. Cook until whites are completely set and yolks begin to thicken but are not hard.

MICROWAVE

Omit butter. Break and slip eggs into a lightly greased or sprayed pie plate. Gently prick yolks with tip of knife or wooden pick. Cover with plastic wrap. Cook on 50% power just until eggs are almost done, about 2 to 3 minutes. Let stand, covered, until whites are completely set and yolks begin to thicken, but are not hard, about 30 seconds to 1 minute.



MERINGUES

No one knows which clever cook first discovered the wonderful results of whipping egg whites and then sweetening and stabilizing the airy mixture with sugar. We do know that the name, meringue, probably comes from the European town of Mehrinyghen, where a 16th century pastry chef created memorable desserts from those simple ingredients.

A meringue can do many things: top a pie, pudding or cake; swirl with nuts, dried fruits or coconut to become cookies or candies; lighten elegant fillings; smooth frozen desserts; even insulate ice cream for a trip to the oven.

Meringue begins with egg whites which are liquid. As you beat the clear, almost opalescent liquid you incorporate air, first in large bubbles, then in countless tiny air cells. The liquid becomes white foam increasing seven or eight times in volume!

The foam is a delicate mixture, though, and begins to return to the liquid state quickly unless stabilized. This is why acid ingredients, such as cream of tartar, vinegar, or lemon juice are added before beating. Sugar also stabilizes the foam and turns it into a meringue.

When heated, the air cells expand and the protein coagulates around them, giving permanence to the foam. This leavening property of egg white is responsible for the airy structure of angel food, sponge and chiffon cakes, soufflés, puffy omelets and meringues.

SIMPLE STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL MERINGUES

- Be sure beaters and bowls are sparkling clean and free from any fat. Use only metal or glass bowls; plastic bowls, even clean ones, can have a greasy film that can prevent foaming.
- Separate the eggs carefully. Be sure not even a bit of yolk gets in with the whites because fat in the yolk can keep the foam from forming. Separate the eggs while they are cold.
- Let egg whites stand at room temperature for about half an hour after separating. They will whip to greater volume than if beaten when cold.
- Add 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar (or other acid ingredient as recipe directs) for each egg white before beating.

- Beat with rotary beater, whisk or electric mixer at high speed just until foamy. Then gradually begin adding sugar, about 1 tablespoon at a time, beating as you slowly sprinkle the sugar in. Adding sugar too quickly can keep the foam from forming. Be sure to move the beaters or the bowl so all the egg/sugar mixture reaches the beaters. Continue to beat at high speed until the sugar is dissolved and whites stand in soft or stiff peaks, depending on recipe directions.
- Check to be sure the sugar is dissolved by rubbing a bit of meringue between your thumb and forefinger. If you can still feel sugar crystals, beat some more.
- Soft peaks are mountains of meringue that come up as you lift the beaters and then fold over at the tips.
- Stiff peaks are mountains whose peaks remain upright after you lift the beaters away.
- Choose a dry, not humid, day to make meringue. Because of the high sugar content it can absorb moisture from the air and become limp and sticky.

HARD MERINGUES AND SOFT MERINGUES

The difference between these two, in addition to texture, is in the amount of sugar added and the cooking.

Soft meringues top pies, pudding and Baked Alaskas. A soft meringue uses 2 tablespoons of sugar for each egg white and is beaten to soft peaks. Soft meringues can be baked on pies, or poached in milk to top custard for Floating Island. Pie meringues should go on hot fillings and be swirled to seal to the pastry all around. Bake as recipe directs.

Hard meringues require $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (4 tablespoons) sugar for each egg white. Hard meringues are baked or, more accurately, dried in a low oven. The meringue mixture for hard meringues is beaten to stiff peaks and then formed with the back of a spoon into large or small nests or shells on baking sheets, or piped onto baking sheets through a pastry tube. The mixture can also be swirled into a greased pie plate, cake pan or springform pan for baking. Prepare baking sheets for hard meringues by greasing with unsalted shortening or lining sheet with waxed paper, brown paper or foil.

Hard meringues can be stored in an air-tight container for several weeks. If it does lose its crispness, reheat it in a preheated 250°F oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

STEP BY STEP TO A DOZEN PERFECT MERINGUE SHELLS

Follow these directions for individual hard meringue shells. For large shells follow directions under Italian Meringue. For soft meringues see recipe for Lemon Meringue pie.

1. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cream of tartar to 4 room temperature whites.
2. Beat whites till foamy, then very gradually add 1 cup sugar.
3. Beat at high speed until stiff peaks form.
4. Rub a bit of meringue between thumb and forefinger to be sure sugar is dissolved.
5. Using about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup for each meringue, shape into shells on paper-lined baking sheets. Bake in preheated 250°F oven until firm and delicately browned, about 50 minutes.
6. Turn oven off. Leave meringues in oven for 1 hour. Fill shells with fresh fruit, custard or pudding.

BAKED ALASKA

8 to 10 servings

The meringue insulates the ice cream when this impressive dessert takes its quick trip into the oven.

3 pints ice cream, partially softened

6 egg whites

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cream of tartar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 (8- or 9-inch) round sponge, brownie or other cake layer

Line $\frac{1}{2}$ quart round mixing bowl (7 to 8 inches in diameter) with aluminum foil. Press ice cream firmly into bowl and freeze until firm, at least 2 to 3 hours. Preheat oven to 450°F. Beat egg whites and cream of tartar at high speed until foamy. Add sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating constantly until sugar is dissolved* and whites are glossy and stand in soft peaks. Beat in vanilla. Place cake on oven-proof serving plate. Remove ice cream from bowl and put on cake, flat side down. Remove foil. Working quickly, cover all of ice cream and sides of cake completely and evenly with meringue. Spread meringue in attractive swirls. Bake on lowest rack in preheated oven until peaks are lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

*Rub just a bit of meringue between thumb and forefinger to feel if sugar is dissolved.

BOILED FROSTING OR ITALIAN MERINGUE

About 4 cups

A hot syrup stabilizes the foam in this recipe. Use a cake frosting, a dessert topping, a pie meringue or a hard meringue. French cooks also use it in butter cream fillings and sherbets.

1 cup sugar

1/3 cup water

3 egg whites

1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

In small saucepan combine sugar and water and boil to 238° to 240° F or until syrup forms a soft ball when dropped into cold water. Meanwhile, beat egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff but not dry or until whites no longer slip when bowl is tilted. Very slowly pour the hot syrup in a very thin stream over the beaten whites, beating constantly until cool.

Spread on 2 (8- or 9-inch) cake layers or 1 (10-inch) tube cake

OR use to top pudding or other desserts

OR form 2 (9-inch) or 12 (3-inch) shells on greased or paper-lined baking sheets

OR spread mixture over bottom and up sides of 2 greased 9-inch pie plates and bake in preheated 225° F oven until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 1 hour.

LEMON MERINGUE PIE

6 to 8 servings

Sometimes a meringue may weep - a small amount of liquid accumulates between the meringue and filing. This is less likely to happen if the filing is hot when the meringue is put on. Also be sure the meringue is sealed to the crust all around the edges of the pie, so it will not shrink while baking.

2 cups sugar, divided
1/3 cup cornstarch
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups cold water
1/2 cup lemon juice
5 eggs, separated
2 teaspoons butter
1 to 3 teaspoons grated lemon peel
1 (9-inch) pie shell, baked
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

In large saucepan combine 1 1/2 cups of the sugar, cornstarch and salt. Gradually stir in water and lemon juice until smooth. Beat egg yolks and blend into sugar mixture. Add butter. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat until mixture thickens and boils. Boil, stirring constantly, 1 minute.

Remove from heat and stir in lemon peel. Pour hot filling into baked pie shell. In large mixing bowl beat egg whites and cream of tartar at high speed until foamy. Add remaining 1/2 cup sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time. Beating constantly until sugar is dissolved* and whites are glossy and stand in soft peaks. Beat in vanilla. Spread meringue over hot filling, starting with small amounts of edges and sealing to crust all around. Cover pie with remaining meringue, spreading evenly in attractive swirls. Bake in preheated 350°F oven until peaks are lightly browned, 12 to 15 minutes. Cool at room temperature.

*Rub just a bit of meringue between thumb and forefinger to feel if sugar is dissolved.

ANGEL FOOD CAKE

1 (10-inch) tube cake

This classic cake is simply a meringue plus flour. Fold gently, but thoroughly, so you don't lose any of the air bubbles. Top cake with custard sauce, fresh fruit or whipped cream, or serve it plain.

12 egg whites

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons cream of tartar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon almond extract

1 cup sifted cake flour

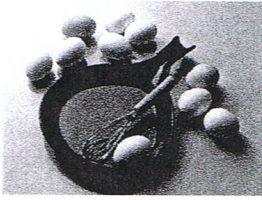
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups confections' sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

In large mixing bowl beat egg whites and cream of tartar at high speed until foamy. Add the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating constantly until sugar is dissolved* and whites are glossy and stand in soft peaks. Beat in vanilla and almond extract. Sift flour, confectioners' sugar and salt together twice. Sift about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour mixture over egg whites and gently fold in just until flour disappears. Repeat folding in remaining flour mixture $\frac{1}{2}$ cup at a time. Turn into ungreased 10-inch tube pan. Gently cut through batter with metal spatula. Bake in preheated 375° F oven until top springs back when touched lightly with finger, 30 to 40 minutes. Invert cake in pan on funnel or bottle neck.

* Rub just a bit of meringue between thumb and forefinger to feel if sugar is dissolved.

Modified from American Egg Board



OMELETS . . .

Fun, Versatile, Economical and Elegant!

Want to entertain at home? Have an Omelet Party! Everyone can participate and have fun and you will make your reputation as a hostess. Do it at home or in a meeting room, for groups of all sizes. Or try an Omelet Party as a fund raising event in a public spot or meeting room. Small or large, an Omelet Party is easy to put together, inexpensive and impressive!

An Omelet Party is nothing more than group omelet making. It may sound (and even look) chaotic, but it is surprisingly good fun.

First, develop and perfect your own omelet-making skills so you can demonstrate for the group. Then, once you have shown them how, they are on their own.

Here is how a party works. You need one cooking station for every 10 to 15 guests. Plan on about 2 minutes for everyone to cook his/her omelet.

TIMETABLE FOR PLANNING YOUR OMELET PARTY

1. Select meeting spot several months in advance.
2. Send out publicity and invitations several weeks before.
3. Get final guest count 1 to 2 weeks before.
4. Make a list, order food and supplies 1 week in advance.
5. Buy food: staples 2 to 3 days in advance, perishables the day before.
6. Set up tables and station 3 to 4 hours in advance.
7. Chop and prepare filling ingredients 2 to 3 hours before.
8. Break eggs and mix with water $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before.
9. Put food at cooking stations $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before.
10. Welcome guest, take care of introductions.
11. Demonstrate the art of Omelet Creation.
12. CREATE!

40-SECOND OMELET

1 serving

2 large eggs

2 tablespoons water

Salt and Pepper to taste (optional)

HINTS

- Do not start cooking until you have all ingredients, including the beaten eggs, prepared fillings, and serving plates, at hand.
- If serving a crowd, premix eggs and water. Then use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measure for each omelet. Decrease water to 1 tablespoon per egg when mixing more than one dozen eggs.
- Garnish omelet with a little of the filling to identify what is inside.

6 STEPS TO PREPARING A 40-SECOND OMELET

1. Mix the omelet ingredients with a fork or a whisk, just until blended.
2. In 10-inch non-stick omelet pan over medium-high heat, heat butter or use cooking spray until just hot enough to sizzle a drop of water. Pour the egg mixture into the pan. It should set at the edges almost immediately.
3. With an inverted pancake turner, push cooked portions from the edges of the pan toward the center so uncooked portions can spill on the hot pan surface (Dig a hole and fill it!).
4. Tip and tilt the pan so the uncooked portion can get to the bottom of the pan, keeping the bottom of the pan covered with egg.
5. When the top is thickened and no visible liquid egg remains, fill one half of the omelet. Put filling on the left side if you are right handed and the right side if you are left handed. The whole process should take no more than a minute.
6. Fold one side over the filling with the turner. Invert to serve . . . simply turn the pan upside down over the plate and the omelet will land with its prettiest side up.

FILLINGS

Omelets are delicious served plain, but the addition of fillings makes an endless variety of omelets possible. There is no limit to the range of exciting ideas.

Vegetables are great in omelets! Try some of the new specialty or sauced frozen vegetables, or crisp-cook some of your own garden or freezer. Leftovers too are perfect omelet fillings. You can dice meat or vegetables to fold in an omelet. Sauce leftovers with white sauce, gravy or canned soup for extra special omelet fillings. Everyday ingredients can go in omelets too, like peanut butter and jelly;

bacon, lettuce and tomato; pizza sauce and mozzarella cheese; fruit flavored yogurt. And omelets filled with sweet things make magnificent desserts. Try orange marmalade or fruit preserve, strawberries and sour cream, canned pie filling or any diced or sliced fresh, frozen or canned fruit.

THE SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED FOR EACH STATION ARE . . .

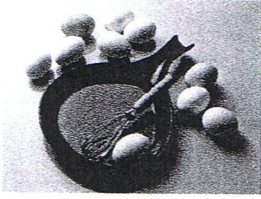
1. One heat source (butane burner, hot plate, or burner on your range).
2. One omelet pan.
3. One butter plate and knife or cooking spray.
4. One pancake turner.
5. One ladle for each bowl of egg mixture. Most standard kitchen ladles hold $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, the perfect amount of the egg mixture for an individual omelet.
6. One serving plate per person.
7. Egg mixture.
8. Assortment of fillings.

The bowls of egg mixture and fillings can go between each two to four stations.

AMOUNT OF FOOD NEEDED

Ingredients	Number of Persons				
	1	10	20	50	100
Eggs, Large	2	20	40	100	200
Shredded Cheese	1 to 1 1/3 oz.	10 oz. to $\frac{3}{4}$ lb.	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	3 to 4 lbs.	6 to 8 lbs.
Cubed Ham	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup or 2 2/3 oz.	1 to 2 lbs.	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 lbs.	8 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 10 lbs.	17 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 lbs.
Chopped Onion	1 to 2 Tbsp.	$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 lbs.	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 lbs.
Bacon, cooked and crumbled	1 to 2 slices	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 lb.	1 to 2 lbs.	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 lbs.	5 to 10 lbs.
Mushrooms, sliced, canned, drained	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	8 (4 oz. cans)	16 (4 oz. cans)	2 (68 oz. cans)	4 (68 oz. cans)
Green pepper, chopped	1 to 2 Tbsp.	$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 lb.	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 lbs.
Vegetables, frozen, cooked, drained	2 oz.	2 (10 oz. pkgs.)	4 (10 oz. pkgs.)	10 (10 oz. pkgs.)	20 (10 oz. pkgs.)
Salt/Pepper	One set Per Station				

Modified from the American Egg Board



POACHED...

Versatile, Simply Sensational!

Poaching is one of the easiest ways to cook an egg. It requires two basic skills: heating water and cracking eggs. You'll find pointers included in this handout to help you refine those skills. But, the basics are quite simple.

And, the results can be wonderfully rewarding. A properly poached egg is an elongated white oval similar in shape to the ovoid of the egg's shell. Embraced within the tender, opaque cooked white is the rich, flowing, flavorful yolk. Although some prefer their egg yolk cooked until firm, purists demand the thick, golden sauciness of a lightly cooked yolk.

The word poach comes from the French *poche*, which means pouch or pocket, referring to the yolk, smoothly pocketed in its white. Webster says that to poach is "to cook in a liquid kept just below the boiling point".

When you slip eggs into gently simmering water, the thin white tends to drift to the water's surface. And if you're poaching several eggs at one time, they seem to literally disappear under these white feathery wings. This is why the Viennese refer to poached eggs as "Lost Eggs."

Most often eggs are simply poached in plain water. Some cooks suggest that vinegar can help set the egg whites, keeping them intact as the egg cooks. Others indicate that salt is the important additive to the cooking water for the same reason. Research in the American Egg Board test kitchen shows that while vinegar or salt may stabilize the whites to some degree, they also add a slight flavor to the eggs. Neither are necessary.

Water, though, is not the only liquid in which eggs can be poached. Broth - beef, chicken, vegetable or even fish - can be used. They will add flavor as well as conduct the heat and can be eaten along with the eggs. Or, try vegetable juice cocktail, tomato juice, beer or wine. Be forewarned, though. Just as eggs will absorb the flavor of the poaching liquid, they will also absorb the color of the wine!

Soups are great for poaching eggs, too. The eggs add protein, making a simple soup a full meal. Almost any canned soup is a good poaching possibility: tomato, consommé, gumbo, onion, or vegetable. And cream soups can double as both the poaching medium and a sauce. Try "cream of anything" and then ladle the soup and eggs over noodles, rice, toast points or English muffin halves. Soups made from packets, pouches, mixes or from scratch work equally as well.

For nutritious, home-style treat, poach eggs in milk and then serve the eggs and the milk over buttered toast or your favorite hot cereal.

Choose the poaching liquid based on your own taste preference and calorie needs. When poached in water, large eggs are low in calories - only 80 each! And, as you will see from the suggestions under "Poaching Possibilities", they can make dieting a delicious proposition.

Since poached eggs are very easy to digest and require little chewing, they can be served to toddlers, not-so-youngsters and anyone in between. Another benefit that makes poached eggs a good menu choice is their low cost. Eggs are one of today's best food buys! Since a dozen Large eggs weights $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, their cost per pound is only $\frac{2}{3}$ the price per dozen. And, for all their economy, eggs provide high-quality protein, all the vitamins except vitamin C, and a host of minerals with practically no waste.

POACHING POSSIBILITIES

Poached eggs can come to the table plain or fancy. For some, pristine poached eggs on toast or English muffin halves is THE way to start a day. Other folks feel that a brunch is not a brunch unless classic Eggs Benedict are on the menu. A number of famous restaurants have specialties that vary the Benedict theme by replacing the Canadian bacon with creamed spinach or artichoke bottoms.

But, poached eggs need not be reserved for a grand breakfast or brunch. They can be served throughout the day. Consider these possibilities:

- Spread toasted sourdough or whole wheat English muffins with deviled ham, then top with poached eggs. Lavish with a cheese sauce.
- Hash takes on regal airs when it's crowned with a poached egg. Mustard sauce or chili sauce makes good go-alongs.
- When tomatoes are at their very best, scoop out the pulp of the medium-sized ones, warm through and then slip in a poached egg or two. Sprinkle with buttered crumbs, shredded cheese, snipped fresh parsley or crushed dried herbs for a simple, but savory, finish.
- Any creamed vegetable can become a satisfying main dish when topped with poached eggs. Creamed spinach, for example is transformed into the famous Eggs Florentine with the addition of poached eggs and Mornay Sauce.
- For breakfast, brunch or lunch, toast butter and cube rye bread. Arrange the cubes in a small baking dish, sprinkle with Swiss cheese shreds and keep warm in a low oven. Then, poach the eggs to be served on the cheesy croutons. Wonderful!
- Potato baskets, patty shells and pita bread seem to have been created to hold poached eggs. Potato baskets, or bird nests, as they are sometimes called, can delightfully cradle poached eggs au natural, or they can be served with a cheese, tomato or mushroom sauce. If you would rather not contrast the

delicate texture of poached eggs with the crunch of potato baskets, patty shells are an elegant choice. Or, dollop cream puff choux paste into rings or oval shapes to encircle the eggs. Tuck a poached egg into a pita pocket along with sprouts, steamed fresh vegetables and a sprinkling of sesame seeds or a fresh herb to create a portable feast.

- Dieters can save calories but still feel pampered by making a meal of steamed vegetables topped with poached eggs. The golden yolks make a sensational sauce.
- Why not create your own family-favorite way of serving poached eggs? Maybe you would enjoy chili topped with poached eggs and cheese. Or, for a soothing meal, try chicken noodle soup enriched with eggs. Perhaps your family would prefer an adaptation of a fried egg sandwich with, instead a poached egg nestling in a hollowed-out burger bun or French roll. Then, again, it may be poached eggs on crusty French or Italian bread laced with Spanish sauce that wins raves at your house. Since poached eggs go well with most other foods, the possibilities are endless. Experiment and enjoy!

4 STEPS TO PROPERLY POACHED EGGS

1. In a saucepan or deep omelet pan or skillet, heat 2-3 inches of liquid to boiling, then reduce the heat to keep the liquid gently simmering. Break cold eggs, one at a time, into a custard cup, saucer or sauce dish or, break several into a large bowl. Hold the dish close to the liquid's surface as you slip in the eggs.
2. Let the eggs cook in the barley moving liquid about 3-5 minutes, depending on the desired doneness. (At about 3 minutes, the whites will be firm, but the yolks will still flow. At about 5 minutes, the yolks will be hard-cooked.) Lift the eggs out with a slotted spoon. Drain in the spoon or on paper towels and trim any rough edges, if you like.
3. To prepare poached eggs in advance, slightly undercook them. Lift them from the cooking liquid and trim, if desired. Then transfer the eggs to a baking dish filled with enough cold water to cover the eggs. Cover the dish and refrigerate it until needed. Just before serving, return the eggs to simmering water or other poaching liquid for 1-2 minutes to heat them through and complete the cooking. See "Poaching Ahead."
4. Gadgets for poaching or steaming eggs include: rings to retain egg shape; individual steamer; three-egg steaming insert to use in saucepan or skillet; egg shaped poaching spoon (bottom is pierced); electric steamer that also doubles as hard-cooker.

HINTS

- Use very fresh, Grade AA eggs. Very fresh eggs have a higher proportion of thick white to thin white than older eggs. (The thick white embraces the yolk, while the thin white drifts away in the cooking water.) Also, the yolks of very

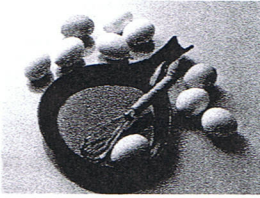
fresh eggs are more likely to hold their firm round shape and are less likely to break. A very fresh egg, when poached, still keeps its oval shape.

- Use cold eggs, right from the refrigerator. When cold, the whites more closely adhere to the yolks rather than spreading out over the surface of the water.
- Water or other liquid should be gently simmering. Rapidly moving or bubbling water or other liquid will disturb the egg, especially the white, as it cooks and you may find your finished poached egg has ripples or waves on the white's surface. Though some cooks like to swirl the water to produce an eddy or whirlpool, this may ripple the eggs, too.
- Use slotted spoon to lift the eggs out of the liquid.
- Drain poached eggs well in a slotted spoon or on paper towels
- Trim away any strands of white at the edges for a more even shape, if you wish.

POACHING AHEAD

One of the many advantages of poached eggs is their ability to wait for important occasions. Although it's very easy to poach as many eggs as you need for a special event, an Eggs Benedict brunch, for example - you can simplify preparation by doing all the poaching the day before. In fact, in some recipes, it may be best to poach the eggs ahead. In the classic *Oeufs en Gelee*, an appetizer of poached eggs in aspic on a ham base, the eggs are poached ahead, encased in the aspic and chilled before serving.

To prepare ahead, slightly undercook the eggs, trim the edges, if you like, and transfer them to a baking dish, pan, bowl, or other container of cold water. Be sure that the eggs are completely covered with cold water. Be sure that the eggs are completely covered with the cold water. Then, cover the container and keep the eggs chilled in the refrigerator until you're almost ready to serve. When everything else on the menu is ready, slip the chilled eggs into simmering water for just a minute or two to heat them to serving temperature and finish their cooking. Lift them out of the simmering water with a slotted spoon, drain and use as your recipe directs.



SCRAMBLED EGGS . . .

Scrambling is very quick and easy, particularly in the microwave, although even children report that they prefer scrambled eggs cooked top of range.

Though unadorned scrambled eggs are a pleasure themselves, some cooks add a dollop of butter, a few cubes of cream cheese or a spoonful or so of cottage cheese for richness. Scrambled eggs can be the basis for one of the most simple-to-prepare, economical and speedy suppers, as well. To cooked pasta, rice or another grain, add slices or dices of cooked vegetables or meat; pour on beat, seasoned eggs; scramble; and top with a light drizzle of shredded cheese. Dinner! It is even faster and easier than leftovers. For more elegance, pair scrambled eggs with smoked fish and lemon wedges or fresh dill.

Have scrambled eggs your way. Think of them as a canvas for your creativity and serve them with a palette of foods of varied colors, flavors and textures.

HINTS

- Vigorously beat to aerate the eggs; even, medium heat; and slow, gentle movement - easily accomplished by drawing a pancake turner or spatula across the bottom and sides of the pan - are the secrets to light, fluffy curds of scrambled eggs. A nonstick pan and pancake turner make clean-up easy.
- Scrambled eggs may turn a greenish shade, especially if cooked in large batches. This harmless color change is actually a chemical reaction - the formation of ferrous sulfide from iron in the yolks and sulfur in the whites. It occurs when eggs are cooked in an iron skillet, or cooked at too high a temperature, held for too long or both. Using stainless steel equipment and a low to medium temperature, cooking in small batches (also recommended for food safety) and serving as soon as possible after cooking will help prevent the discoloration.
- Though suggested to microwave scrambled eggs in Styrofoam cups, food storage bags and other items abound, these materials are not intended for cooking and may melt - particularly if fat is added to the eggs - or diffuse unwanted chemicals into the eggs. Only microwave-safe dishes or bags made to withstand boiling or baking temperature appropriate.

- If necessary, scrambled eggs can be held for a short time if the pan of cooked eggs is placed over a pan of hot water. They will quickly become overdone, and may turn green, if held over direct heat. Eggs that have become dry should be discarded and a new batch prepared in a clean pan. Raw eggs should not be added to cooked eggs to "refresh" them.

4 STEPS TO PREPARING SCRAMBLED EGGS

1. For 1 to 2 servings, in small bowl, beat together 2 eggs and 2 tablespoons skim or 1% low-fat milk with salt and pepper to taste, if desired, until blended.
2. In 7- to 8-inch omelet pan or skillet over medium heat, heat 1 tablespoon butter or cooking oil (or use cooking spray) until just hot enough to sizzle a drop of water. Pour in egg mixture.
3. As mixture begins to set, gently draw an inverted pancake turner completely across bottom and sides of pan, forming large, soft curds.
4. Continue cooking until eggs are thickened and no visible liquid egg remains. Do not stir constantly.

OVEN-SCRAMBLED EGGS

6 to 12 servings

12 eggs

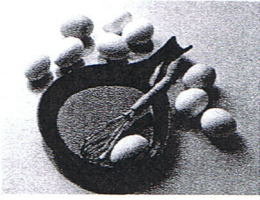
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup skim or 1% low-fat milk

1 teaspoon salt, optional

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper, optional

In large bowl, beat together eggs, milk, and salt and pepper, if desired, until blended. Pour egg mixture into lightly greased 13 X 9 X 2-inch baking pan. Place in preheated 350°F oven. As mixture begins to set, after about 7 minutes, pull out oven rack and gently draw an inverted pancake turner completely across the bottom and sides of pan, forming large, soft curds. Continue baking. Repeat drawing a few more times until eggs are thickened and no visible liquid egg remains, about 12 to 15 minutes more. Do not stir constantly.

Modified from American Egg Board



SOUFFLE . . .

Soufflé is French for puff. Strictly speaking, a true soufflé is a thick béchamel (white) sauce, thickened with egg yolks and leavened by stiffly beaten whites. To accommodate today's concern with excess fat consumption, flour blended with milk gravy-style can substitute for the white sauce or, if speed of preparation is preferred, ready-made condensed cream soups can be used. Sugar sweetens dessert soufflés. A soufflé may also contain other pureed, shredded or finely chopped, well-drained, cooked flavoring foods. The size of the pieces is important—large chunks of food will not only sink, they will weight down a soufflé and hamper its rise.

Since they can be ordered ahead and prepared during dinner service, restaurants often present sweet soufflés - with a flourish - for dessert, but a few specialize in savory entrée soufflés. Served as brunch or luncheon entrees or side dishes, soufflés can also serve to seal the reputations of both gourmet and everyday cooks.

Like many skills, making a successful soufflé is easy once you learn the basic techniques. Mastery of them will reward you with one of the most majestic of all food preparations.

5 STEPS TO A BASIC SOUFFLE

1. For 2 to 4 servings, evenly coat 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - to 2-quart soufflé dish or straight-sided casserole with cooking spray. Dust with fine, dry bread crumbs, grated parmesan cheese or cornmeal. Set aside. In covered jar or blender container, shake or blend together 1 cup skim or 1% low-fat milk, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt, if desired, until smooth. Pour into medium saucepan. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until mixture boils and is smooth and thickened. Stir in cheese, if used, and seasoning, if desired, until cheese is melted. Set aside.
2. In large mixing bowl at high speed, beat 4 egg whites with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cream of tartar until stiff but not dry, just until whites no longer slip when bowl is tilted.
3. Stir 4 egg yolks into reserved sauce until well blended. Stir in up to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups additional ingredients, if desired.
4. Gently, but thoroughly, fold yolk mixture into whites. Carefully pour into prepared dish.

5. For a "top hat", hold spoon upright and circle mixture to make ring about 1 inch from side of dish and 1 inch deep. Bake in preheated 350°F oven until puffy, delicately browned and soufflé shakes slightly when oven rack is moved gently back and forth, about 30 to 40 minutes. Serve immediately.

For 3 to 6 servings

Cooking spray

Fine dry bread crumbs, grated Parmesan cheese or cornmeal

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups skim or 1% low-fat milk

1/3 cup all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, optional

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups additional ingredients, optional

Seasonings, optional

6 eggs, separated

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar

HINTS

- Bake a soufflé in an ungreased or specially coated, straight-sided dish so the airy mixture can cling to the sides as it climbs. To coat the dish, lightly grease with butter, oil or cooking spray, then dust evenly with grated parmesan cheese, fine dry bread crumbs or cornmeal or, for dessert soufflés, cookie crumbs, finely chopped nuts or granulated sugar.
- Beyond traditional soufflé dishes, you can use a straight-sided casserole or saucepan - if nonstick, lightly grease and coat with crumbs. Individual soufflés can be baked in custard cups or ovenproof coffee mugs. It is important, though, that the container be the right size since the soufflé mixture will increase in volume two to three times. A soufflé will overflow a too-small container; it will not rise well above the rim of a too-large container and will lose the lofty look that is part of its charm. Depending on your beating and folding skills and the weight of any added ingredients, a 4-egg soufflé usually requires a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - to 2-quart container, a 6-egg soufflé, a 2-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - quart container. Fill to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the top.
- If your container is a tad too small or your beating and folding skills are exceptional, you can collar the container to keep the soufflé in bounds. Make a 4-inch band of triple-thickness aluminum foil long enough to go around the container and overlap 2 inches. Grease and dust the band just as you coated the dish. Wrap the band around the outside of the container with the dusted side in. Fasten with strong masking tape or string. The collar should extend at least 2 inches above the rim of the container.
- As you would with all other egg white-leavened dishes, separate the eggs when they are refrigerator cold. Using an egg separator or funnel, separate one egg at a time into a cup or small bowl, transferring each white to the

mixing bowl only after it is successfully separated. Even a mere drop of yolk can hinder foam formation, as can any other form of fat. So, be sure your bowl and beaters are spotless, as plastic may retain a film of oil.

- Let the egg whites stand at room temperature in the mixing bowl while you assemble the remaining ingredients and make the sauce. Egg whites will whip to greater volume when they have had a chance to warm slightly. Depending on the ambient temperature, about 20 minutes is adequate and no more than 30 minutes is necessary.
- Flavoring foods should be cooked and well drained, if necessary, before they are folded into the soufflé.
- Gentle folding is the key to maintaining volume. Some cooks like to sacrifice about a quarter of beaten egg whites to lighten the yolk mixture before adding the rest of the whites. They maintain that this pre-folding helps blend the whites with the base and makes the real folding easier. Depending on your folding skills, "lightening" the yolk mixture by forcing some of the egg whites into it may, instead, serve to push air out of those whites. Another method is to simply pour all of the yolk mixture onto the spatula or spoon to gradually combine the mixtures with a downward stroke into the bowl, continuing across the bottom, up the side, and over the top of the mixture. Come up through the center every few strokes and rotate the bowl often as you fold. Fold just until there are no streaks remaining. Then, gently pour into the prepared dish.
- The best soufflé is one that is baked immediately, but, if necessary, you can cover and refrigerate an unbaked soufflé for up to 2 hours before baking. With the loss of some puff, a soufflé can also be frozen for several weeks. Defrost in the refrigerator before baking as directed.
- Resist the urge to open the oven door and peek for at least the first 25 minutes of the baking time for a full-sized soufflé. A cool draft or slammed door might deflate it. Though the French prefer soufflés with runny centers that are spooned over portions as a sauce, for food safety, it is best to cook a soufflé through and make a separate sauce, if one is desired.
- When baking is complete, if you collared the container, quickly, but gently, remove the collar. Then, hurry the finished soufflé to the table. It is an age-old rule that guests wait for the soufflé, not the soufflé for the guest! Serve by gently breaking the top crust into portions with two forks held back to back. Then, lightly spoon out, including some of the center and crust in each portion.

SUNNY SOUFFLE

This hot lemon soufflé is a most impressive dessert. Be sure to serve it straight from the oven.

Butter
Sugar
1/3 cup sugar
1½ teaspoons grated lemon peel*
3 tablespoons lemon juice*
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup butter
4 eggs, separated
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Butter and sugar bottom and sides of a 1½ quart soufflé dish. Make a 4-inch band of triple-thickness aluminum foil long enough to go around dish and overlap 2 inches. Lightly butter 1 side of band and sprinkle with sugar. Wrap around outside of dish with sugared side in. Fasten with tape, paper clip, or string. Collar should extend 2 inches above rim of dish. Set aside.

In medium sauce pan beat together 1/3 cup sugar, lemon peel, juice and salt until well blended. Add butter. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium-high heat until mixture boils. Boil, stirring constantly, 1 minute. Remove from heat.

In small mixing bowl beat egg yolks at high speed until thick and lemon-colored, and about 5 minutes. Blend a little of hot mixture into yolks. Stir yolk mixture into hot lemon mixture. Wash and dry beaters.

In large mixing bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar at high speed until stiff but not dry, just until whites no longer slip when bowl is tilted.

Gently but thoroughly fold yolk mixture into whites. Carefully pour into prepared dish.

Bake in preheated 350° F oven until puffy, delicately browned and soufflé shakes slightly when oven rack is gently moved back and forth, 25-30 minutes. Carefully remove foil band. Serve immediately.

*3 tablespoons of frozen lemonade concentrate may be substituted for lemon peel and juice.

Modified from American Egg Board