

CORN

Continued from Page 1B

GREEN CHILE-CHEESE-CORN SPOON BREAD

Prep: 35 minutes
Cook: 35 minutes
Makes: 6 to 8 servings

Spoon bread is a longtime Southern favorite. This version gets a double hit of corn flavor from cornmeal and fresh corn kernels. It's very good as a side dish with grilled or roasted chicken, pork or fish. Try using other cheeses in this as well: grated cheddar, while completely different, gives an excellent result.

3 medium ears sweet corn, to yield about 1½ cups kernels
2 cups milk
2/3 cup cornmeal
2 tablespoons butter
¾ teaspoon coarse or sea salt
½ teaspoon hot sauce, such as Tabasco or Frank's, or more to taste
2 teaspoons dried



Abel Uribe/Chicago Tribune/TNS

Spoon bread is a longtime Southern favorite.

oregano, crumbled
½ cup shredded pepper-jack cheese
1 can (4 ounces) hot or mild diced green chiles, drained
4 eggs, separated

1. Heat oven to 350. Grease a heavy 10-inch skillet or an 8-inch square baking dish. Cut the kernels from the ears of corn and set aside.

2. Mix milk, cornmeal, butter, salt, hot sauce and oregano in medium saucepan. Bring just to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until slightly thickened, stirring frequently,

2 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in cheese, chiles and corn kernels. Let stand until slightly cooled, 10 to 15 minutes.

3. Beat egg yolks in a small bowl. Stir into cornmeal mixture. Beat egg whites in a medium bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until soft peaks form. Stir one fourth of the egg whites into the cornmeal mixture until well mixed. Gently fold in remaining egg whites. Pour into skillet or baking dish.

4. Bake until top is browned and center is slightly loose (a knife inserted into center comes out clean), 25 to 30

minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition information per serving (for 8 servings): 193 calories, 9 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 112 mg cholesterol, 20 g carbohydrates, 4 g sugar, 9 g protein, 359 mg sodium, 2 g fiber

GRILLED CORN RELISH

Prep: 40 minutes
Cook: 45 minutes
Makes: Four 8-ounce jars, or about 4½ cups

This is an old-timey corn relish, the kid-friendly kind you put on sandwiches and hot dogs. It's also good as a piquant side to any summer supper. You'll have enough for yourself and some to share. Instead of finely chopping the vegetables by hand, you can do so in a food processor or blender, in batches.

5 ears of corn, shucked
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 green pepper, stemmed, seeded, finely chopped
¼ head cabbage,

finely chopped

1 cup cider vinegar
2 tablespoons each: salt, flour
½ teaspoon each: dry mustard powder, celery seed, mustard seed
¼ teaspoon turmeric
½ cup sugar

1. Grill or broil the ears, turning frequently, until the kernels have begun to char, 10-12 minutes. Cut kernels from cobs. Set corn aside, discarding cobs.

2. Place corn and chopped vegetables in a large pot. Pour ½ cup vinegar over vegetables. Moisten salt, flour, mustard powder, celery seed, mustard seed and turmeric with remaining ½ cup vinegar; stir to combine. Stir into vegetable mixture, along with the sugar.

3. Over medium-high heat, bring mixture to a boil; reduce heat to a gentle boil and cook, stirring occasionally, 30 minutes. Allow to cool before storing in the fridge in covered containers.

4. This relish will keep up to six weeks in the refrigerator. For longer storage, follow canning instructions below.

5. Ladle corn relish into clean, hot 8-ounce jars. Wipe rims. Apply lids. Process in boiling-water bath for 15 min-

utes, beginning timing when water in canner returns to a full rolling boil. Remove canner lid. Let stand 5 minutes, then remove jars, cool and store.

Nutrition information per tablespoon: 55 calories, 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 12 g carbohydrates, 7 g sugar, 1 g protein, 782 mg sodium, 1 g fiber

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146 MAIN, HALFWAY

DORY

Continued from Page 1B

The tub was big enough for the babies and small children, but older children and adults had to curl up their legs when they sat in it. Also, it was necessary to have at least one adult in the room besides the bather in order to pour in the hot water additions and help with the rinsing.

You see, the water had to be carried by the pailful from the spring at the bottom of 81 steps, or from the creek a far cry from the house up the backyard and across the road. The water was stored in tubs in preparation for the Saturday night bath. The water was then heated on the kitchen wood-burning stove in tea kettles and/or big pans. Since the same bath water was used for the whole family, working up from the cleanest to the dirtiest body, some of the water would need to be replaced from each bather and it would also begin getting cold, so the water replacement would be from the hot-water-bearing kettle.

Our kitchen was narrow, so the bathing tub was on the floor between the stove on one side and the counter on the other, barely leaving enough room for the helper to move into position.

I was only seven at the time of the memory being so vivid. It wasn't long, after the

difficulty of providing water from its main source, until my dad had plumbed in the cold water pipe and faucet into the kitchen, relieving the back-breaking labor of carrying the water; however, the water was still cold and had to be heated on the stove before use even in the hot summertime.

There were only three of us children in the family — my older sister, myself, and our younger brother — so the whole thing was easier for my parents than had there been many more siblings. For some reason my sister, who was 10 years old, demanded and got to be first. I've wondered about that, but she knew her mind and I never objected when she told me I had to be third. She didn't want to wash in dirty water, she said, and so she didn't. My brother was four and not yet too soiled with playing in the dirt outside, so he got the second bath, wrapped in towels, dried, dressed, and snuggled into his bed.

Now, I wasn't especially dirty, either, but I suppose I was to some extent in having spent the week mostly out-of-doors. Anyway, my mother would add plenty of additional hot water and I was OK with it. The part I hated the most, though, was having my hair washed while I sat in the tub. I don't know what soap my mother used at the

time but you had to squeeze your eyes tightly closed to keep the stinging soap out of them. There was the good scrubbing and then she would pour a whole pan of warm water over my head and the suds would wash down into the tub. I would always grab for the washcloth and hold it against my eyes.

There was never anything like the warm towels that my mom wrapped me in, patting me gently to take up the bathwater from my body as I stepped out of the tub, and the rub-down before getting into my pajamas. No, I take that back. There were the warm flannel sheet-blankets that she warmed by the fire and then wrapped me in on a cold winter's night when climbing into a cold bed in a cold bedroom.

Hubby George was also a galvanized tub bather as a child, but, after marriage, we and our three young sons enjoyed regular tub baths in a claw-footed bathtub, and the water, both hot and cold, came out of faucets at the ready.

Today I use a most convenient shower with everything I need right handy from water, soap, shampoo, washcloth, towels, cosmetics, and wearing apparel. See how memory connects itself to the present by such small remaining images of the good, the bad, and the in-between.

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what we did were those that bathed in cold creeks. Then I think of my husband's father's advancement in bathing even though he was also a galvanized tub bather: His one luxury was a seven-foot galvanized tub that was larger at one end and smaller at the other so that he could stretch out his legs while seated. It fit into the kitchen of their house for wintertime bathing but he was delegated to the backyard with it come summer.

It was a memory we kept, for the tub was stored in our shed until I finally donated it to the Union County Museum Society.

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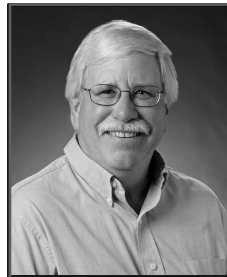
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GARDEN

Continued from Page 1B

Most monkey trees have stiff, close overlapping, dark-to bright-green leaves. These are not trees to sit under — in age they will bear large, spiny, 10- to 15-pound cones that fall with a crash.

All do well in a wide range of soils with adequate drainage and abundance of moisture. They become so towering that they should be given park space. They will also thrive in containers for several years, even in desert areas.

The monkey puzzle tree — *Araucaria araucana*, zones 4-9, native to Chile. It's an arboreal oddity with its heavy, spreading branches and ropelike branchlets closely set with sharp-pointed dark green leaves. Hardest of the *Araucaria* family. Slow-growing in youth, it eventually reaches 70 to 90 feet. Hardy west of the Cascades.

Other species:

• *Bunya-bunya* (*Araucaria bidillii*). Zones 7-9, native to Australia. Probably the most widely planted *Araucaria* both in coastal and valley areas of California. Moderate growth to 80 feet. Broadly rounded crown supplies dense shade. Unusual house plant, as it's

very tough and intolerant of low light.

• *Hoop pine* (*Araucaria cunninghamii*). Zone 17, 21-24. Native to Australia. Unusual silhouette of long horizontal or upswept branches with foliage tufted at tips. Can reach 100 feet. Juvenile leaves are needle-like and flattened, half an inch long with spiny recurve points. Adults leaves are broader and overlapping, with points incurved.

• *Norfolk Island pine* (*Araucaria heterophylla*, A.

excelcsa). Zones 17, 21-24. Moderate growth to 100 feet, and a pyramidal shape. Juvenile leaves are rather narrow, half an inch long, curved and with sharp points. Mature leaves are somewhat triangular and densely overlapping. Can be held in containers for many years — outdoors in mild climates, or as a house-plant anywhere.

If you have garden comments or questions, please write: greengardencolumn@yahoo.com. Thanks for reading!

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