

Food for Thought

By Leslie Barnes

Here is another group of satisfying mid-winter recipes, complete with dessert. These are healthy meals that are low in cost.



CHILI CON CARNE

Chipotle chile powder

2 T red chile powder 1 tsp chipotle chile powder
1 T ground cumin
2 tsp ground oregano 1 tsp thyme
1/2 tsp ground coriander seeds 3-4 T water

Chili

4 strips bacon
2-1/2 pound chuck roast, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
Salt, to taste 1 medium white onion, chopped 3 cloves garlic, minced
2 jalapeño chili peppers, stems, seeds and ribs removed, minced
1 14-oz can whole tomatoes 2-1/2 cups water
1 T freshly squeezed lime juice 1 tsp sugar
1 14-oz can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 tsp cornstarch, dissolved in a couple tablespoons of water
Grated cheddar cheese and chopped red onion for garnish

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients using just enough water to form a light paste. Set aside.

Cook bacon in a large skillet on medium high heat until crisp. Use a slotted spoon to remove from pan and set aside on a paper towel. Pour bacon fat from the pan into a separate container, reserve. When the bacon cools, crumble it into smaller pieces and set aside.

Increase heat to medium high, add back in one T bacon fat. Working in batches so you don't crowd the beef (crowding will steam cook the meat instead of browning it), brown the beef cubes on all sides, lightly salting as you cook the beef. Remove beef from pan, set aside.

Add another T bacon fat to the pan. Add chopped onions and sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and jalapeño, cook until fragrant, 1 minute more. Add the chili paste and cook 2-3 more minutes.

Into a 6-quart thick-bottomed Dutch oven, put onion/chili mixture, beef, bacon, tomatoes (break up the whole tomatoes with your fingers as you put them in the pot), water, lime juice and sugar. Heat chili on medium high heat until it comes to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook for 1-1/2 hours, then uncover and cook another half hour, keeping the temperature at a place where you can maintain a simmer.

Dissolve cornstarch in a little water (otherwise you'll have lumps to deal with) and add to the chili to thicken it. Gently mix in the kidney beans. Add salt to taste. Adjust seasonings. Depending on the acidity of the tomatoes and lime juice you may need a little more sugar to bring the stew to balance. At this point you can also add a little more chili powder if you desire more heat.

Sprinkle with grated cheddar cheese and chopped red onion. Serve with cornbread, tortilla chips, and/or rice. Serves 4 to 6.

SOUTHERN CORN BREAD

1 cup self-rising cornmeal* 1/2 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt 1-1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 cup chopped onion 1 cup milk
3 T bacon drippings (warmed to liquid)
1 tsp garlic powder 3 eggs, beaten
3/4 cup of cooked corn, fresh, defrosted frozen corn, or drained canned corn

*Self-rising cornmeal is just cornmeal with the leavening already in it. You can make your own easily. 1 cup of self-rising cornmeal is equivalent to:

1 T of baking powder, 1/2 tsp of salt, and
1 cup minus 1 T of cornmeal.

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Combine cornmeal, soda and salt. Add remaining ingredients, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened.

Spoon into a greased 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown. Makes 8 servings.

BLACK BEAN, RED PEPPER, CORN AND QUINOA SALAD

5 T olive oil 1 cup whole-kernel corn
1/2 cup quinoa; rinsed in cold water
1 lg ripe tomato; peeled, seeded and chopped
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth
1 sm sweet red pepper; seeded and chopped 1/4 tsp ground cumin
2 green onions; finely chopped 1/4 tsp salt
3 T chopped cilantro leaves 2 T lime juice
2 T chopped fresh parsley leaves 1/8 tsp ground black pepper
2 cups mixed salad greens 1 cup cooked or canned black beans

In 1-quart saucepan, heat 1 T oil over medium heat. Add quinoa and stir until toasted and aromatic, about 5 minutes. Stir in broth, cumin and salt; heat to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until liquid is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes; with fork, fluff quinoa and set aside at room temperature to cool.

In medium-size bowl, whisk together remaining 4 T oil, lime juice and black pepper. Stir in black beans, corn, tomato, red pepper, green onions, cilantro, chopped parsley, and cooked quinoa.

To serve, divide greens among 4 salad plates. Spoon quinoa mixture onto greens. Serve at room temperature or refrigerate until 30 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

MINNESOTA MUNCHERS

These are fantastic!

1 cup butter 1-1/2 cups brown sugar 2 eggs
2 tsp vanilla extract 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder (or could use baking soda)
1/4 tsp salt 1 cup milk chocolate chips
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
2/3 cup English toffee bits (use more if desired) 1 cup pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie trays with parchment paper (or spray with cooking spray). Cream butter and sugar together. Beat in eggs, one at a time, then stir in vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; stir into the creamed mixture. Stir in milk chocolate chips, semisweet chocolate chips, toffee bits and pecans.

Drop by tablespoonfuls onto the greased cookie sheets (Or spread dough out onto baking tray and bake as one large cookie. After tray cools a few minutes, use cookie cutters to make your favorite shapes.)

Bake 10-12 minutes. Allow to cool slightly on baking sheet before transferring to wire cooling rack.

Church Directory

NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH

Gary Taylor, Pastor
Grant & North Streets, Vernonia
503 429-5378
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Nursery available
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

Carl Pense, Pastor
850 Madison Avenue, Vernonia
503 429-1103
Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Marc Farmer, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street, Vernonia
503 429-7151
Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.
Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.
Relief Society, Priesthood and
Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Gary S. Walter, Pastor
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St., Vernonia
503 429-8301
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Sabbath School 9:30 a.m.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Wayne and Maureen Marr
662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia,
503 429-0373
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sam Hough, Evangelist
410 North Street, Vernonia
503 429-6522
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Every Wednesday:
Ladies' Bible Study 9:30 a.m.
Ladies' Worship 10:00 a.m.
Children's Choir 3:00 p.m.
Family Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

359 "A" Street, Vernonia
503 429-4027
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
960 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia
503 429-8841
Mass Sunday 12:00 Noon
Religious Educ. Sunday 10:30 a.m.

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grant Williams, Pastor
957 State Avenue, Vernonia
503 429-6790
Sunday Breakfast 9:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 9:45 a.m.
Children and Nursery 10:00 a.m.
Youth Group 6:00 p.m.
Preschool Mon. & Wed. 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer 6:00 p.m.
Tues. & Fri. Adult Volleyball 7:00 p.m.