

## Food for Thought

by Linda Barnes

*Creating delicious food for your family and friends doesn't have to be difficult. All the dishes this month are quite simple to prepare and loaded with flavor. The sweet Italian sausage casserole is a freezer friendly dish. The tarragon egg salad is wonderful served on hearty whole wheat with a handful of mixed greens. I was especially surprised with the outcome of the bacon potato torte because I didn't have all the ingredients on hand. Instead of making the dough, I used ready made pie dough. Gruyere was replaced with parmesan, and I used milk and a bit of butter for the cream. Fresh thyme was a teaspoon of dried and, of course, I added an 1/8 of a teaspoon of cayenne pepper. Despite these minor hurdles this dish was wonderful. Enjoy.*



**Tarragon** Notes: The French are especially fond of this aromatic, anise-like herb. They often use it with delicately flavored foods like eggs, fish, cheese, and chicken. Use it sparingly – a little goes a long way.

Substitutes: dill OR basil OR marjoram OR fennel seed OR anise seed OR angelica

### CREAMY VINAIGRETTE SALAD

1/2 cup good olive oil	1 T red wine vinegar	1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
1/4 tsp honey	1 tsp kosher salt	
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper		1 T minced shallot
4 oz (5 cups) mesclun mix		

In a small bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, mustard, honey, salt, pepper and shallots until the vinaigrette is emulsified.

Toss the greens with enough dressing to moisten and serve immediately. Serves 4-6.

### EGG SALAD WITH TARRAGON MUSTARD

6 large eggs	1/3 cup mayonnaise	1 tsp tarragon
2 tsp Dijon mustard	1/4 tsp salt	
1/8 tsp freshly ground pepper		1 small shallot, finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely chopped		1 T capers

Bring a medium saucepan three-quarters filled with water to a boil. Add eggs and cook 9 minutes (center of yolk will be slightly creamy). Carefully pour off hot water and rinse eggs with cold running water to cool. Peel eggs and roughly chop.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine mayonnaise, tarragon, mustard, salt and pepper. Add remaining ingredients. Gently fold in eggs. Serves 4-6.

### POTATO BACON TORTE

#### Pie Crust:

1 cup butter (2 sticks), cubed and chilled	
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour	1 tsp salt
8 to 10 T ice water	

Put the butter, flour, and salt in the food processor, and pulse lightly, just until the mixture resembles wet sand. Add the water, 1 tablespoon at a time, pulsing briefly after each spoonful of water. Keep adding water until the dough just begins to gather into larger clumps. Transfer equal amounts of the dough into 2 resealable plastic bags and pat each into a disk. Let rest in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Remove 1 of the disks from the bag to a flour coated surface. Using a rolling pin, roll the dough out to a 10-inch round. Gently fit the rolled dough into a 9-inch pie pan, and refrigerate while you prepare the torte ingredients. Yield: 2 (9-inch) pie crusts

#### Filling:

4 strips bacon	3 sprigs fresh thyme
2/3 cup heavy cream	3 medium baking potatoes, peeled
Salt and freshly ground black pepper	
1/4 cup grated Gruyere cheese	
1 egg yolk, whisked with a splash of water	

Preheat oven to 375°F.

In a skillet over medium heat, cook the bacon until just crispy. Drain on paper towel lined plate and set aside. Crumble the bacon when cool to the touch.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, heat the thyme and cream

over low heat to a bare simmer. Turn off the heat and let steep for about 5 minutes. Remove the thyme sprigs.

Remove the pie pan from the refrigerator. Slice the potatoes in half lengthwise and then finely slice potatoes crosswise. Working in circles, arrange the potato slices in the pie crust, stopping to season each layer with salt, pepper, and about 1/4 of the crumbled bacon. Continue layering until the pie pan is nearly full. Top with an even layer of the cheese and gently pour cream around and over the entire pie, allowing it to seep down between the potato slices. (You may not use all the cream.)

Roll out the remaining disk of refrigerated dough. Cover the pie with the dough and crimp the edges closed. Brush the top and edges of the crust with egg wash. Make a few slits in the center of the top crust, for the steam to escape, and put the pie pan on a baking sheet. Bake the torte until the crust is browned and crispy and the potatoes are cooked through, about 50 to 60 minutes. If the crust edges get too brown, cover them with strips of aluminum foil. Remove the pie from the oven and let rest at least 15 minutes before cutting into wedges and serving. Serves 8.



### SWEET ITALIAN SAUSAGE CASSEROLE

	1 cup quinoa	2 cups water or chicken broth
4 T olive oil	8 oz sweet Italian turkey sausage, casings removed	
2 cups frozen spinach, chopped		
1 cup carrot, shredded	1/4 cup chopped onion	
6 cloves of garlic, minced	1/2 cup chicken broth	
1 can (28 oz) Italian plum tomatoes, drained and chopped		
1 T dried parsley	1 T dried basil leaves	
1/4 cup parmesan cheese	cayenne or black pepper, to taste	
1/4 cup grated mozzarella cheese		

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Combine quinoa and 2 cups water or chicken broth, bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes.

Put the oil in a nonstick pan over medium-low heat. Add the sausage meat and cook for 10 minutes, breaking up the meat with a spoon. Remove to a bowl with a slotted spoon; reserve.

To the same pot, add spinach, carrot, onion and garlic. Stirring occasionally, cook until softened, about 10 to 15 minutes. Add 1/2 cup chicken broth, the reserved sausage, tomatoes, parsley, basil, cayenne, parmesan cheese and quinoa. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.

Spoon the mixture into an 8x9-inch, oven-to-table baking dish to fit and sprinkle with the mozzarella cheese. Bake until the cheese melts, about 15 to 20 minutes. Serves 4.

## 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, Minister  
410 North Street, Vernonia  
503 429-6522  
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.  
(meets in Youth & Family Center)  
Home Group Meeting  
throughout the week  
at various locations

### 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.