



Cooking It Up!

*From
The
Pepper
Plant*

INCLUDING TRIED & TESTED RECIPES



UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING

Extension

With many thanks to our recipe testers—we could not have done this without you!

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For information regarding growing peppers in the home garden, refer to:

Wyoming Vegetable & Fruit Growing Guide (pages 136–140, Peppers): <https://bit.ly/WY-fruit-veg>

Gardening: Vegetables in Wyoming (page 13, Peppers): <https://bit.ly/wy-veg>

In addition, the University of Wyoming Extension publications offer peer-reviewed, research-based, objective information on a wide range of topics written by specialists and educators in the College of Agriculture, Life Sciences and Natural Resources and the University of Wyoming Extension at <https://www.wyoextension.org/publications>.



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Peppers

Is a pepper a fruit or a vegetable? According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), peppers are both. A botanist would classify a pepper as a fruit due to its structure and seed-bearing properties. A nutritionist or chef would classify a pepper as a vegetable due to its tougher texture and taste. Whichever way you prefer peppers, they count towards the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend 2 ½ cups of vegetables per day.

Each type of pepper has its own distinctive flavor and spice level. Some peppers are sweet, while others have you rushing to the sink to cool off your burning mouth.

By the way, drinking water isn't the best way to cool the oil-based alkaline capsaicin (kap-say-ih-sin), which causes the burn in our mouth. Instead, reach for acidic food and drinks such as lemonade, orange juice, anything tomato-based, or even a glass of milk, which is also acidic.

AVAILABILITY

Peppers are found in local supermarkets year-round. They are most abundant in Wyoming farmers' markets and home gardens from July–September.

According to University of Wyoming Extension educator Brian Sebade in a *Barnyards and Backyards* magazine article, peppers can be grown in Wyoming, but may be tricky in cooler parts of Wyoming. Ideal growing temperatures are between 70–90 degrees during the day and 60–70 degrees at night.

SELECTION

Peppers come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. Varieties are split into sweet and hot categories. Hot peppers can vary drastically in heat and their degree of “hotness.” Peppers range from a Scoville Heat Unit of 0 (i.e., a bell pepper) to about 2.2 million Scoville Heat Units (i.e., a Carolina Reaper). It's important to choose the right pepper for your needs and your taste buds.

Choose firm, crisp peppers that are heavy for their size, with bright, shiny skins.

Avoid peppers with bruised, blistered, cracked, wrinkled, or soft skin, as these may be overripe or damaged.

STORAGE

Most produce should not be washed before storage. However, fruits and vegetables need to be washed before peeling or eating them. Pathogens that cause foodborne illness may be present on produce. Use cool running water to wash the produce. Once cut or peeled, they must be treated like prepared food and refrigerated within two hours.

Peppers are sensitive to ethylene gas and should be stored away from produce that gives off such gases. Apples, bananas, melons, pears, and peaches are common ethylene-producing fruits, while tomatoes are moderate ethylene producers.

Store peppers in a cool, dark place to prevent mold and other decay. If you store them in the refrigerator, use them soon after removal. Fresh peppers do not have a long storage life, only one to two weeks. Home-grown peppers will last longer than those purchased from the store.

PEPPER HEAT

The seeds and membranes of hot peppers contain much of their heat. To reduce spiciness, remove these parts before cooking. The seeds also carry flavor, so adjust quantities accordingly. Embrace the heat while considering the overall flavor profile of the dish. Start with small amounts and gradually adjust to achieve the desired level of spiciness.

Use these techniques to reduce pepper heat.

Blend with mild ingredients: To mellow the heat of peppers, blend them with mild ingredients. With their mild flavor, carrots, celery, onions, or potatoes work in a variety of hot pepper dishes. The fat in cheese also helps to offset the spice from hot peppers. Grate the cheese and let it melt on top, or stir it in.

Roast or grill: Roasting or grilling peppers caramelizes their natural sugars and tempers their spiciness. Once charred, you can peel off the skin for a smoother texture and subtly smoky flavor.

Soak in dairy: Dairy products like milk, yogurt, or sour cream contain casein, a protein that helps neutralize capsaicin, the compound responsible for heat. Soak sliced peppers in dairy before using them in dishes.

Balance with sweetness: Counterbalance pepper heat with sweetness. A touch of honey, agave nectar, or brown sugar can soften the fiery punch while adding depth to the dish.

Acidity for balance: Acidic ingredients like vinegar, citrus juice, or tomatoes help balance the heat by cutting through the spiciness. Use them in sauces, marinades, or dressings.

Serve with starch: Serve your spicy dish alongside rice, pasta, or bread to help cut down on the hot pepper flavor.

PREPARATION

Wash all peppers just before using them. Rub the skin gently under cool running water. Using a scrub brush may scrape away the delicate skin. Once clean, use a clean towel or paper towel to dry the peppers.

Although it is safe to eat the seeds of the pepper, removing the seeds and the pale membrane also

known as pith will lessen the heat of the pepper. You should wear gloves or use a tool manufactured to remove the pith so as not to burn your hands or eyes. Wash hands thoroughly after handling peppers.

Cut your peppers as directed for the recipe.

COOKING

Peppers are a versatile food that can be eaten both raw and cooked. Each method gives the peppers a slightly different taste and texture. Peppers are easy to add to many dishes and there are endless recipes to try.

The following equivalent measurements will help you convert pepper weight in pounds on a scale to the amount in cups needed for a recipe.

- Bell peppers: One medium sweet pepper equals ½ cup chopped. 1 pound equals 3–4 cups chopped. An average of 9 pounds equals 9 pints for canning.
- Jalapeños: There are approximately 10–12 jalapeños in 1 pound. This amount varies depending on the size of the jalapeño. One large jalapeño pepper (about 1½ ounces) will yield about ¼ cup of diced pepper. (With each chunk of diced jalapeño pepper measuring about ¼ inch per side.)

Try preparing peppers using one of these methods:

Raw: For a low-calorie appetizer or snack, wash and cut peppers into strips or chunks. Eat them plain, with dips, or add them raw to salads and sandwiches.

Baking: Cleaned peppers can be sliced, cubed, or left whole and baked with seasonings, herbs, and other vegetables. Young, tender peppers cut in slices or halves take less time to cook. Larger, tougher peppers should be de-seeded before baking.

Roasting: Wash peppers and cut them into cubes, slices, or strips, then drizzle with olive oil, salt, and seasonings. Bake in an oven until browned to the desired level.

Steaming: Cleaned peppers can be cut into bite-sized pieces and placed in a steaming basket over 1 inch of water. Cover the basket, bring water to a boil, and steam. Smaller peppers can be steamed whole.

Sautéing or stir-frying: Slices or chunks can be sautéed in a little oil, water, or broth. Add peppers to a stir-fry with other vegetables. Stir and toss the vegetables while cooking.

Grilling: Peppers can be cut into strips or halves, then grilled, or cut into cubes and threaded on skewers for kebabs that are placed on the grill and cooked until tender. If you're using wooden skewers, soak them in water for 20–30 minutes before using them so they don't burn.

Are you looking for some exciting and different ways to use peppers? Here are some examples of how to incorporate peppers into other recipes and meals.

- Thinly slice or grate raw peppers and add them to lettuce, slaws, or pasta salads.
- Chopped, sliced, or diced peppers are an excellent option to add to stir-fry dishes.
- Add diced or sliced peppers to sauces, soups, chilis, or stews.
- Peppers can be added to meatloaf, meatballs, turkey burgers, or casserole recipes.
- There's nothing like a casserole or hearty pasta dish when you're in the mood for comfort food. Try adding pepper to these dishes!
- Try a shredded pepper pizza crust or pizza topping.
- For a nutrition boost, include peppers in a grain power bowl or other bowl recipes.
- Frittatas, quiche, egg bakes, omelets, and scrambled eggs are dishes that lend themselves to the addition of peppers. Make these dishes with peppers for a special breakfast or brunch.

- Give marinated peppers a try. Marinate thinly sliced peppers in pesto or any type of vinaigrette.
- Stuff halved peppers with a hearty meat mixture or other filling to make pepper boats. Hollowed-out peppers act as a vessel for many other ingredients, so get creative!
- Add peppers to bars, brownies, cakes, cookies, or muffins.

SPICES

Cooking with herbs and spices is one of the easiest ways to add great flavor to any dish. There are so many herbs and spices that pair perfectly with peppers.

Here are some of the best spices to pair with sweet peppers: cayenne pepper, cumin, black pepper, cloves, Cajun seasoning, fajita seasoning, and taco seasoning.

The heat of chile peppers is often offset by cooling herbs like mint and cilantro. The spices cumin and coriander can enhance the flavors while providing a contrast to the heat. Cooking with hot peppers is a journey of discovery and experimentation.

If you want to experiment with fresh herbs, basil, oregano, cilantro, thyme, parsley, and rosemary often taste great when added to dishes with peppers.

PRESERVE AT HOME

Looking to preserve your pepper crop? You can freeze, pickle, can, or dry your peppers.

The safest recipes and resources are those that have been researched and tested by the USDA and extension services associated with land-grant universities. Many sources on the internet or social media platforms are not tested for safety, so it is critical to use the resources below.

The University of Wyoming Extension recommends using canning recipes from the following approved food preservation sources.

Canning directions and recipes dated prior to 2014 should not be used. Mass media and blog recipes, unless from extension programs or other approved sources, should also not be used.

The following are University of Wyoming approved food preservation sources:

- *Preserving Food in Wyoming*, University of Wyoming Extension (2024): <https://bit.ly/wyo-1210>
- *USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning* (revised 2015): <https://bit.ly/usda-canning>
- *Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving*, 38th edition (2024)
- *New and Updated Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving* (2020 edition)
- *Ball Canning Back to Basics* (2017)
- *The All-New Ball Book of Canning and Preserving* (2016)
- *So Easy to Preserve*, 6th edition (2020 reprint)
- Commercial pectin recipes and manufacturer's instructions
- Other up-to-date extension publications

Visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation at <https://nchfp.uga.edu> for recipes and instructions on canning, freezing, drying, and pickling peppers.

For more information on food preservation, visit the University of Wyoming Nutrition and Food Safety website at <https://bit.ly/NFS-Food-Preservation>.

Canning

When canning or pickling peppers, it is important to carefully follow the recipe directions in order to ensure a safe product. Peppers are low in acid and, when preserved improperly, can cause botulism. Peppers must be processed in a pressure canner at 240°F.

When canning, you must know your altitude, since altitude affects processing times and pressures. Processing times in most recipes are based on elevations from sea level to 1,000 feet. Do not use normal processing times if you live at an altitude above 1,000 feet.

Water boils at lower temperatures as altitude increases due to decreased atmospheric pressure. These lower boiling temperatures are less effective for killing bacteria. You must increase either the processing time or canner pressure to make up for lower boiling temperatures. Use publications based on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-approved guidelines to select the proper processing time and canner pressures for your altitude.

When canning foods at home, adjustments must be made to ensure the safe processing of home-canned foods.

- For foods processed in a boiling water canner, extra time must be added.
- For foods processed in a pressure canner, extra pressure must be added.

Detailed information on altitude adjustments for canning specific foods is available on the National Center for Home Food Preservation website at <http://nchfp.uga.edu/>.

Pickling

The proportion of vinegar to water is critical when pickling. Use only tested and approved pickling recipes with at least as much vinegar as water to properly acidify peppers.

All pickled products should be processed in a boiling water canner to ensure a product that will not spoil. Detailed information on altitude adjustments for canning specific foods is available on the National Center for Home Food Preservation website at <http://nchfp.uga.edu/>, or ask your county Extension office for time adjustments if you live above 1,000 feet.

Freezing

Peppers lose their crispness when frozen and thawed, but keep their flavor. Frozen peppers are good in cooked dishes where texture is not important.

Bell or sweet peppers: Select crisp, tender green or bright red pods. Wash, cut out stems, cut in half, and remove seeds. If desired, cut into ½-inch strips or rings.

For crisp texture, package raw, leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.

For longest shelf-life, blanch peppers before freezing. Blanching is the scalding of vegetables in steam or boiling water to slow or stop the action of certain enzymes. Water-blanch halves for 3 minutes and strips or rings for 2 minutes. Cool promptly, drain, and package, leaving ½-inch of headspace. Seal and freeze.

Hot Peppers: Wash and stem peppers. Package leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.

Drying

Peppers can easily be dried at home. The drying process also intensifies their flavor, so they pack a bigger punch than fresh peppers. Vegetables can be dried in a food dehydrator or an oven by using the right combination of warm temperatures, low humidity, and air currents. The optimum temperature for drying food is 140°F.

Because vegetables contain less acid than fruits, vegetables are dried until they are brittle. At this stage, only 10% of the initial moisture remains, so no microorganisms can grow.

Drying is not a precise method of food preservation, and the amount of drying time will vary depending on the equipment, moisture content of the vegetables, and humidity in the air.

Bell or sweet peppers: Wash, remove core and seeds. Cut into ¼-inch disks or slices. Spread on drying trays and dry in oven or dehydrator. Peppers will be tough to brittle when done. Store dried peppers in moisture/vapor-resistant packaging in a cool, dry, dark place. Peppers fade quickly when exposed to light.

Hot peppers: For whole peppers, wipe clean with a damp cloth. Spread a thin layer on trays or string together with a needle and cord. Dry until pods are shriveled, dark, red, and crisp. Remove seeds and stems before using. Peppers can also be dried in ¼- to ½-inch pieces. Dry until crisp.

Dried peppers should be stored in labeled glass jars or moisture-proof containers in a cool, dark, dry place. They will keep for a year. Containers should be filled as full as possible without crushing.

Rehydrate dried peppers for use in dishes like casseroles by soaking them in water. Or you may crumble or crush the dried peppers into a powder to use as a seasoning.

For drying instructions, visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation at nchfp.uga.edu.

NUTRITION

Bell peppers are high in vitamins A and C. They are also a good source of potassium, folic acid, fiber, and beta-carotene. Color does matter nutritionally in peppers; green peppers are picked before maturing and have a longer shelf life. Orange, yellow, and purple peppers are on the vine longer than green ones and have more nutritional value and a sweeter flavor. Red peppers are on the vine the longest and are highest in beta-carotene and vitamins A and C. They also have the sweetest flavor.

Peppers are low in calories, with a 3.5-ounce serving containing 31 calories, 1 gram of protein, 6 grams of carbs, 4.2 grams of sugar, 2.1 grams of fiber, and only .3 grams of fat.

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Sweet and Spicy Pepper Relish Cheese Spread

APPETIZERS

Cooking It Up! From The Pepper Plant

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PROSCIUTTO-WRAPPED MINI PEPPERS

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 6

Foil

6 mini bell peppers, halved lengthwise and seeded

½ cup garlic and herb gournay cheese or herb-flavored cream cheese, softened

3 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto, cut into 12 strips (½ to 1-inch wide)

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.
- 3 Wash and dry the mini bell peppers. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Fill each pepper half with some of the cheese (1–2 tablespoons) and wrap a strip of prosciutto around it.
- 5 Arrange on the prepared baking sheet and bake until heated through, about 10 minutes.



JALAPEÑO POPPERS

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 12

Optional: food-safe gloves

12 jalapeño peppers

2 tablespoons chives, finely chopped

6 ounces cream cheese, softened

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 cup (4 ounces) sharp cheddar,
shredded

¼ cup panko breadcrumbs

1 tablespoon butter, melted

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 400°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce.
- 4 Wearing gloves, slice the jalapeños in half lengthwise. Using a small spoon, scoop out the seeds and membranes.
- 5 In a bowl, mix cream cheese, garlic powder, cheddar cheese, and chives (if using).
- 6 In a separate bowl, combine panko crumbs and melted butter.
- 7 Fill jalapeños with the cheese mixture. Top with crumbs.
- 8 Place on a baking sheet and bake for 18–22 minutes or until golden.
- 9 Cool for 5–10 minutes before serving.

ROASTED BELL PEPPER PUFF PASTRY BITES

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

Servings: 15

1 medium red bell pepper, finely diced

1 medium green bell pepper, finely diced

1 medium yellow bell pepper, finely diced

Arugula leaves

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 sheet puff pastry, thawed

1 cup (4 ounces) mozzarella cheese, cut into small cubes

1/3 cup (1 ounce) Parmesan cheese, finely grated

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

1/2 teaspoon dried basil

1/2 teaspoon salt

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Put the chopped peppers in a baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and drizzle 1 tablespoon of the olive oil onto peppers, then stir.
- 5 Roast for about 15 minutes or until soft. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.
- 6 Roll out the puff pastry sheet. Brush the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil onto pastry. Sprinkle sheet with Parmesan cheese, oregano, and basil.
- 7 Cut into 16 equal squares. Arrange the squares on a baking tray. Top each square with a spoonful of roasted bell peppers. Top with a couple of mozzarella cubes.
- 8 Bake for 15 minutes or until golden and puffed.
- 9 Remove from oven and top with fresh arugula leaves. Serve immediately.



BALSAMIC, BELL PEPPER, AND OLIVE BRUSCHETTA

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

Servings: 12

1 green bell pepper, cut into thin strips or chopped

1 red bell pepper, cut into thin strips or chopped

1 yellow bell pepper, cut into thin strips or chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons Italian parsley, chopped

¼ cup balsamic vinaigrette dressing

¼ cup water

12 ½-inch thick slices of French baguette

¾ cup pitted green olives, sliced

1 tablespoon capers

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 425°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Heat dressing in large skillet on medium heat. Add garlic; cook and stir for 1 minute. Add peppers and water. Bring to a boil; cover. Simmer on low heat for 15 minutes or until peppers are tender, occasionally stirring.
- 5 Meanwhile, place bread slices in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes or until deep golden brown.
- 6 Add olives and capers to the pepper mixture; cook and stir for 1 minute or until heated through.
- 7 Spoon pepper mixture onto toast slices; sprinkle with parsley.

LOADED BELL PEPPER NACHOS

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

4 large assorted (yellow, red, or orange) bell peppers, cubed into bite-sized pieces

1 pound cooked shredded chicken, lean ground beef, or ground turkey

1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained

1 cup (4 ounces) low-fat or regular Mexican cheese, shredded

Tortilla chips

Toppings

Salsa

Sour cream

Diced red onions

Guacamole



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to a low broil.
- 3 Wash and dry the peppers. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Arrange bell peppers on a sheet pan and broil on low for about 10 minutes, or air fry them for 3–4 minutes at 400°F until they're softened and lightly browned. Keep an eye on them.
- 5 On a sheet pan, arrange cooked bell peppers on half of the pan, and tortilla chips on the other half. Keep them separate until serving to prevent soggy chips.
- 6 Top chips and bell peppers evenly with meat, beans, and cheese.
- 7 Broil on low for 1–2 minutes until cheese is melted. Watch closely, or they will burn!
- 8 When plating the nachos, take half of the serving from the chip side and half from the bell pepper side. Serve with additional nacho toppings.

Note: For extra flavor, cook the meat with taco seasoning.



SWEET AND SPICY PEPPER RELISH CHEESE SPREAD

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2–2½ cups

Optional: food-safe gloves

3 (1½–2 cups) bell peppers, any color,
seeded and diced fine

6–8 (1–1½ cups) jalapeño peppers,
seeded and finely diced

⅓ cup salt

2 cups warm water

1 tablespoon garlic powder

1 cup sugar

⅓ cup apple cider vinegar

8 ounces cream cheese, room
temperature

Crackers, pretzel crisps, toasted
baguette rounds

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry the peppers. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed.
- 3 Mix warm water, salt, and garlic powder until salt is mostly dissolved to make brine. Pour brine over diced peppers. Let sit for 10–30 minutes (depending on how much time you have).
- 4 Pour brine off peppers and rinse 2–3 times using cold water. Squeeze to remove excess water. Set aside.
- 5 In a medium saucepan, add sugar and vinegar. Bring to a boil and boil for 5–8 minutes until the mixture thickens like syrup.
- 6 Remove from heat and add drained peppers. Stir. Let cool and store in the refrigerator until ready to serve.
- 7 If desired, warm cream cheese in a 300°F oven for 8–10 minutes to soften. Place cream cheese on a serving dish.
- 8 Spoon pepper relish on top of cream cheese. Serve with crackers, pretzel crisps, toasted baguette rounds, or other favorite snacks.



Photo by Brent Hofacker, stock.adobe.com

CHILE CON QUESO

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 6

Optional: food-safe gloves

.....
3 serrano chiles, seeded and diced

.....
3 jalapeños, seeded and diced

.....
½ medium yellow onion, diced

.....
2 (1 cup) plum tomatoes, peeled and
diced (use canned if tomatoes aren't in
season)

.....
4 cloves garlic, minced

.....
½ cup cilantro leaves, chopped

.....
2 tablespoons unsalted butter

.....
2 tablespoons flour

.....
1 cup milk

.....
6 cups (24 ounces) Colby-Jack cheese,
hand-shredded, or any other melting
cheese (see Note)

.....
½ cup sour cream

.....
¼ teaspoon ground cumin

.....
Salt

- 1** Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2** Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed. Prepare the remaining produce as directed.
- 3** Melt the butter in a saucepan on medium-low heat, and then cook the onions and peppers for about 5 minutes or until the onions are translucent. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.
- 4** Whisk the flour into the butter and vegetable mix, then cook for 1–2 minutes.
- 5** Add milk to the pan and cook on medium heat, whisking constantly until sauce is thick, about 5 minutes. Stir in the cilantro and tomatoes.
- 6** Turn the heat down to low, and slowly add ¼ cup shredded cheese, stirring into the white sauce until completely melted. Repeat until all the cheese has been added. Stir in the sour cream and cumin, then add salt to taste.
- 7** Note: Pre-grated cheeses contain preservatives like potato starch and natamycin, meant to keep the shreds from clumping together in the bag. That means the cheese won't melt well when used for cooking. Your recipes will turn out less clumpy if you use freshly grated cheese, which does not contain those additives.



Photo by Seva_Blov, stock.adobe.com

REFRIGERATOR PEPPER JELLY CREAM CHEESE APPETIZER

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 8–10

Jelly: makes 2½ cups

Optional: food-safe gloves

Jelly

¾ cup red bell pepper, diced

¾ cup green or orange bell pepper, diced

⅓ cup jalapeños, seeded, diced

2¾ cups sugar

½ cup red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

3 ounces (6 tablespoons) liquid pectin

Spread

8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature

Raw vegetables and/or crackers

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry the peppers.
- 3 Wear gloves while handling jalapeños. Use a knife or a food processor to very finely chop all of the peppers.
- 4 Combine the peppers, sugar, vinegar, and lime juice in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook until warmed through and sugar is dissolved.
- 5 Bring jelly to a boil. Watch carefully! It can quickly boil over.
- 6 Skim off any foam that forms on the surface. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes.
- 7 Slowly stir in the pectin, increase the heat to medium-high and bring the mixture to a boil.
- 8 Turn off and remove from heat and allow the jelly to cool. It will set up and thicken as it cools.
- 9 Once cooled, stir and transfer to a covered container or jar and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. To freeze, put it in a freezer-safe container, leaving room at the top for it to expand, then label and date it. Freeze for up to 6 months.
- 10 Place cream cheese on a serving plate. Top with a thick layer of pepper jelly, allowing some to fall over the edges. Serve with raw vegetables and/or crackers.



Zesty Italian Pasta Salad

SALADS

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PEAR CUCUMBER SALAD

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Servings: 6

1 English cucumber, sliced

1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced

1 fresh ripe pear with skin, cored and thinly sliced

½ small red onion, thinly sliced

4 cups spring mix lettuce

¼ cup apple cider vinegar

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 teaspoon brown sugar

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt and pepper, to taste

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed. Put in a large bowl.
- 3 In a small bowl, mix together vinegar, mustard, sugar, and olive oil to make a dressing.
- 4 Drizzle dressing over produce. Toss to coat.
- 5 Season with salt and pepper to taste.



WARM BELL PEPPER, CAULIFLOWER, AND BRUSSELS SPROUT SALAD

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 4

1 red bell pepper, sliced

½ pound small Brussels sprouts, cut in
half or quartered

1 cup chickpeas

2 cups cauliflower florets

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Seasoned salt and pepper, to taste

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Heat oven to 350°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Heat a pan over medium high heat.
- 5 Add olive oil and chickpeas to the pan and cook until browned and slightly crispy, approximately 5 minutes.
- 6 Add Brussels sprouts, bell pepper, and cauliflower; season with salt and pepper.
- 7 Sauté until lightly browned, approximately 5 minutes.
- 8 Transfer to pan and roast vegetables for approximately 15 minutes, or until tender.

Note: If desired, substitute broccoli florets for Brussels sprouts.



PEPPER COLESLAW

Prep time: 20 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 8

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 medium sweet red pepper, finely chopped

1 medium green pepper, finely chopped

1–2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and finely chopped

3 green onions, chopped

1 (10-ounce) package angel hair coleslaw mix

¼ cup white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons lime juice

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon pepper

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce.
- 3 Wearing gloves, slice the jalapeños in half lengthwise. Using a small spoon, scoop out the seeds and membranes. Then finely chop.
- 4 Prepare the remaining produce as directed.
- 5 Place the first 5 ingredients in a large serving bowl.
- 6 In a small bowl, whisk the remaining ingredients. Pour over coleslaw mixture; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving.

SOUTHWESTERN CHOPPED SALAD WITH CILANTRO DRESSING

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Servings: 6

- 2 cups romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1 orange bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup mixed grape tomatoes, chopped
- 1 English cucumber, chopped
- 5 green onions, chopped
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained
- 2 cups corn, fresh or fresh or frozen, cooked, and cooled
- Creamy cilantro-lime dressing (see recipe below)

Creamy cilantro-lime dressing

- 1 cup loosely packed cilantro
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 garlic cloves
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Place all salad ingredients in a large bowl and mix to combine.
- 4 Purée all dressing ingredients in a blender or food processor until smooth.
- 5 Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.
- 6 Toss salad with dressing.



ZESTY ITALIAN PASTA SALAD

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 8

1 bell pepper, diced

2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved

1 cup cucumber, diced

1 shallot, diced

8 ounces whole wheat pasta

1 (15-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained

1 (3.8-ounce) can sliced black olives, drained

2 cups (8 ounces) fresh mozzarella, diced

2 cups (8 ounces) salami or hard Italian sausage, diced

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup creamy Parmesan and herb Italian dressing

Optional, for serving: baby arugula, grated Parmesan, chopped parsley

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Cook pasta al dente according to package directions.
- 4 Toss all ingredients together in a large bowl.
- 5 If desired, serve on a bed of arugula and garnish with grated Parmesan and chopped parsley.



BELL PEPPER RAINBOW SALAD

Prep time: 30 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4

1 red bell pepper

1 yellow bell pepper

1 orange bell pepper

1 small red onion

¼ cup Italian parsley

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

1 tablespoon sesame oil

½ cup feta cheese, crumbled

Freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Place bell peppers, onion, and parsley in a large bowl.
- 4 Add rice vinegar, sesame oil, salt, and pepper, mixing well.
- 5 Cover and refrigerate for approximately 20 minutes.
- 6 Sprinkle salad with feta cheese and toss.





Jalapeño Lime Chicken Soup

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STUFFED PEPPER SOUP

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 40 minutes

Total time: 50 minutes

Servings: 6

10–12 (2 pounds) tomatoes, finely diced

1 cup yellow onion, chopped

1 cup red bell pepper, chopped

1 cup green bell pepper, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2½ tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped,
plus more for garnish

1 pound lean ground beef

2 tablespoons olive oil, divided

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce

1 (14.5-ounce) can low-sodium beef
broth

1–2 teaspoons Italian seasoning

1 cup uncooked long-grain white or
brown rice

Optional: shredded cheddar or
mozzarella cheese for serving

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 In a large pot, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat; once hot, add beef and season with salt and pepper. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat. Cook, stirring occasionally while breaking up beef, until browned. Drain beef and pour it onto a plate lined with paper towels; set aside.
- 4 Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in a pot, then add onions, and peppers. Sauté for 3 minutes, then add garlic and sauté 30 seconds longer.
- 5 Pour in diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, beef broth and add Italian seasoning and cooked beef, then season with salt and pepper to taste. Bring just to a light boil, then reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes.
- 6 While the soup simmers, prepare rice according to the directions listed on the package, then once the soup is done simmering, stir in the desired amount of cooked rice into the soup.
- 7 Serve warm. If desired, top with cheese and garnish with fresh parsley.

JALAPEÑO LIME CHICKEN SOUP

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Total time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Servings: 6

Optional: food-safe gloves

2 jalapeños, ribs and seeds removed, minced

½ onion, red or yellow, minced

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 cups water

1 teaspoon salt

1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts or thighs

2 (14-ounce) cans white beans, cannellini or great northern, drained

1 (16-ounce) jar salsa verde

Juice of 1 lime

1 lime, cut into wedges for serving

Fresh chopped cilantro, sour cream, sliced avocado, tortilla chips, and shredded cheese for serving

Optional: 3 cups cooked rice, brown or white

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed. Prepare the remaining produce as directed.
- 3 In a soup pot over medium heat, sauté the onion and jalapeño with the olive oil until soft and fragrant.
- 4 Add the water and salt. Bring to a boil. Add the raw chicken breasts. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat.
- 5 Cover the pot and cook the chicken for 5–10 minutes. Remove from heat but leave the lid on so the chicken continues cooking for another 20 minutes. Remove the chicken breasts from pot and set aside to cool. See Notes.
- 6 Add the white beans and salsa to the pot. Simmer for 30 minutes over medium heat.
- 7 Shred the chicken and add it back to the pot.
- 8 Just before serving, squeeze the juice of one lime into the pot. Cut the remaining lime into wedges for serving.
- 9 Add the salt; taste and adjust as needed. Serve with fresh cilantro, sour cream, and shredded cheese.

Optional: This soup is also delicious served with white or brown rice in it, or as a side. It helps offset the spiciness.

Notes:

To remove any unwanted chicken fat in the broth after Step 4, use one of these procedures:

- **Skimmer:** skim the soup during the cooking process by scraping across the top to remove any chicken fat.
- **Ice cube:** glide an ice cube along the surface of the soup. Fat will stick to it and then you can dispose of the ice cube.
- **Paper towel or napkin:** gently lay a paper towel or napkin on top of the liquid. The fat particles will adhere to it, making it easy to lift away the excess grease.
- **Fat separator:** pour broth into a fat separator, wait for the fat to rise, then pour the lower fat-free liquid back into the pot.
- **Chilling technique:** if you're not in a rush, chilling the broth will cause the fat to solidify, making it easy to skim off.



CREAMY ROASTED POBLANO PEPPER CHICKEN SOUP

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 55 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Servings: 6

Immersion blender

Plastic wrap or zipper baggie

3 poblano peppers

1 cup onions, diced

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2½ cups chicken stock

8 ounces cream cheese, softened and cubed

Salt and pepper, to taste

2 cups cooked chicken, shredded

1¼ cups fresh or frozen corn kernels

1½ cups (6 ounces) Colby-Jack cheese, freshly grated (see Note)

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Roast the poblano peppers using the gas stove top or the oven.
- 4 Gas stove top: turn the flame on the stovetop to high heat and place the poblano peppers on the grates. Using tongs, flip the peppers occasionally until the outside has charred on all sides.
- 5 Oven: preheat oven to 400°F. Place whole poblano peppers on a foil-lined baking sheet and roast for 35–40 minutes or until skins are blackened, flipping once.
- 6 Place the peppers in a zipper baggie or a bowl, sealed with plastic wrap, and let them steam. After about 15–30 minutes, peel the skin off using your hands or a paper towel. Remove stems and seeds. Chop the peppers into a small ½-inch dice.
- 7 In a medium saucepan, melt butter on medium heat. Once melted, add onion and garlic and cook for 3–5 minutes or until translucent. Next, add the chopped poblano peppers and cook for 3–5 minutes.
- 8 Add broth, cream cheese, salt, and pepper and stir until cream cheese has almost completely melted and combined.
- 9 Using an immersion blender, blend the liquid until smooth.
- 10 Add chicken and corn. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 10 minutes. Add cheese and stir until melted.

Note: Pre-grated cheeses contain preservatives like potato starch and natamycin, meant to keep the shreds from clumping together in the bag. That means the cheese won't melt well when used for cooking. Your recipes will turn out less clumpy if you use freshly grated cheese, which does not contain those additives.



SPICY RED BELL PEPPER SOUP

Prep time: 40 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Servings: 10

Immersion blender, blender, or food processor

6 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped

2 carrots, chopped

2 yellow onions, chopped

2 celery ribs, chopped

4 cloves garlic, chopped

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

2 quarts chicken broth

½ cup long-grain rice

2 tablespoons fresh thyme, chopped

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Stir in the bell peppers, carrots, onions, celery, and garlic. Cook and stir the vegetables until soft, about 10 minutes. Stir in the chicken broth, rice, thyme, cayenne pepper, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper, and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until the rice and vegetables are tender, about 25 minutes. Remove from heat and cool for 30 minutes.
- 4 Blend the cooled soup until smooth using a hand-held immersion blender directly in the pot, or use a blender or food processor to blend the soup in batches.

ROASTED RED BELL PEPPER SOUP

Prep time: 55 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Total time: 1 hour 55 minutes

Servings: 10

Immersion blender or blender

6 red bell peppers, roughly chopped

1 yellow onion, finely chopped

5 sun-dried tomatoes, jarred

4 garlic cloves, peeled and whole

½ tablespoon (1 squeeze) lemon juice

2½ cups vegetable stock

Salt and pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon olive oil

1–2 tablespoons homemade or purchased pesto

Crème fraîche or sour cream, for topping

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Place the roughly chopped peppers in a large baking tray with peeled whole garlic cloves. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper, then roast in the oven until slightly charred, around 40 minutes.
- 5 Sauté onion in a large pot with a little olive oil until translucent and soft. Once soft, add the roasted peppers, garlic, sun-dried tomatoes, and vegetable stock.
- 6 Simmer for 10 minutes, then turn off the heat and blend until completely smooth using an immersion blender or blender. Taste for seasoning and adjust as necessary.
- 7 Add a small splash of freshly squeezed lemon juice, stir, and serve with a drizzle of pesto and crème fraîche or sour cream.





MEXICAN-SPICED ROASTED RED PEPPER AND CORN SOUP

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Total time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Servings: 5 cups

Aluminum foil

Plastic wrap

Immersion blender, blender, or food processor

4 large red bell peppers

½ cup onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 (14-ounce) package frozen roasted corn

1 cup vegetable stock

2 teaspoons chili powder

2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground coriander

¼ teaspoon sea salt

¼ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper

¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven broiler on high. Line a large baking sheet with foil.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Place the whole bell peppers on the prepared baking sheet. Broil 4–5 inches from heat for 8–10 minutes or until charred on all sides, turning occasionally. Transfer to a bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let stand for 15 minutes. Peel off skins; discard skins, stems, and seeds. Coarsely chop the bell peppers.
- 5 In a 4-quart Dutch oven, combine the bell peppers, corn, onion, garlic, 1 cup water, stock, chili powder, cumin, coriander, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes; cool for about five minutes.
- 6 Blend the cooled soup until smooth using a hand-held immersion blender directly in the pot, or use a blender or food processor to blend the soup in batches until smooth. Return the puréed mixture to the Dutch oven and heat through. This step can be skipped if you want a chunkier soup.
- 7 Sprinkle the soup with the cilantro.



Chile Cheddar Bread

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BELL PEPPER CORNBREAD

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 8

1 red bell pepper, diced

1 cup yellow cornmeal

½ cup all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)

3 tablespoon sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

¾ cup canned creamed corn

¼ cup butter, melted

1 large egg, beaten

½–1 teaspoon red chili flakes

Salt and pepper, to taste

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Position rack in center of oven and preheat it to 400°F. Butter an 8-inch square baking pan.
- 3 Wash and dry the pepper. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Whisk cornmeal, flour, sugar, red chili flakes, baking powder, salt, and pepper in a large bowl to blend. Add creamed corn, pepper, butter, and egg. Mix together to form a batter. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 5 Spoon batter into baking pan.
- 6 Bake cornbread for about 20 minutes, until the edges begin to pull away from the sides of the pan. The bread is finished when a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- 7 Remove the bread from the pan once cooled.



SWEET ROASTED PEPPERS AND CAMELIZED ONION CHEESE BREAD

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Total time: 35 minutes

Servings: 8

Parchment paper or foil

1 (12-ounce) jar roasted bell pepper strips and caramelized onions (see Note)

1 whole loaf Italian bread, not sliced

1 stick butter, room temperature

½ cup mayonnaise

2 cups (8 ounces) Colby-Jack cheese, shredded

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 325°F.
- 3 Mix butter and mayonnaise together until smooth.
- 4 Scoop out as much of the peppers and onions from jar as desired. Drain and dry the pepper and onion mixture, and then coarsely chop.
- 5 Add the chopped peppers, onions, and cheese to the butter and mayo spread and mix just until blended.
- 6 Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper or foil.
- 7 Cut the Italian bread in half lengthwise.
- 8 Cover the bread halves with spread.
- 9 Bake for 20–25 minutes until the cheese is melted.
- 10 Serve warm.

Note: If desired, make your own roasted peppers and caramelized onions. See recipes on following pages.

CARAMELIZED ONIONS

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 8

2–3 (about 5 cups) large onions, finely sliced

1 tablespoon butter or olive oil

Water

Kosher salt

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Melt butter in a large heavy-bottomed stainless steel or enameled cast iron saucepan over high heat. Add onions and cook, stirring frequently, until bottom of saucepan is glazed in a pale brown fond (burned bits on bottom of pan), about 5 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons water and scrape up fond with wooden spoon.
- 4 Continue to cook on high heat, stirring frequently, until fond has built up again, about 2 minutes longer. Add 2 more tablespoons water and scrape up browned bits. Repeat cooking, adding water, and scraping until onions are completely softened and a deep, dark brown, about 15 minutes total. Season to taste with salt.
- 5 Remove from saucepan rapidly to prevent burning.

ROASTED PEPPERS

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4

- High-heat-resistant parchment paper or foil
- 4 medium red bell peppers
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt or ¼ teaspoon of any other salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 450°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with high-heat-resistant parchment paper or foil.
- 3 Wash and dry peppers.
- 4 Cut the bell peppers into quarters, then remove the seeds and membranes.
- 5 Place the peppers on the prepared baking sheet. Drizzle them with olive oil and use your hands to coat them well.
- 6 Sprinkle the peppers with salt, pepper, garlic powder, oregano, and red pepper flakes.
- 7 Roast until tender and charred in spots, about 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

JALAPEÑO CHEDDAR BEER BREAD

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 45–60 minutes

Cool time: 10 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 5 minutes – 1 hour 20 minutes

Servings: 1 loaf

Non-stick spray

Bread loaf pan

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 (¼ cup) large jalapeño, finely diced

¼ cup green onions, thinly sliced

3 cups self-rising flour (spoon and level to measure)

2 tablespoons sugar

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon cumin

1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

1 (12-ounce) bottle or can beer (avoid IPA or hoppy beers)

1 cup (4 ounces) cheddar or Mexican blend cheese, shredded

¼ cup butter, melted

Toppings

3 tablespoons cheese, shredded

1 tablespoon green onion, thinly sliced

Jalapeños, diced or sliced



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly coat the inside of an 8x4-inch or 9x5-inch bread loaf pan with non-stick spray; set aside.
- 3 Wash and dry produce. Wearing food-safe gloves, prepare the peppers as directed. Prepare the remaining produce as directed.
- 4 In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the self-rising flour, sugar, salt, garlic powder, cumin, Italian seasonings, and salt. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour.
- 5 Reserve 3 tablespoons of cheese and 1 tablespoon of green onions for the topping. Stir the remaining cheese, green onions, and jalapeños into the flour mixture.
- 6 Pour in the beer and stir well to mix. The dough should become a soft batter.
- 7 Pour the dough into the prepared bread loaf pan. Top with reserved cheese, green onions, and additional sliced jalapeños if desired.
- 8 Bake in the oven for 50–60 minutes for an 8x4 loaf pan or about 45 minutes for a 9x5 loaf pan. The bread is finished when a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- 9 Let the bread cool in the pan for 10 minutes before turning it over onto a wire rack.
- 10 Brush the top and sides of the bread with melted butter. Let the butter soak in.
- 11 Let cool slightly before slicing and serving.

CHILE CHEDDAR BREAD

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 50 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 5 minutes

Servings: 8

Non-stick spray

Bread loaf pan

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 (¼ cup) large jalapeño, diced

1 (½ cup) red bell pepper, finely chopped

1 cup all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)

1 cup whole wheat flour (spoon and level to measure)

1 tablespoon baking powder

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon pepper

1 cup (4 ounces) sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

1 cup whole milk

⅓ cup canola or vegetable oil

1 large egg

1 (4.5-ounce) can chopped green chiles

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 375°F and coat an 8x4-inch loaf pan with non-stick spray.
- 3 Wash and dry jalapeño and bell pepper. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed.
- 4 In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flours, baking powder, cayenne, sugar, salt, and pepper. Add cheese and stir to evenly distribute.
- 5 In a separate medium bowl, mix together milk, oil, egg, green chiles, jalapeño, and bell pepper.
- 6 Make a well in the center of the flour and cheese mixture and pour the milk mixture into the center. Gently mix with a spatula until ingredients are just combined. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 7 Pour batter into a prepared pan and bake for 45–50 minutes, until the top is golden brown. The bread is finished when a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- 8 Let bread cool for about 10 minutes. Remove the bread from the pan and let cool completely on a cooling rack before slicing.





BUTTERMILK JALAPEÑO CHEDDAR DROP BISCUITS

Prep time: 20 minutes

Bake time: 12–16 minutes

Cool time: 5 minutes

Total time: 37–41 minutes

Servings: 6

Parchment paper, baking mat, or nonstick spray

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 (2 tablespoons) medium jalapeño, seeded, finely diced

½ cup buttermilk, cold, plus 1–2 tablespoons more if needed

¼ cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled

1 cup and 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon salt

½ cup (2 ounces) cheddar cheese, mild, medium, or sharp, grated

Optional: additional soft or melted butter to top biscuits

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a baking mat, or spray with nonstick spray.
- 3 Pour ½ cup buttermilk into a small bowl and place it in the freezer for 10 minutes.
- 4 Melt and cool the butter.
- 5 Wash and dry jalapeños. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed.
- 6 In a large bowl, whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda, sugar, and salt. Stir in jalapeño and cheddar cheese; set aside.
- 7 Add melted butter to the buttermilk, stirring until butter forms small clumps. The mixture will look curdled.
- 8 Add buttermilk mixture to dry ingredients and stir with a spatula until just incorporated and the batter pulls away from the sides of the bowl; if the mixture is dry, add 1–2 tablespoons more buttermilk. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour.
- 9 Lightly oil or spray a ¼-cup dry measure cup with nonstick spray. Scoop a barely full ¼ cup of dough and drop it onto the baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining dough, spacing biscuits at least 1 inch apart.
- 10 Bake biscuits for 12–16 minutes. The tops should be golden brown. The biscuits are finished when a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- 11 Remove biscuits from the oven. If desired, brush the biscuit tops with 1 tablespoon of soft or melted butter. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 5 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.
- 12 Store cooled biscuits in an airtight container.



BACON PEPPER PANCAKES WITH CHEESE SAUCE

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 8

1/4 cup bell pepper, chopped

2 tablespoons scallions, thinly sliced

1/3 cup bacon, julienned

1 cup all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)

1/4 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 large egg

1 cup milk

3 tablespoons butter, melted

Cheese Sauce

1 cup (4 ounces) melting cheese, grated (see Note)

3–4 tablespoons milk

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Heat a non-stick pan. Add the julienned bacon and cook over medium heat until a little fat has been rendered.
- 4 Add the chopped bell pepper and scallions. Cook, stirring for about a minute. Transfer the mixture to a plate and cool.
- 5 Stir together the flour, salt, sugar, and baking powder.
- 6 In a mixing bowl, lightly beat the egg and milk.
- 7 Add the flour mixture and stir just until blended.
- 8 Fold in the melted butter.
- 9 Add the bacon mixture to the batter. Stir lightly to combine. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour, raw meat, and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour, raw meat, and/or raw eggs.
- 10 Reheat the pan and start cooking the pancakes.
- 11 Prepare the sauce. Stir together the grated cheese and milk in a microwave-safe bowl.
- 12 Microwave on high for about 2 minutes or until the cheese is soft enough to be stirred into a thick, smooth sauce.
- 13 Stack the pancakes and pour some cheese sauce over them.
- 14 If you want added depth of flavor, color, and texture, sprinkle in more sliced scallions and a little cayenne.

Note: Any soft cheese should melt well, but mozzarella is NOT recommended for this recipe. Consider using American, Fontina, Gouda, Monterey Jack, Provolone, Italian or Mexican blend.

SAVORY CORN PANCAKES WITH PEPPER RELISH

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 15

Blender

4 (about 2 cups) ears corn kernels

1½ cups buttermilk

2 tablespoons vegetable oil or melted butter

3 large eggs

½ teaspoon salt

1 cup fine stone-ground cornmeal

1¼ cups all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)

1 teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda

Butter for frying

Pepper relish (see recipe below)

Sour cream

Pepper Relish

1 ripe tomato, diced

4–6 mini sweet peppers, seeded and finely diced

2 scallions, including half of the greens, sliced thin

3 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

2 teaspoons fresh marjoram, chopped

Salt

Freshly ground pepper

Dash of vinegar



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 200°F.
- 3 Relish: Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Combine the tomatoes, peppers, scallions, and herbs in a small bowl. Season with a few pinches of salt, a little pepper, and a dash of vinegar. Taste and adjust the seasonings, if needed.
- 5 Pancakes: Purée ½ cup of corn kernels in a blender with the buttermilk for about 1 minute. Add the oil, eggs, and salt. Blend until smooth, then transfer to a bowl and whisk in the dry ingredients, stirring until just blended. Fold in the remaining corn kernels. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 6 Melt a little butter in a nonstick skillet. When it bubbles, pour in the batter. ¼ cup batter yields a 5-inch pancake. Cook over medium-high heat until covered with holes, then turn and cook until the second side is set, about 1 minute. Hold cakes in the warm oven while cooking the rest of the batter.
- 7 Serve two or three pancakes per plate with a dollop of sour cream and a spoonful of the relish on each.



GARLIC JALAPEÑO CHEDDAR CHEESE BREAD

Prep time: 40 minutes

Rise time: 1 hour

Cook time: 35 minutes

Cool time: 30 minutes

Total time: 2 hours 45 minutes

Servings: 1 loaf

Plastic wrap

Optional: food-safe gloves

1–2 mid-sized jalapeños, seeded and thinly sliced or diced

1¼ cups water

3–3½ cups bread or all-purpose flour, (spoon and level to measure)

1 cup (4 ounces) cheddar cheese, shredded

2¼ teaspoons (1 packet) quick-rising dry yeast

1 tablespoon sugar

½ tablespoon garlic powder

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon salt

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry peppers. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed.
- 3 Add yeast and sugar to a large mixing bowl, then add warm (105–115°F) water. Let sit for approximately 5 minutes until the mixture foams, then add olive oil, garlic powder, and salt.
- 4 Mix in 3 cups of flour, one cup at a time. Either mix thoroughly by hand or use a stand mixer with a dough hook attachment. If the dough is not coming together and sticking to the bowl after adding all 3 cups of flour, try adding 1 tablespoon of flour at a time until it begins sticking.
- 5 First rise: oil a medium mixing bowl (cooking spray works well for this). Flour hands, form dough into a ball, then place it into the bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise for 30 minutes. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour.
- 6 Kneading: combine jalapeños and cheese in a small bowl. Flour a flat surface. Take a handful of jalapeños and cheese at a time, then knead into the dough ball until toppings are well incorporated into the dough. Place toppings in the center of the dough, stretch the edge of the dough outward, then fold it back on top of the toppings and repeat.
- 7 Second rise: flour hands and form dough into a ball. Place dough back into an oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let rise for another 30 minutes.
- 8 Preheat oven to 400°F.
- 9 Flour hands, then gently form dough into a ball or oval. Transfer to a floured pan or baking stone, then slice the top of the loaf with a few slashes with a sharp knife or kitchen shears.
- 10 Bake for 35 minutes or until the crust is golden brown and the internal temperature is 210°F for crusty bread.
- 11 Remove bread from the oven. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 30 minutes before slicing.

JALAPEÑO CHEDDAR AND CHIVE SCONE

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20–23 minutes

Total time: 30–33 minutes

Servings: 10 scones

Optional: parchment paper, food-safe gloves

1½ scallions, white and green parts, cleaned, trimmed, and chopped

¼ cup peppers, any kind, chopped

¼ chives, chopped

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon baking powder

6 tablespoons butter, cold, cut into pieces

1 cup (4 ounces) sharp cheddar cheese, grated or chopped

2 large eggs

⅓ cup sour cream or ricotta cheese

Optional: 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard, for flavor

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed if using spicy peppers.
- 3 Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a baking sheet or line it with parchment.
- 4 Whisk together the flour, salt, and baking powder. Work in the butter with your fingers to make an unevenly crumbly mixture.
- 5 Toss in the cheese, scallions, peppers, and chives.
- 6 In a bowl, mix together the eggs, sour cream or ricotta cheese, and the mustard, if using.
- 7 Add egg mixture to the dry ingredients, stirring until everything is evenly moistened; the dough will be sticky.
- 8 Liberally flour the counter and your hands. Pat the dough into a 10"x2" rectangle. For larger, flatter scones, pat into a 15"x3" rectangle.
- 9 Cut the rectangle into five squares. Cut each square in half diagonally, to make a total of ten triangular scones.
- 10 Place the scones on prepared baking sheet, leaving at least 1" between them. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 11 Bake the scones for 20–23 minutes until they're nicely browned and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean or with a few crumbs. Remove them from the oven and serve warm or at room temperature.
- 12 Store, well-wrapped, in the refrigerator for several days. Freeze for longer storage.

*adapted from <https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/recipes/cheddar-cheese-and-scallion-scones-recipe>





Sweet and Sour Pork with Peppers

MAIN DISHES

Cooking It Up! From The Pepper Plant

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SPICY CHICKEN SAUTÉ WITH JALAPEÑO

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 15–20 minutes

Total time: 30–35 minutes

Servings: 4

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 jalapeño, thinly sliced

1 medium onion, thinly sliced

1 large tomato, diced

2 cloves garlic, minced

¼ cup cilantro, minced (or fresh herb of choice)

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1½ pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts, cubed

Salt and pepper, to taste

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the pepper as directed. Prepare the remaining produce as directed.
- 3 Cube chicken breasts. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat.
- 4 Sprinkle chicken cubes with salt and pepper evenly on both sides; set aside.
- 5 Heat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat and drizzle with olive oil. Add the seasoned chicken to the pan and sauté until browned, about 7–8 minutes, stirring occasionally. The chicken's internal temperature should be 165°F on a food thermometer.
- 6 Remove chicken from pan; set aside.
- 7 Add the onion, jalapeño, and garlic to the hot pan. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and pepper and sauté until tender and slightly caramelized, about 5–6 minutes, frequently stirring.
- 8 Add tomatoes to the pan; if desired, season with another pinch of salt and pepper. Continue sautéing until tomatoes are softened, about 3–4 additional minutes.
- 9 Return chicken and any residual juices to the pan and stir well. Heat until chicken is warmed through, about 3–4 minutes. Check seasoning and adjust according to taste. Garnish with fresh herbs before serving.

CHILE RELLENO CASSEROLE

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour 10 minutes–1 hour 30 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 20 minutes–1 hour 40 minutes

Servings: 8

Zipper baggie or plastic wrap

Foil

Non-stick spray

6–8 large poblano peppers (see Notes)

2 cups (8 ounces) Monterey Jack
cheese, shredded and divided

1 cup (4 ounces) cheddar cheese,
shredded and divided

5 large eggs

1½ cups whole milk

3 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon onion powder

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon black pepper

Optional: Sour cream, salsa, and fresh
chopped cilantro for serving

Notes: The number of peppers needed depends on their size. You want enough to completely cover the bottom of a baking dish twice.

Fresh roasted poblano peppers will give this casserole the best flavor, but if you're in a hurry, you can also replace them with 3–4 (7-ounce) cans of whole green chilies. Drain them completely, open them up, and scrape out the seeds. Proceed with the recipe.



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven's broiler on high and set the rack about 6 inches from the heat source. Line a baking sheet with foil.
- 3 Wash and dry peppers.
- 4 Place peppers on the baking sheet and roast for about 10–15 minutes, using tongs to turn them occasionally, roasting until the skins are blackened and charred.
- 5 Transfer the roasted peppers to a zipper baggie or a bowl sealed with plastic wrap for 15–30 minutes, allowing them to steam as they cool. Once they are cool enough to handle, peel off the skin using your hands or a paper towel, cut off the stems, open them up, and remove the seeds.
- 6 Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly coat a 3-quart baking dish with nonstick spray.
- 7 Lay half the roasted chiles in the baking dish in a single layer. Sprinkle 1 cup of the Monterey Jack cheese and ½ cup of the cheddar on top. Repeat, adding another layer of chile and another layer of cheese on top.
- 8 In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, flour, baking powder, onion powder, garlic powder, salt, and pepper until thoroughly combined and no lumps of flour remain. Pour the mixture evenly over the cheese and chiles. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw eggs.
- 9 Place in the oven and bake for 45 minutes until eggs are set and golden around the edges and the casserole is puffed up in the center. The casserole's internal temperature should be 160°F on a food thermometer.
- 10 Let stand and cool for 5–10 minutes before cutting. Slice into squares and if desired, serve with a dollop of sour cream, a little salsa, and freshly chopped cilantro.



STUFFED BELL PEPPERS

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Total time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Servings: 6

Non-stick spray

6 bell peppers, any color or combination of colors

½ cup onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons garlic, minced

2 tablespoons parsley, chopped

2 teaspoons olive oil

1½ pounds lean ground beef

1½ cups rice, cooked (do not use raw rice)

Salt and pepper, to taste

1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce

½ teaspoon Italian seasoning

1½ cups (6 ounces) mozzarella cheese, shredded and divided

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Coat a large baking dish with non-stick spray.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Slice the tops off the peppers and remove the ribs and seeds.
- 5 Place the peppers cut side down in the baking dish. Add 1½ cups water to the dish.
- 6 Cover the dish with foil and bake for 25 minutes.
- 7 While the peppers are cooking, prepare the filling. Heat the oil in a large pan over medium heat.
- 8 Add the ground beef and season with salt and pepper. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat.
- 9 Cook for 5–6 minutes, breaking up the meat with a spatula, until meat is cooked through.
- 10 Add the onion to the pan and cook for 3–4 minutes or until softened. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds.
- 11 Add the rice, tomato sauce, and Italian seasoning. Stir to combine. Stir in ½ cup cheese, salt, and pepper to taste.
- 12 Remove the peppers from the oven and drain off the water. Turn the peppers over and fill each one with the beef mixture.
- 13 Top each pepper with the remaining cheese. Cover and bake for 20 minutes. The filling's internal temperature should be 165°F on a food thermometer.
- 14 Uncover and bake for another 10 minutes or until cheese is melted and browned and peppers are tender.
- 15 Sprinkle with parsley, then serve.

PEPPER STEAK STIR FRY

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4

1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into strips

1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into strips

2 teaspoons garlic, minced

1 teaspoon ginger, minced

1 tablespoon vegetable oil, divided

1¼ pounds flank steak, skirt steak, hanger steak, or sirloin tip steak

Salt and pepper, to taste

¼ cup soy sauce

1½ tablespoons sugar

¼ cup water

1½ tablespoons cornstarch

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Look for the direction of the muscle fibers in the steak. The “grain” of a steak refers to the direction that the muscle fibers run. Thinly slice the meat across the grain. Slicing against the grain cuts those long muscle fibers into smaller pieces resulting in meat that’s tender and easy to chew. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked raw meat.
- 4 Heat 1 teaspoon vegetable oil over medium-high heat in a large pan.
- 5 Add the peppers and cook for 3–4 minutes or until tender. Remove the peppers from the pan and place on a plate.
- 6 Add the remaining 2 teaspoons of oil to the pan. Season the steak with salt and pepper to taste.
- 7 Increase heat to high. Add the steak to the pan and cook for 5–6 minutes or until lightly browned.
- 8 Add the garlic and ginger, then cook for 30 seconds.
- 9 Place the peppers back in the pan with the steak.
- 10 In a small bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, sugar, water, and cornstarch.
- 11 Pour the sauce over the steak mixture and bring to a simmer. Cook for 2–3 minutes or until sauce thickens, then serve.





JALAPEÑO POPPER CHICKEN

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

Total time: 50 minutes

Servings: 2

Non-stick spray

Toothpicks

Optional: food-safe gloves

1–2 jalapeño peppers, seeds and ribs removed, minced

½ cup panko breadcrumbs

2 teaspoons canola oil

1½–2 teaspoons taco seasoning (see Note)

1 large egg

2 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, room temperature

¼ cup cheddar cheese, shredded

2 chicken breasts

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place an ovenproof rack onto a rimmed baking dish. Coat with non-stick spray.
- 3 Wash and dry jalapeños. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed.
- 4 In a small skillet over medium heat, combine the panko with the oil. Cook, stirring often, until the panko is golden and crispy. Place in a shallow bowl or dish. To the panko, add the taco seasoning and stir to combine.
- 5 In another shallow bowl or dish, lightly beat an egg. In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese, cheddar cheese, and jalapeños.
- 6 Using a small knife, cut a pocket into the side of each chicken breast, or horizontally slice the chicken through the center until it is almost butterflied. Season the chicken lightly with salt and pepper, and then divide the cream cheese mixture evenly between each chicken breast's pocket. Use toothpicks to secure, if necessary.
- 7 Dip the chicken pieces one at a time, first into the egg, and then into the panko mixture, making sure to completely coat the chicken.
- 8 Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked raw meat and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked raw meat and/or raw eggs.
- 9 Place the chicken on the prepared baking rack and cook for about 30–35 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through. The chicken's internal temperature should be 165°F on a food thermometer.

Note: To make your own taco seasoning mixture, combine ½ teaspoon chili powder, ¼ teaspoon cumin, ⅛ teaspoon garlic powder, ⅛ teaspoon onion powder, ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper, ⅛ teaspoon oregano, ⅛ teaspoon paprika, and salt and black pepper to taste.

SWEET AND SOUR PORK WITH PEPPERS

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Total time: 35 minutes

Servings: 6

1 each (4 cups) green, red, yellow, and orange bell pepper, diced

1 large clove garlic, minced

3 green onions, sliced, greens and whites divided

1 pound pork tenderloin

1 large egg

1 tablespoon soy sauce

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 (8-ounce) can of pineapple in juice, juice reserved for sauce

2 tablespoons cornstarch

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

1½ teaspoons ginger

6 cups cooked rice

Sauce

1 cup low-sodium chicken broth

½ cup reserved pineapple juice

3 tablespoons sugar

1½ tablespoons soy sauce

⅓ cup rice vinegar

2 tablespoons cornstarch

1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.

2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.

3 Trim pork of any fat and cut into 1-inch cubes. Combine with egg and soy sauce and allow to marinate for 20 minutes while preparing the remaining ingredients.

4 Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat and/or eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat and/or eggs.

5 Combine all sauce ingredients and mix well; set aside.

6 Remove pork from marinade. Remove any excess marinade by shaking or patting it lightly with paper towels and gently toss with flour and cornstarch.

7 Heat oil in a wok or large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add pork and cook without stirring for 3 minutes on one side or until a crust forms. Continuing cooking just until pork is cooked through but still slightly pink, about 3 more minutes. The pork's internal temperature should be 145°F on a food thermometer.

8 Remove pork from pan and set aside. Add garlic, ginger, and the whites of the onions. Add more oil if needed. Cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.

9 Stir in peppers and cook until tender-crisp, about 3–4 minutes.

10 Stir sauce and add to peppers. Cook until thick and bubbly while stirring, about 2 minutes.

11 Add pork and pineapple and simmer for 1 minute more. Serve over cooked rice.



GRILLED BELL PEPPER RUBEN SANDWICH

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

2 bell peppers, red, orange, or yellow,
thinly sliced

1 cup cabbage, thinly shaved

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar

8 slices Swiss cheese

¼ cup Thousand Island dressing

8 slices rye bread

2 ounces butter, softened

Optional: deli sliced pastrami

Salt and freshly ground black pepper,
to taste



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 To make bell pepper mixture, add bell peppers, cabbage, olive oil, white balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper into a medium bowl.
- 4 Let it marinate for at least 15 minutes, then squeeze out the liquid from the pepper mixture.
- 5 Butter one side of each slice of bread.
- 6 Heat a griddle pan to medium-high heat.
- 7 Place 4 pieces of bread on the griddle, buttered side down.
- 8 On each bread slice, add cheese and bell pepper mixture. If desired, add pastrami.
- 9 Place a slice of bread with butter facing up on top of the pastrami or bell pepper mixture. Leave the sandwich in the pan for 2 minutes or until the bread turns golden brown, then flip and repeat. The cheese should also be melted.



SHEET PAN SHRIMP FAJITAS

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

Foil or non-stick spray

2 bell peppers, any colors, cut into slices

1 sweet onion, cut into slices

¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

Juice of one lime (1/4 cup)

2 tablespoons fresh lime zest

⅓ cup olive oil

1 tablespoon honey

1 teaspoon cumin

1 teaspoon chili powder

1 teaspoon smoked paprika

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon black pepper

1 pound raw shrimp, peeled, deveined

For Serving

Warm tortillas

Lime wedges

Cotija cheese

Pickled onions

Lime Crema

½ cup plain Greek yogurt, 2% or full fat

1 fresh lime, zested and juiced

1 garlic clove, minced

1 teaspoon honey

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon pepper

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 425°F. Prepare a baking sheet by lining it with foil or coating with non-stick spray.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 In a bowl, whisk together the oil, lime zest and juice, honey, cumin, chili powder, paprika, salt, pepper, and garlic.
- 5 Place the peppers and onions on the baking sheet. Add half of the marinade and toss them well, until they're all covered. Place the sheet in the oven and roast for 15–20 minutes, tossing once or twice during cooking.
- 6 In the meantime, place the shrimp in a bowl and pour the remaining marinade over top. Let the shrimp sit to marinate until the peppers are roasted. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw seafood. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw seafood.
- 7 At this time, make the lime crema. Whisk together all ingredients in a small bowl and let the sauce sit for at least 15 minutes before using.
- 8 Once the peppers and onions are finished, toss them a few times and scoop them over to one side of the pan. Place the shrimp on the sheet in a single layer. Roast the shrimp for 6–8 minutes or until just pink and opaque.
- 9 Once the shrimp is cooked, assemble the fajitas. Start with peppers and onions and then add the shrimp. Drizzle with the lime crema, sprinkle with cotija cheese, and top with pickled onions, cilantro, and a squeeze of lime wedge.



PHILLY CHEESESTEAK CASSEROLE

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6

2 bell peppers, any colors, sliced

1 small onion, sliced

2 cups crimini (baby bella) mushrooms, sliced

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 pounds beef, thinly sliced

1 teaspoon garlic salt

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

½ cup beef broth

4 ounces cream cheese, softened and cubed

2 cups (8 ounces) provolone cheese, shredded, or 8 slices provolone

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- 3 Wash and dry peppers and onion. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Clean mushrooms with a damp paper towel. Prepare as directed.
- 5 In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat.
- 6 Add the thinly sliced beef, garlic salt, and pepper and cook it until browned. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat.
- 7 Remove beef from the pan and set aside but leave about 2 tablespoons of fat in the skillet to cook the vegetables. If there isn't enough fat left, add a little more oil to the pan for the veggies.
- 8 Add the sliced bell peppers, onion, and mushrooms to the skillet. Cook until softened.
- 9 Add the Worcestershire sauce, beef broth, and cream cheese to the pan and combine. Heat through until the cream cheese is melted.
- 10 Add the beef back to the pan and combine all ingredients. If you don't have an oven-proof skillet large enough to hold all of the ingredients, transfer the mixture to a 9x13 pan and combine it there.
- 11 Sprinkle with shredded provolone cheese or provolone slices.
- 12 Bake for 15 minutes until heated through. Broil for 2–3 minutes if you prefer crispy cheese on top.

PEACH AND PEPPER TACOS

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Total time: 1 hour

Servings: 12

4 medium peaches or nectarines,
halved and pitted

12 whole miniature bell peppers,
assorted colors, halved, stemmed, and
seeded

1 large fresh poblano chile pepper,
halved, stemmed, and seeded

1 small yellow onion, quartered
lengthwise

1 large avocado, halved, seeded, and
peeled

1 small clove garlic, chopped

2 tablespoons fresh basil, slivered

1/3 cup milk or unsweetened, unflavored
plant milk, such as almond, soy,
cashew, or rice

2 tablespoons lime juice, divided

1/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

5 tablespoons orange juice

1 teaspoon chili powder

1 1/2 cups hot cooked barley

Sea salt, to taste

12 (6-inch) corn tortillas



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Cook barley as directed on package.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 In a blender or food processor, combine avocado, milk, 1 tablespoon lime juice, hot pepper sauce, garlic, and sea salt to taste. Blend until smooth.
- 5 In a bowl, combine 3 tablespoons orange juice, 1 tablespoon lime juice, and chili powder. Add barley and basil; toss to combine. Season with salt.
- 6 Brush peaches, bell peppers, poblano, and onion quarters with remaining 2 tablespoons of orange juice. Grill, covered, over medium-high heat for about 10 minutes or until slightly charred, turning as needed and brushing with water as needed to prevent drying. Transfer to a cutting board; cool slightly.
- 7 Cut peach halves and onion into wedges; separate onion wedges. Cut poblano into bite-size strips.
- 8 Spread tortillas with avocado crema. Top with barley mixture, grilled peaches, and vegetables.



Cajun Mac and Cheese

Cooking It Up!
From
The
Pepper
Plant

SIDES

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GRILLED MARINATED VEGETABLE KABOBS

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 8

Wooden or metal skewers

8 cups vegetables, including onions, mushrooms, sweet or hot peppers, zucchini, potatoes, cauliflower, and cherry tomatoes (see Note)

Marinade

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/3 cup olive oil

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice

1/4 cup water

3 tablespoons Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons honey

1 teaspoon each dried basil, parsley, oregano

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

- 1 If using wooden skewers, soak them in water for at least 30 minutes.
- 2 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 3 Wash and dry all vegetables, then chop them into bite-sized pieces.
- 4 Combine all marinade ingredients in a large ziplock bag. Add veggies and allow to marinate for 4 hours or as long as overnight, turning occasionally. If you are pressed for time, you can just toss and let sit for 15 minutes, but longer is better.
- 5 Thread the veggies onto skewers.
- 6 Preheat the grill to medium and grill skewers 10 minutes or until done.

Note: If using veggies that take longer to cook such as potatoes or cauliflower, partially cook before grilling. Place the veggies in salted boiling water until tender to crisp and then transfer to an ice bath to cool. Once cooled, dry well and add to the marinade.





ROASTED BELL PEPPERS AND RADISHES

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

Servings: 4

1 pound radishes, washed and trimmed on both ends (see Notes)

2 orange bell peppers, chopped

2 cups fresh green peas

2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil

½–1 teaspoon chili flakes

2 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar (see Notes)

¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

Salt and pepper, to taste

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 400°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 In a roasting pan, add radishes, 1 tablespoon oil, and salt. Roast for 15 minutes.
- 5 Remove from oven and add peas, bell peppers, chili flakes, and 1 tablespoon oil; season with salt and pepper.
- 6 Mix well, return to the oven, and roast for an additional 20 minutes.
- 7 Arrange on a serving platter, garnish with fresh parsley, and drizzle with white balsamic vinegar.

Notes:

- If desired, substitute radish with vegetable of choice, such as broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, etc.
- White balsamic vinegar can be substituted with white wine vinegar or rice wine vinegar.

CAJUN MAC AND CHEESE

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 8–10

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped

1 red bell pepper, finely chopped

1 orange or yellow bell pepper, finely chopped

1 pound dried macaroni (elbow) noodles

½ pound bacon, chopped

½ cup unsalted butter

½ cup all-purpose flour

2 cups low-sodium chicken broth

2 teaspoons dried thyme

2 teaspoons garlic powder

½ teaspoon smoked paprika

2 cups whole milk

½ cup half-and-half

2 cups (8 ounces) gouda cheese, shredded (see Note)

2 cups (8 ounces) extra-sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

2 cups (8 ounces) Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

Salt and pepper, to taste

Optional: green onions, cayenne pepper, and breadcrumbs for garnish

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the jalapeño as directed. Prepare the remaining produce as directed.
- 3 Bring 8 cups of water to a boil in a large pot over high heat. Add the noodles and cook until al dente. Do not overcook!
- 4 Drain the noodles and set aside. Return the pot to the stove and set the heat to medium.
- 5 Add the chopped bacon and cook until the fat has rendered, about 6–8 minutes. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat.
- 6 Remove the cooked bacon with a slotted spoon and reserve the bacon grease in the pot.
- 7 Add the jalapeño and bell peppers to the pan. Sauté for 5 minutes, using a wooden spoon to scrape up any brown bits on the bottom of the pan. After 5 minutes, remove the jalapeño and bell peppers from the pan and set aside with the cooked noodles. Carefully wipe any excess fat from the pan.
- 8 Add butter to the pan and let it melt. Sprinkle the flour into the pan and whisk into the butter. Cook the roux mixture for 3 minutes, constantly whisking.
- 9 Slowly pour the chicken broth into the pan and continue to stir. Add the thyme, garlic powder, and smoked paprika to the pot. Allow the sauce to come to a boil over medium heat. Once it has come to a boil, pour the milk and half-and-half into the sauce; stir well.
- 10 Once the sauce mixture barely starts to boil, turn off the heat and stir in the shredded cheeses by the handful.
- 11 Return the cooked pasta, bacon, and sautéed peppers to the pot. Taste, and add salt and pepper as needed. Garnish with green onions, cayenne pepper, and breadcrumbs if desired.

Note: Pre-grated cheese contains preservatives like potato starch and natamycin, meant to keep the shreds from clumping together in the bag. That means the cheese won't melt well when used for cooking. Freshly grated cheese does not contain those additives, so your recipes will turn out less clumpy and much smoother.



GREEN CHILE AND BACON HOMINY

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15–40 minutes

Total time: 25–50 minutes

Servings: 10–12

Optional: food-safe gloves

1–2 (1 cup) fresh poblano or Anaheim pepper, seeded and chopped

1 cup onion, chopped

10 slices bacon, fried crisp and chopped, drippings reserved

Bacon drippings, reserved

4 (15-ounce) cans white hominy, liquid reserved

½ cup hominy liquid, drained and reserved from cans

1 tablespoon juice from pickled jalapeños

2 cups (8 ounces) cheddar cheese, grated (See Note)

Optional: 1 or 2 pickled jalapeños, seeded and chopped

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 325°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Cook bacon until crisp and reserve fat. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by raw meat.
- 5 Chop cooled bacon.
- 6 Sauté the onion in a little of the bacon drippings and put aside.
- 7 Heat the hominy in a separate sauté pan, stirring often. When heated thoroughly, add the hominy liquid and jalapeño juice, return to high heat, and add $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cheese. When the cheese melts, add half the peppers and bacon. Add all the onion.
- 8 Pour into a 9x13-inch baking pan and sprinkle with the remaining cheese, bacon, and peppers. It can be refrigerated or frozen at this point if cooking in advance.
- 9 Bake until the cheese on top melts, about 15 minutes fresh, about 40 minutes if refrigerated.

Note: Pre-grated cheese contains preservatives like potato starch and natamycin, meant to keep the shreds from clumping together in the bag. That means the cheese won't melt well when used for cooking. Freshly grated cheese does not contain those additives, so your recipes will turn out less clumpy and much smoother.



SKILLET POTATOES WITH PEPPERS

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

Servings: 4

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 pound baby yukon gold potatoes, cut in half lengthwise

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup red onion, diced

1 ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) red bell pepper, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes

1 ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) green bell pepper, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes

1½ garlic cloves, thinly sliced

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive or vegetable oil, divided

$\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon kosher salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon onion powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper

Optional: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon serrano pepper, chopped

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 In a medium-sized bowl, combine potatoes with 2 tablespoons oil, salt, garlic powder, onion powder, and black pepper.
- 4 Heat a large 12-inch cast-iron pan or skillet over medium heat. Add 2 tablespoons of oil. Once hot, add onions and sauté until translucent, about 3 minutes.
- 5 Add the bell pepper and sauté until heated and cooked but still has a slight crunch, 2 minutes.
- 6 Add garlic and serrano pepper if using, and sauté until fragrant, 1 minute.
- 7 Add potatoes to the pan and stir to combine.
- 8 Cover and cook until potatoes are tender, about 10–12 minutes, stirring halfway through cooking.
- 9 Remove the cover and increase the heat to medium-high heat.
- 10 Cook the potatoes to lightly brown the surface, stirring occasionally every few minutes, 5–7 minutes.
- 11 Season with additional salt and pepper if desired.



PRESSURE COOKER CHEESY PEPPER RISOTTO

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 4

Pressure cooker

1 (1 cup) bell pepper or hot pepper, diced

1 small yellow onion, diced

1 teaspoon garlic, chopped

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 can chicken broth

1 cup white rice

1 cup (4 ounces) sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 3 Add the olive oil, pepper, onion, and garlic into the pressure cooker. Turn the setting to sauté and sauté the vegetables to your liking.
- 4 Then add in the chicken broth and white rice. Close and seal the pressure cooker and change the setting to high pressure for 6 minutes.
- 5 While the rice is cooking, shred the cheese.
- 6 Once the pressure cooker indicates that the 6 minutes are up, allow the pressure to release naturally for 5 minutes. After the 5 minutes are up, carefully quickly release the remaining pressure and remove the lid.
- 7 After the steam has cleared, immediately stir in the shredded cheese and serve.



Spicy Chocolate Cake with Jalapeño Chocolate Fudge Frosting

DESSERTS

Cooking It Up! From The Pepper Plant

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GRANNY SMITH BELL PEPPER CAKE

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 30–50 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes–1 hour 10 minutes

Servings: 12–18

Non-stick spray

Food processor or blender

2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and chopped

2 red bell peppers, cored and diced

1 cup carrots, shredded

1 granny smith apple

4 large eggs

1 cup sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 cups flour, plus extra to dust the pan (spoon and level to measure)

2 teaspoons baking soda

2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon cinnamon

½ teaspoon salt

12 ounces cream cheese, softened

3 cups powdered sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 375°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Coat a 9x11-inch pan with non-stick spray and flour.
- 5 Add chopped bell peppers to a food processor or blender with sugar, and blitz until smooth.
- 6 In a large bowl, beat together eggs, bell pepper purée, and vanilla.
- 7 Whisk together flour, baking soda, salt, baking powder, and cinnamon. Add dry ingredients to the bowl of liquid ingredients and combine. Stir in carrots and pour the mix into the prepared pan. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 8 Bake for 30–50 minutes. After 30 minutes, check if the cake is done by inserting a toothpick into it. If the toothpick is clean or has a few crumbs, the cake is done.
- 9 Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes. Place the cake on a wire cooling rack and completely cool.
- 10 To make the icing, use a medium bowl and mix in the cream cheese, powdered sugar, and vanilla until smooth. Finely dice the apple. Fold diced apples into icing.
- 11 Ice the cooled cake. Keep the cake refrigerated.



STRAWBERRY TOMATILLO UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 35–45 minutes

Total time: 45 minutes–1 hour

Servings: 12–18

Foil

Topping

2 cups strawberries, diced

3–5 (½ cup) husked tomatillos, diced

¾ cup sugar

Cake

½ cup butter, room temperature

¾ cup sugar

2 large eggs

1½ cups flour (spoon and level to measure)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup milk, room temperature

Optional: whipped cream

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9x9-inch baking dish with foil.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Mix strawberries in a bowl with ¾ cup sugar and set aside.
- 5 Cream butter with ¾ cup sugar until light and fluffy with a hand mixer. You can also do this by hand with a spoon.
- 6 Mix in the eggs one at a time.
- 7 Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add half to the butter mixture; mix.
- 8 Add vanilla and the milk; mix. Add the rest of the dry ingredients and mix for 30 seconds.
- 9 Spread the strawberry tomatillo mixture evenly across the bottom of the pan. Top with the cake batter. It's best to dollop the batter all around the pan and smooth over the top. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 10 Bake for 35–45 minutes until the top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean or with a few crumbs.
- 11 Cool in the pan to allow the fruit to firm up. You can either slice the cake once cool, invert piece by piece when served, or invert the cake all at once before serving.
- 12 Top with whipped cream if desired.

SPICY CHOCOLATE CAKE WITH JALAPEÑO CHOCOLATE FUDGE FROSTING

Prep time: 30 minutes	2 teaspoons cayenne pepper	Jalapeño Fudge Frosting
Cook time: 30 minutes	1 cup butter, softened	Immersion blender or blender
Total time: 1 hour	2¼ cups sugar	Optional: food-safe gloves
Servings: 12	4 large eggs	1 large jalapeño, roughly chopped (with seeds and veins)
Non-stick spray	2¾ cups all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)	2 cups heavy cream
Parchment paper	2 teaspoons baking soda	½ cup powdered sugar
3 (8-inch) cake pans	½ teaspoon baking powder	20 ounces dark chocolate (62% cocoa), chopped into small pieces
2 cups boiling water	1 teaspoon kosher salt	Optional: sprinkles for decorating
1 cup dark cocoa powder, unsweetened		

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Prepare three 8-inch cake pans with non-stick spray and parchment paper rounds on the bottom.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the peppers as directed.
- 4 In a medium bowl, combine the boiling water with the cocoa powder and the red cayenne pepper. Whisk until smooth and set aside to cool.
- 5 In the bowl of a standing mixer, cream together the butter and sugar until fluffy.
- 6 Add the eggs one at a time until they are mixed well.
- 7 In a separate bowl, combine all the dry ingredients; whisk to mix.
- 8 Add the cooled chocolate mixture to the batter. Then, add the dry ingredients to the batter and mix well until it is smooth. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 9 Divide the batter evenly between the three pans.
- 10 Bake for 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean or with a few crumbs. Remove from the oven and let completely cool.
- 11 While the cakes are baking, make the frosting.



- 12** In a medium saucepan, heat the heavy cream, powdered sugar, and the jalapeño over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Add the chocolate to the pot, remove it from the heat, and set aside.
- 13** After 5 minutes, whisk the cream and chocolate until it is very smooth. Use an immersion blender on the mixture to completely purée the jalapeño chunks into the frosting.
- 14** Set it aside to cool and thicken—this will take about 1 hour. You can speed this process up by placing it in the fridge.
- 15** When the cake is completely cooled, place one of the cake layers on a cake plate, use $\frac{1}{4}$ of the frosting, and spread it as a filling over the first layer. Repeat with a second layer and another $\frac{1}{4}$ of the frosting.
- 16** Add the last layer and then use the remaining frosting to frost the whole outside of the cake.
- 17** Use sprinkles to decorate if desired. Slice and serve.

Note: This is a heavy cake.

CHEWY BELL PEPPER OATMEAL COOKIES

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 12 minutes

Total time: 27 minutes

Servings: 12

Food processor or blender

2 red bell peppers, cored, chopped, and puréed

2 red bell peppers, diced

1 cup butter, softened

1 cup sugar

1 cup brown sugar, packed

2 large eggs

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1¾ cups flour (spoon and level to measure)

½ teaspoon baking soda

3 cups quick cooking oats

½ cup hemp seeds, chia seeds, or flaked coconut

- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Add two chopped red bell peppers to a food processor and blitz until smooth.
- 5 In a large bowl, cream together butter and both sugars until smooth. Beat in one egg at a time and stir in vanilla and bell pepper purée.
- 6 Add flour and baking soda, followed by oats and diced bell peppers; stir it all together. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 7 Make cookies by scooping a heaping tablespoon of batter onto an ungreased baking sheet. Depending on the size of your spoon, this will make between 12–18 cookies.
- 8 Bake for 15–20 minutes or until tops are golden and edges are lightly browned.

SWEET PEPPER AND CRANBERRY ORANGE MUFFINS

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 20–25 minutes

Total time: 35–40 minutes

Servings: 24

Blender or food processor

Non-stick spray or paper muffin liners

Muffin pan

1½ cups mini sweet peppers, cored, halved, and puréed

1 cup mini sweet peppers, finely diced

1 (1–2 tablespoons) orange, zested

1½ cups dried cranberries

1½ cups milk

3 large eggs

1 cup vegetable or canola oil

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

4½ cups all-purpose flour (spoon and level to measure)

1 cup sugar

1 cup brown sugar, packed

2 tablespoons baking powder

1 tablespoon nutmeg

1½ teaspoons salt



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly coat muffin pans with non-stick spray or line with paper muffin liners.
- 3 Wash and dry all produce. Prepare as directed.
- 4 Using a blender or food processor, purée 1½ cups of peppers; set aside.
- 5 In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, brown sugar, baking powder, salt, and nutmeg.
- 6 Crack eggs into a separate measuring cup. Add milk, oil, and vanilla extract to the egg mixture. Add the liquid ingredients, including the pepper purée, to dry ingredients in a mixing bowl.
- 7 Using a spoon, gently mix the ingredients together.
- 8 Add the dried cranberries, orange zest, and half the diced peppers, taking care not to overmix.
- 9 Carefully fill each muffin cup $\frac{3}{4}$ full with batter and sprinkle the remaining diced peppers onto the tops of each muffin. Wash hands with warm running water and soap after handling uncooked flour and/or raw eggs. Clean all surfaces and utensils touched by uncooked flour and/or raw eggs.
- 10 Bake muffins til a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean or with a few crumbs, 20–25 minutes. Place muffins on a rack to cool after baking.

CHILE CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cool time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 35 minutes

Servings: 20–25

Waxed paper

Optional: food-safe gloves

1 large red chile or jalapeño, halved and seeded

1 (8-ounce) good-quality dark chocolate bar, chopped

½ cup heavy cream

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 pinch salt

3 tablespoons cocoa powder for dusting



- 1 Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- 2 Wash and dry all produce. Wearing gloves, prepare the pepper as directed.
- 3 Slowly bring the cream and chile or pepper to a boil over medium-low heat.
- 4 Remove the chile from the cream and pour over the chopped chocolate, cayenne pepper, and salt. Leave to sit for 1–2 minutes, then whisk until smooth. Put the bowl in the fridge for 1 hour to firm up.
- 5 After an hour, remove from the fridge. With a teaspoon, spoon mounds onto a large baking tray lined with waxed paper. You'll get 20–25, depending on how large you make the mounds. If desired, put the tray back in the fridge for about 15–20 minutes for firmer truffles.
- 6 Roll the mounds into balls between the palms of your hands.
- 7 Put cocoa powder in a bowl and roll the balls in it to cover. Put truffles back on the baking tray and chill until set.
- 8 Store in an airtight container in the fridge.





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