

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

Bacon, Potato, Cheese Casserole

Dennis Kirby, Champaign, IL

1st Prize Illinois State Fair, 2015

1 1/2 lbs of lean bacon
2 lbs of potatoes, skin on
1 large onion
1 1/2 lbs of Colby Jack Cheese
1/4 teaspoon salt each layer
1/4 teaspoon pepper each layer

Use a frying pan that can be put into a 350-degree oven.

Line the bottom and side of the pan with parchment paper, or use 2 tablespoon lard to prevent from sticking

Starting at the very center of the pan, line bacon strips side by side, alternating a little forward and a little back to prevent overlapping on the bottom of the pan.

Once this is done, thinly slice potatoes, and onions (ONLY ONE LAYER OF ONIONS) layering them on top of the bacon. Add a layer of cheese and then season with salt and pepper. Repeat the process (potatoes, cheese, salt and pepper) until you have about 4 to 6 layers.

Taking your time, fold the bacon over the top of the potatoes. Place a heavy lid on top of the casserole to prevent bacon from curling. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for about 2 1/2 hours. Be sure to place a drip pan beneath the skillet to prevent bacon grease from splattering everywhere.

Remove from oven and drain as much grease as possible. Turn pan over onto a large plate to release casserole and remove parchment if used. Use a second plate to turn casserole over again. Sprinkle with a little more cheese. Cut in pie slices and serve warm as a main dish or allow to cool for a side dish! Top with sour cream, extra shredded cheese and green onions if desired! Enjoy! This dish has been around for many years and has only just recently resurfaced as a popular family gathering dish.

[Read the history here.](#)

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

Saltibarsciai----cold beet soup from Lithuania

Deborah Steele, Springfield, Illinois

10 beets; greens removed 3 quarts water
1/4 cup chopped dill (and 3 tbsp chopped dill for garnish)
2 cucumbers, peeled and chopped coarsely
1/4 cup white vinegar
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
1 pint sour cream
2 potatoes, boiled and cooled

one medium onion, finely chopped three tbsp butter
three tbsp vegetable oil

wash beets, place in 6 quart dutch oven pan. bring to boil, and simmer til just tender. should be approx. 20 minutes.

drain the beets, reserve the beet water. let the beets and water cool. trim and peel the beets, chop coarsely. add to water.

peel cucumbers, chop coarsely, add to water.

add the vinegar, sour cream, salt and pepper.

wash the fresh dill. chop up, and add to water in pot. combine very well.

place in refrigerator at least three hours to chill. overnight is best.

boil potatoes and let cool. then peel and dice.

add vegetable oil and butter to frying pan .. saute the chopped onion in the pan til limp. add diced potato,
and the 3 tbsp chopped dill. combine well heat though.
serves 10 people.

[Read the history here.](#)

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

Simple Asparagus Soup

Amy Wertheim, Atlanta, Illinois

1st Prize Illinois State Fair, 2016

1 tablespoon butter
1 pound asparagus
2 tablespoons flour
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste
3/4 cup onion, chopped
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 3/4 cup chicken or vegetable broth
1/2 cup plain yogurt *
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, + some for garnish

Prepare the asparagus: snap off the woody ends. Chop off the tips and set aside. Chop the remainder into 1/4 inch pieces. Set aside.

In a large pot, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onions and saute' for 2 minutes. Add the asparagus (but not the tips) and continue to saute' until the asparagus and onion are tender, about 3-5 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine flour, salt, and pepper. Using a wooden spoon, to move the veggies to the side of the pot. Melt 1 tablespoon butter on the clear side of the pot; add the flour mixture and whisk it together to make a paste while keeping the veggies on the other side of the pan. Cook the mixture for about a minute, then add the broth in small increments, whisking between each addition. Whisk out any lumps. Add the milk and combine. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Simmer for about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile in a small saucepan, add 1 1/2 cups water and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil over high heat. When it is at a rolling boil, add the reserved asparagus tips. Cover and cook for 2 minutes. Immediately drain in a colander and rinse with cold water to stop the cooking process. Set aside.

Remove the soup from the stove after it is done simmering & puree the soup until smooth** and then return it to the pot. Add the yogurt, lemon juice, and Parmesan and any additional salt and pepper to taste. If the soup has cooled too much, heat on high, stirring until the soup is as hot as you like. Serve with the reserved asparagus tips and shredded Parmesan.

* Heavy cream was originally used; I like the yogurt for a lighter flavor. ** We prefer it not completely smooth so the soup has some texture to it. Yield: Serves 2-4

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

Spargelsuppe – White Asparagus Soup

Amy Wertheim, Atlanta, Illinois

1st Prize Illinois State Fair, 2016

1/2 cup chopped white onion

2 tablespoons butter

1-1/2 pounds white asparagus, peeled & cut into 2-inch pieces

6 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1/2 cup heavy whipping cream

salt and pepper to taste

Prepare the asparagus: white asparagus must be peeled, similar to a carrot to remove the woody flesh. Be sure and peel prior to cutting into 2-inch pieces. Reserve some tips for garnish. Set aside.

In a large soup pot, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onions and saute until soft, approximately 4 minutes. Add the asparagus (but not the tips) and continue to saute until the asparagus and onion are tender, about 3-5 minutes. Add the broth and cook for 30 minutes until the asparagus is soft and pliable.

Remove the soup from the stove after it is done simmering & puree the soup until smooth and then return it to the pot. Add the heavy whipping cream salt and pepper to taste. If the soup has cooled too much, heat on high, stirring until the soup is as hot as you like. Serve with the reserved asparagus tips.

Note: This is not a big batch of soup – this recipe was for 4 people as it was served between courses to cleanse the palate; however for a single course meal only, if there are other side dishes like bread and salad it would be enough. My grandparents were known to sometimes add a splash of white wine for a little kick (acidity).

[Read the history here.](#)

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

BEULAH'S CHICKEN SALAD

Jone Schumacher, Chapin, Illinois

2nd Prize Illinois State Fair, 2010

2 1/2 pounds chicken breasts

1 1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning

1/4 teaspoons pepper

2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules

2/3 cup sweet pickles

3/4 cup finely chopped celery

1 1/4 cups mayonnaise

1/4 cup reserved chicken broth

30 slices sandwich bread

Soft butter to spread, approximately 1 teaspoon per sandwich
Mayonnaise to spread, approximately 1 teaspoon per sandwich

Grease large baking pan. Place chicken breasts in pan and season with the seasoning, pepper and chicken bouillon. Cover with foil and bake in pre-heated oven for 40 minutes or until cut breast broth is clear. Drain and cool. Place broth and chicken in refrigerator to cool. Remove bones and skin from chicken, cut in pieces and grind chicken with meat grinder. (I choose to use 2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breasts for healthier, easier choice.)

Grind pickles into the chicken and allow the pickle juice to fall into the chicken. Stir the celery into the chicken. Combine the mayonnaise with the reserved chicken broth and stir into chicken. Chill the chicken salad until ready to make sandwiches.

To prepare sandwiches, cut the edge of bread from the slices. Spread soft butter on one side of first piece of bread and mayonnaise on another slice. Spoon about 1/3 cup chicken salad on the mayonnaise bread, top with the buttered bread. Cut sandwich on diagonally and place in sandwich bag. Chill in refrigerator until serving. If taking to picnic, place on ice.

YIELD: Recipe makes approximately 5 cups chicken salad, making 15 sandwiches.

[Read the history here.](#)

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

OLD FASHION OVEN FRIED CHICKEN

Jone Schumacher, Chapin, Illinois

CHICKEN:

- 1 1/4 cup all purpose Flour.
- 3/4 teaspoon Seasoning (poultry seasoning).
- 3/4 teaspoon Lawry's salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoon fine chicken bouillon
- 2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup buttermilk or evaporated milk
- 4 pounds chicken pieces
- 4 cups solid shortening
- 12 oz chicken broth

OPTIONAL GRAVY:

- 3 tablespoons left-over seasoned
- 2-3 cups whole milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pre-heat lard in a large skillet to 350 degrees.
2. Combine all seasonings and flour in a plastic or plastic bag.
3. Dip chicken pieces in the buttermilk and place in bag. Shake gently to coat with the seasoned flour. Carefully place chicken into the hot oil.
4. Let fry to light brown, turning after about 5 to 10 minutes to brown all sides.
5. Remove from skillet to blot off excess oil on paper towels.
6. Place chicken in roasting pan, pour on the chicken broth, cover and place in pre-heated 275 degree oven for 2 1/2 to 3 hours until tender and reaches internal temperature of 180 degrees.

OPTIONAL GRAVY:

1. When shortening is cool enough to handle safely, drain skillet, being careful to leave the browned flour crumbs. Stir the seasoned flour into the fat that remains with the crumbs. Slowly pour in the milk, stirring constantly. Heat skillet to 350 degrees, continuing to stir until gravy is bubbling and thickened. (Additional milk can be added as necessary for desired thickness.) Keep warm until serving.

[Read the history here.](#)

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

CHOCOLATE SOUR CREAM POUND CAKE

Pamela Lynn Sage, Monmouth, Illinois

1 1/2 cups butter, softened
3 cups sugar
5 eggs
3 cups flour
1/2 cup cocoa
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup sour cream -8 ounce
1 cup boiling water
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Cream butter; gradually add sugar, beating well. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine flour, cocoa, soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with sour cream, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Mix well after each addition. Add boiling water, and mix well. Stir in vanilla. Pour batter into a greased and floured 10-inch tube pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour and 20 minutes or until cake tests done. Cool cake in pan 10 to 15 minutes; remove from pan, and cool completely on a rack.
Yield: one 10-inch cake. Dust with powdered sugar.

[Read the history here.](#)

Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair

Ruth's Pasta Salad
Jackie Bales, Springfield, Illinois

- 1 pkg. 16 oz rotini
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped cucumbers
- 1 cup chopped green peppers
- 1 cup chopped red peppers
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons parsley flakes
- 1 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 2 teaspoons prepared mustard
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

Cook rotini till soft. Drain. Add onions, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes and parsley flakes.

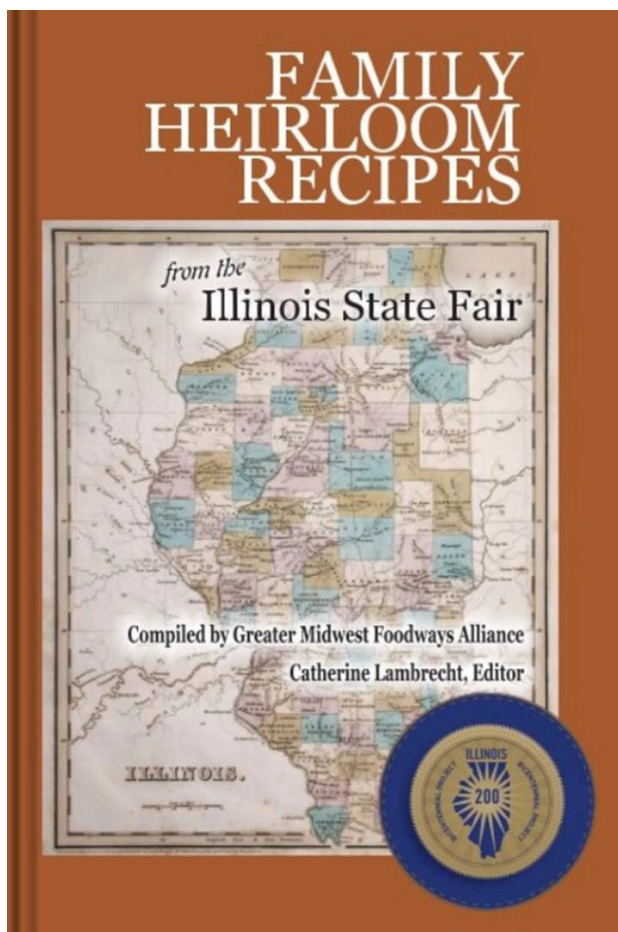
Mix sugar, vinegar, oil, mustard, salt, pepper and garlic powder. Pour over the rotini mix. For best flavor, chill in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Stir and serve.

The salad can be kept in the refrigerator for two weeks.

[Read the history here.](#)

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More stories and recipes are at www.GreaterMidwestFoodways.com or via this book:



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