

REAL FOOD WEEKLY

January 05, 2013

“CLEAN AND COMFORTING”

ISSUE 64

I hope you are enjoying the New Year so far! Most people are trying to figure out how to improve their health this year. YOU have made an awesome decision to follow my nourishing, real food weekly meal plans! This week I am keeping the food clean and simple, but also comforting...it is the middle of winter after all! Real Food Weekly meal plans are now offering grain-free options for all recipes, so enjoy my “Succulent Grain-free Brownies” for a treat this week. Stay warm and stay nourished!



ROASTED CHICKEN AND FENNEL



CRISPY POTATO CAKES WITH HERB AND SCALLION CREAM



STUFFED PEPPERS WITH BRAISED CRANBERRY CABBAGE



CHICKEN "GUMBO"

MY EXTRA MEALS THIS WEEK:

WHAT'S FOR DINNER

- Roasted Chicken and Fennel
- Stuffed Peppers with Braised Cranberry Cabbage
- Easy Slow-Cooker Beef Roast with Crispy Potato Cakes with Herb and Scallion Cream
- Leftovers Creation~ Chicken "Gumbo"

EXTRAS

- Succulent Grain-Free Brownies

NOURISHING ADDITIONS

- Homemade Spiced Red Sauerkraut
- Homemade Sour Cream
- Homemade Chicken Stock

PLANNING NOTES

- Make the Homemade Sour Cream at the beginning of the week to use during the week.
- Use the leftover chicken bones and parts to make Homemade Chicken Stock to use for the Chicken "Gumbo" as well as easy soups for snacks or meals.
- Some of the grain-free ingredient options on the shopping list are all available at health food stores, or on the "Resources" page at **RealFoodFamily.com**.

Shopping List

Clean and Comforting

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My NOTES:

PANTRY:

Salt and Pepper
Extra virgin olive oil
Frying fat, such as olive oil, coconut oil, organic beef tallow or lard
Garlic powder
Cayenne pepper
Mixed dried herbs, such as thyme, rosemary and oregano
garbanzo bean flour (*grain-free option*)
or dry breadcrumbs
¼ cup potato starch (*grain-free option*)
or flour
red wine
cinnamon
honey or real maple syrup

FOR HOMEMADE SAUERKRAUT:

Nutmeg

FOR SUCCULENT GRAIN-FREE BROWNIES:

Dark chocolate (*chips or in a solid bar*)
Vanilla
Almond flour
Coconut flour
Cocoa powder
(honey)

***Consider extra items for breakfast, lunches, snacks, and additional recipes such as tortillas for tacos, etc.**

ROASTED CHICKEN AND FENNEL

Total Time 1 hour, 10 minutes

Ingredients:

**1 whole roasting chicken, butterflied
(see note below)**
**3-6 fennel bulbs, fronds cut off and cut
into quarters**
extra virgin olive oil or butter
salt and pepper
garlic powder

Preheat oven to 425°F.

To butterfly the chicken, use sharp kitchen shears to cut along the side of the backbone, all the way through to the opposite end. *You may cut out the entire backbone by repeating on the other side, or leaving the backbone on the chicken to roast (*as I do*). Using the shears or a sharp knife, cut a one-inch slit in the top of the breastbone, then turn chicken over into a large baking dish. Press to flatten.

Cut firm cores out of fennel slices and place fennel around chicken, or in a separate baking dish if there is not enough room.

Coat the chicken and fennel with oil or dot with pieces of butter. Sprinkle liberally with salt, pepper and garlic powder, then place in the oven. Bake for 15 minutes, then reduce heat to 350°F and continue roasting chicken and fennel for 45-60 minutes, until chicken is fully cooked and fennel is soft. Juices of chicken will run clear when sliced. Serve immediately.

EASY SLOW COOKER BEEF ROAST

Total Time 6-8 hours (*mostly inactive*)

This recipe is perfect for throwing in a slow cooker quickly in the early morning, then leaving and coming home to a deliciously comforting meal.

****This recipe is meant for a slow-cooker, but may be cooked over very low heat on a stove. Make sure you are home to supervise a pot over a live fire!***

Ingredients:

**3-5 pound beef roast, such as chuck, rump
or brisket, cut into large cubes**
extra virgin olive oil or frying fat, optional
1 onion, roughly chopped
1-2 cups carrots, roughly chopped
1-2 cups celery, roughly chopped
1-2 cups chicken or beef stock
salt and pepper
2 teaspoons mixed dried herbs

**Optional: Sauté beef cubes in hot olive oil or frying fat to brown before transferring to the slow cooker or adding vegetables.*

Place beef, onion and celery in a large pot or slow cooker. Pour enough stock to come to 1-2 inches below the top of the ingredients. Stir in a liberal amount of salt and pepper and mixed dried herbs. Place on or over low heat and let cook for 4-8 hours, until meat and vegetables are very soft.

STUFFED PEPPERS WITH BRAISED CRANBERRY CABBAGE

Total Time: 50 minutes

Ingredients:

FOR PEPPERS:

Extra virgin olive oil

1 onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 pound ground beef

**1 pound sausage, such as Italian or
a spicy sausage**

2 eggs

½ cup heavy cream

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper

1 teaspoon mixed dried herbs

1 bell pepper per person

FOR CABBAGE:

8 tablespoons butter, divided

1 red cabbage, chopped

1 ½ cups cranberries

1 ½ cups red wine

salt and pepper

1 teaspoon cinnamon

4-8 tablespoons honey or maple syrup

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Begin by preparing cabbage. Heat 4 tablespoons of butter in a medium saucepan or stockpot. Sauté cabbage in butter for 10 minutes, then add cranberries and wine. Season liberally with salt and pepper and stir in cinnamon and 4 tablespoons of honey or maple syrup. Bring to a strong simmer for 15 minutes, then cover and let simmer for 30 minutes, until cabbage is very tender. Stir in more honey or syrup, as needed, to balance the sourness of the cranberries. Season with salt and pepper, as needed. Before serving, remove from heat and stir in the remaining 4 tablespoons of butter.

Meanwhile, sauté onions in oil in a small skillet for 5 minutes, then add garlic for 2 minutes. Place meat in a bowl with sautéed garlic and onions, eggs, cream, salt, pepper and dried herbs. Use a spoon or your hands to evenly mix the meat and other ingredients.

Slice bell peppers in half and remove stem and seeds. Place peppers, hollow-side up, in a baking dish and fill each pepper "cup" with the meat mixture. Place in the oven and bake for about 30 minutes, until the top of the meat is beginning to brown. Serve stuffed peppers over a bed of braised cabbage.

CRISPY POTATO CAKES WITH HERB AND SCALLION CREAM

Total Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8-10 green onions or scallions, light green parts only**
- 2 eggs**
- 2-3 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped into small cubes (sweet potatoes may be substituted)**
- 2 tablespoons garbanzo bean flour or dry breadcrumbs**
- 1 teaspoon salt, plus extra**
- ½ teaspoon pepper, plus extra**
- frying fat, such as olive oil, coconut oil, organic beef tallow or lard**
- 1 ½ cups sour cream**
- 1 teaspoon mixed dried herbs**

Place 6-8 scallions, roughly chopped, in a food processor with 2 eggs. Pulse until light and fluffy. Add potatoes and pulse until mixture is minced (*not pureed*). Add flour or breadcrumbs, salt and pepper and pulse until just mixed.

Heat about 1 inch of frying fat in a large saucepan and test a drop of potato mixture to ensure that mixture bubbles immediately. Use a large spoon to drop scoops of batter into the fat to fry for about 3 minutes per side. **For crisp cakes, make sure that the fat is very hot and cakes become golden very quickly. For cream sauce, place sour cream in a small bowl with 2 finely chopped scallions and mixed dried herbs. Mix evenly with a fork and season, as needed, with salt and pepper, then serve with potato cakes.*

CHICKEN "GUMBO"

Total Time: 25 minutes

**This isn't a true Gumbo because it lacks the specific Cajun flavors and thick roux that qualify a real Gumbo, but this thick soup is inspired by Gumbo and gives the same comforting feel. This recipe is grain-free but would also be delicious over cooked brown rice for those wanting more than just soup.*

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup olive oil, butter or other frying fat**
- 1 onion, chopped**
- 2 bell peppers, chopped**
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped**
- 6-8 tomatoes, seeded, peeled and chopped (jarred or canned tomatoes work best)**
- ¼ cup potato starch or flour**
- 2 ½ cups chicken stock**
- 2 cups cooked chicken, chopped**
- 1 cup sour cream**
- pinch of cayenne pepper**
- 1 teaspoon mixed dried herbs**
- salt and pepper**

Heat oil or fat in a large stockpot and sauté onions and bell peppers for 8-10 minutes. Stir in garlic and tomatoes for 2-3 minutes, then stir in starch or flour. Stir in chicken stock and cooked chicken and bring to a simmer until soup thickens. Stir in sour cream, cayenne pepper and mixed dried herbs, then season, as needed, with salt and pepper to serve.

SUCCULENT GRAIN-FREE BROWNIES

Total Time: 50 minutes, plus cooling

Ingredients:

- ½ cup butter**
- 5 ounces dark chocolate**
- 1 tablespoon vanilla (or any other desired flavorings such as peppermint or orange)**
- 3 eggs, separated**
- 2/3 cup honey**
- 1 cup almond flour**
- ¼ cup coconut flour**
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder**
- ½ teaspoon salt**

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Melt butter, dark chocolate and vanilla over low heat until melted, smooth and evenly mixed. Place egg whites and egg yolks in two separate bowls. Beat egg whites with a pinch of salt until soft peaks form. Clean whisks, then beat egg yolks with honey in a separate bowl until pale yellow and “ribboning”. In a third bowl, whisk almond flour, coconut flour, cocoa powder and salt together. Mix flour mixture into eggs with the electric mixer on low power. Use a wooden spoon to evenly incorporate melted chocolate mixture into batter. Finally, fold in egg whites just until incorporated. Pour mixture into a buttered baking dish. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until brownies are set and center does not jiggle when shaken. Let cool completely before serving.

HOMEMADE SPICED RED SAUERKRAUT

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 3 days

Servings: Yields 2 cups

Ingredients:

- 1 medium red cabbage, cored and shredded**
- 2-4 teaspoons cinnamon**
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg**
- 1 tablespoon salt**
- 4 tablespoons whey, or 1 additional tablespoon of salt and 2 tablespoons lemon juice**

Place ingredients and large bowl and mash for 10 minutes with large spoon or meat pounder until juices are released and cabbage size is reduced drastically. Transfer mixture to airtight glass jar and set out at room temperature for 3 days. Transfer to refrigerator. Sauerkraut will last for many months and improve with age.

HOMEMADE SOUR CREAM

Real homemade sour cream is really more like Crème Fraîche, or European Sour Cream. This recipe is from Sally Fallon's Nourishing Traditions Cookbook, which you can find on my website on the resources page. To learn more about culturing dairy at home,

Ingredients:

- 1 pint good quality cream**
- 1 tablespoon whole-milk buttermilk or commercial crème fraîche**

Start with the best quality cream you can find. Raw cream is best but pasteurized will do. Do not use ultrapasteurized cream. Place in a clean glass container. Add buttermilk or crème fraîche, stir well, cover tightly and place in a warm spot for 20-24 hours. Chill well before serving.

HOMEMADE CHICKEN STOCK

Total Time: 4-8 hours (mostly inactive cooking time)

***Watch this recipe on Real Food Family's YouTube Channel!**

Every home, I repeat, every home should frequently have a pot of homemade chicken and vegetable soup brewing in the kitchen. Slowly made stocks are one of the leading traditional foods we can nourish ourselves with. Stock making, like many traditional food preparations, is becoming a lost art. Homemade soup stocks have been replaced by pre-made powdered soup base, made with meat-mimicking monosodium glutamate (MSG) and hydrolyzed vegetable protein. It isn't just a myth that good chicken soup will make you feel better. "Good broth will resurrect the dead," says a South American proverb. When made properly- with all the bones and organs- a good meat stock is full of minerals and soothing gelatin. Soups can be a wonderfully filling meal, or sipped as hot drink throughout the day. It is also a great way to get kids to eat multiple vegetables- just chop them up into small pieces.

From www.westonaprice.org/food-features/515-broth-is-beautiful.html:

Gelatin was found to be useful in the treatment of a long list of diseases including peptic ulcers, tuberculosis, diabetes, muscle diseases, infectious diseases, jaundice and cancer. Babies had fewer digestive problems when gelatin was added to their milk. The American researcher Francis Pottenger pointed out that as gelatin is a hydrophilic colloid, which means that it attracts and holds liquids, it facilitates digestion by attracting digestive juices to food in the gut. Even the epicures recognized that broth-based soup did more than please the taste buds. "Soup is a healthy, light, nourishing food" said Brillant-Savarin, "good for all of humanity; it pleases the stomach, stimulates the appetite and prepares the digestion."

It's so tasty, too! So why don't you join the thousands of happy-pappy people, and... Make it!

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons butter or olive oil

1 onion, sliced

1 whole chicken or 6-8 pieces of bone-in chicken parts (legs work well and are inexpensive), also include organ pieces if provided

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon of mixed dried herbs, such as Herbs de Provence

Salt and Pepper

2 tablespoons vinegar (optional- to help break down gelatin)

2-4 cups of chopped vegetables, such as carrots, zucchini, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.

¼ cup fresh herbs, such as basil or flat leaf parsley, chopped (optional)

Heat butter or oil in a large stockpot. Sauté onions for 5 minutes, until translucent. Add chicken and garlic, letting chicken brown a little. Add enough water to fill stockpot. Season generously with salt and pepper, and add dried herbs and vinegar (optional). Cover and let simmer for 3-6 hours. Remove any foam that forms on the top of your stock. Carefully remove chicken parts and separate bones and cartilage from meat. (You may cut large bones with sharp kitchen shears and add back to soup to continue simmering, extracting even more nourishing minerals from within the bones. Make sure to remove these bones before serving.)

TO MAKE AN EASY CHICKEN AND VEGETABLE SOUP:

Add vegetables and fresh herbs and let simmer until vegetables are soft. Add meat back to soup. Season with salt and pepper, as needed, and serve.

Your soup/stock should keep in your refrigerator for up to a week. A good stock has a golden shimmer when warm, and forms into a solid gelatin when cold. You may wish to use this recipe to make a large batch of rich stock to store in your freezer. Simply make the recipe, saving the meat for other uses (like tacos, omelets, or sandwiches!). Let stock cool completely before transferring to freezer bags or containers.

***Tip: store in multiple small containers for convenience.**