

The background is white and decorated with various holiday-themed elements. There are several green snowflakes of different sizes, some hanging from thin green lines. Interspersed among the snowflakes are small, solid-colored circles in green, orange, and yellow. A large, thick, red, stylized line or ribbon curves diagonally across the center of the page, starting from the bottom left and ending near the top right. In the upper left quadrant, the text "Holiday 2021" is written in a green, sans-serif font.

Holiday
2021

The

Love
of MKP cooking



**Celebrate the holidays
with some favorite
family recipes!**



or this collection, each of us at MKP has contributed a personal favorite recipe that celebrates a special memory or honors a long-standing family tradition. Give them a try! Perhaps a recipe or two will become holiday favorites of yours too.

Happy holidays
from all of us at MKP!

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FIRE ESCAPE WINGS

By David Gaull

David Gaull is MKP's Chief Operating Officer.



Attending college in Rochester, NY, Buffalo wings were a staple in my diet, especially since I love spicy food! When I moved to New Jersey, I discovered that wings were different here. This set me on an ultimately successful mission to recreate the crispy hot wings that were a big part of my college days.

Years later, I began preparing wings for our annual MKP Holiday Luncheon. I'd set up on the fire escape and prepare authentic Buffalo wings. They're always served with Dave's Secret Sauce made with peppers from my garden, blue cheese dressing, celery and carrots. The dressing is a must to cool your mouth after each spicy bite.

Ingredients

Dave's Secret Sauce

- 12 oz. bottle of Frank's RedHot® Original Cayenne Pepper Hot Sauce
- 3 tablespoons of butter
- 1/4 cup of chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon of chopped garlic
- 1 teaspoon of crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon of black pepper
- 2 or 3 chopped hot peppers including seeds – Jalapeno, Serrano, Habanero, etc. (any mixture you like)
- 1/4 cup of ketchup
- 2 tablespoons of honey
- 1-1/2 ounces of bourbon or whiskey

Wings

- 4 small packages of wings (each package yields 18 wing parts when cut up); use the first and second wing portions and throw out the wingtip
- 1 gallon of vegetable oil

Steps

1. Melt the butter in a saucepan and sauté the onion until soft and transparent.
2. Add the garlic, red pepper flakes and black pepper. Let simmer for a couple of minutes and add the chopped peppers, making sure to include the seeds—they add to the fire!
3. Once the peppers have softened, add the shot (or two) of bourbon and the honey. Simmer for a couple more minutes before adding the whole bottle of Frank's and the ketchup. Whisk it all together and let it simmer for about 15 minutes.
4. Put the vegetable oil into a deep fryer and preheat to 360 degrees.
5. Place the wings in the fry basket, submerge in the oil and fry for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep them from sticking together. Fry until they just start to turn golden brown.
6. Raise the basket out of the hot oil and turn the temperature up to 375 degrees. This will allow the wings to drain a little while the oil is getting hotter. Once the temp is up to 375, drop the wings back into the oil for another 5 minutes. This final fry makes them slightly crispy – there's nothing worse than a soggy chicken wing!
7. Once frying is complete, put the wings into a brown paper grocery bag and shake to remove the excess oil.
8. Open the bag and spoon some sauce over the wings, reclose the bag and shake lightly to distribute the sauce. (At this point, if you want to clear your sinuses, open the bag and take a slow, deep breath!) Make sure to save some sauce to dress the wings and to serve on the side along with cut up celery, carrots and Marie's® Blue Cheese dressing.



MAMA'S EMPANADAS

By Frank Vasquez

Frank Vasquez is MKP's Director of Information Technology.



For as long as I can remember—at every family gathering and every holiday, including Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas—we could rely on one thing: my mother's empanadas. Ever since I was young, I have always loved them. There is something about the meat-filled, deep-fried pastry that just makes you happy. Not only did I look forward to eating these delicious reminders of home, but so did everyone else. Although they are small, this delicious snack has the power to bring everyone together on something on which we can all agree: good food. I hope you enjoy them as much as our family and friends do.

Ingredients

- 1-1/4 lb. ground beef (or turkey or chicken); beef should be 90% lean, preferably
- 1 tbsp of cooking oil to cook meat; additional oil for frying
- 1/4 cup yellow onion
- 1/4 cup green pepper
- 1 tbsp sofrito (optional)
- 1 tbsp finely minced garlic
- 1/2 chicken bouillon cube or 1 envelope Sa-són Ac'cent® Original envelope seasoning (international section of supermarket); alternatively, just season with adobo (international section of supermarket) or salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1/4 tsp oregano powder
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 to 1 tbsp tomato paste to taste
- 1 or 2 packages of Goya Empanada Dough Discos® (frozen section of supermarket); defrost prior to using

Steps

MEAT FILLING

1. In a preheated pan (on medium-high heat), add in 1 tbsp of cooking oil and allow it to heat through for 1 minute.
2. Add in your onion and bell peppers and cook until tender. Add in your chicken bouillon, garlic and mix well. Once slightly cooked, stir, add in ground beef and stir again. Lower the flame to medium and cover for 10 minutes. Then uncover, use a large spoon to break up the meat and proceed to add other seasonings: garlic powder, soy sauce, Sa-són Ac'cent or adobo.
3. Raise flame to medium-high to finish cooking meat. Once liquid evaporates and meat is fully cooked, taste and adjust seasoning. If meat is drying and seasonings are sticking to the pan, you can add water to deglaze the pan and enhance the flavor. Once meat is cooked, turn off and remove from heat so it doesn't dry out or burn.

PREPARE EMPANADAS

4. Once the meat has cooled off, take one empanada disc (defrosted) and wet the outer rim of the pastry with a little water or egg wash and fill the pastry with beef filling (do not overfill). Fold over to make a half moon shape. Take a fork and press down on the outer edge to seal the edges together. Repeat until you've run out of filling or empanada discs.

COOK EMPANADAS

5. Heat frying pan with cooking oil at medium heat (vegetable oil works best—olive oil or avocado does not work well). DO NOT OVERHEAT OIL as it will burn pastry and filling will remain cold. Add empanadas and turn over once golden brown on each side. Remove and place on paper towel. Serve and enjoy!



PUREED ASPARAGUS SOUP

By Melissa Chefec

Melissa Chefec is MKP's Business Development Manager.



I love soup: making it, gifting it, ordering it at restaurants and my favorite Seinfeld episode is *The Soup Nazi*. I have been making soups for years—classic tomato, creamy cauliflower, curried carrot, celery root soup, chowders, black bean, chicken sweet potato and kale, ground beef and barley, chicken noodle soup and more.

I love this pureed asparagus soup because it's delicious, healthy, low in calories and a gorgeous shade of green. It's always a crowd pleaser. My recipe is modeled after Asparagus Soup with Leeks and Mustard Seed (Fine Cooking Magazine: [finecooking.com/recipe/asparagus-soup-with-leeks-and-mustard-seed](https://www.finecooking.com/recipe/asparagus-soup-with-leeks-and-mustard-seed)).

Ingredients

- 1 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 1 Tbs. EVOO
- 1-1/4 cups thinly sliced leeks (or white onion)
- 3 tsp. minced garlic
- Pinch Kosher salt
- 2-1/2 cups lower-salt chicken broth
- 3 Tbs. white wine
- 2 tsp. mustard seed
- 2-1/4 lb. asparagus, bottom of stems trimmed, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup heavy cream (or half & half or Creme Fraiche)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. fresh lemon juice; more as needed
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- Tiny drizzle of truffle oil

Steps

1. In a big pot, heat the butter and oil over medium-low heat. Add the leeks, garlic and a pinch of kosher salt. Stir, cover, reduce the heat to low and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables have softened, approximately 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in 1 tsp. kosher salt and the mustard seeds.
2. Add the asparagus, chicken broth and wine, plus 2-1/2 cups water. Stir well, bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer over low heat. Cook with the cover ajar to let a little of the steam out, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are very tender and the soup is full-flavored, approximately 20 minutes.
3. Remove the pot from the heat and let the soup cool for 5-10 minutes. Use a stick emulsifier (stick hand blender) to puree the soup.
4. Add the cream and 1/2 tsp. lemon juice. Season the soup with salt and pepper. Taste the soup and adjust the seasonings with more salt, pepper, or lemon juice as needed.
5. Serve with chopped parsley and a drizzle of truffle oil.



POTATO LEEK SOUP (VICHYSSOISE) By Charlie Mendoza

Charlie Mendoza is MKP's Creative Services Manager.



Potato leek soup can be realized in just a few simple steps, is delicious either piping hot or cold and can be a side dish or stand in as a small meal with hearty absorbent bread. My daughter and I share an admiration for mashed potatoes, so, when I introduced her as a young child to my homemade potato leek soup, it quickly became a favorite of hers. My wife is also a fan and we enjoy it particularly in the cooler months when a thick warm soup genuinely hits the spot.

Ingredients

- 2 stalks of leeks
- 6-8 fist-sized potatoes (russet or yellow potatoes are best)
- 1-2 sticks of butter (salted or unsalted)
- 32 ounces of vegetable or chicken broth
- Cumin/salt/pepper
- Favorite bread(s)

Optional add-ins

The soup is great on its own, but use your imagination and add in anything you like!

- Red, green or yellow peppers
- Pearl onions
- Sautéed mushrooms
- Homemade croutons
- Peas
- Corn

Steps

1. Peel roughly two fist-sized potatoes per anticipated serving. Once peeled, chop the potatoes into small pieces/chunks and place them in a pot with enough water so that the potatoes are completely immersed. Add a few pinches of salt and a single pinch of powdered cumin to the water. Bring to a boil and then lower heat to medium and let them simmer on low for 20-30 minutes.
2. While the potatoes are simmering, thoroughly wash, rinse and drain the leeks prior to finely chopping and finely slicing the two stalks. Only use the white up until the stalk begins to turn green. Melt 3-4 tablespoons of butter in a pan. Once the butter is nearly all melted, add the chopped and sliced leeks along with 1/8 cup of diced white onion and sauté until the leeks are coated and soft, but not browned.
3. Once the potatoes are soft, drain them and add two tablespoons of butter and two cups of vegetable broth. Blend the mixture with either an immersion blender or a traditional blender. I prefer the texture of a smooth purée, so I blend until that texture is achieved. Take the leeks and add 1/8 cup vegetable broth and blend this until it is smooth and not chunky. In a large pot, add the potato mix to the leek mix along with the rest of the remaining broth and stir together by hand. If you prefer a creamier soup, simply add 1/2 cup of heavy cream.

Recipe serves 4



HEARTY CIOPPINO

By Hillary Kelbick

Hillary Kelbick is MKP's President and CEO.



I love to cook and I am always looking to create imaginative and bespoke recipes. One of my friends gave me a recipe for cioppino about ten years ago. I decided it looked like a great fit for my family: meatless, loaded with seafood and a healthy alternative to a cream-based soup. The title on the recipe as provided to me was Judy's Cioppino. It quickly became my recipe, as I changed the flavor profile by adding hot pepper, crab, fresh clams and mild white fish to the mix. Nevertheless, I will always be grateful to Judy, who inspired the original idea. I embrace this recipe throughout the winter, often adding a savory side salad and crusty garlic bread. The recipe feeds a big group and it never fails to please a wide variety of palates.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 tsp parsley
- 28-oz can chopped tomatoes
- 16-oz can tomato sauce
- 1 tsp each of the following spices: oregano, marjoram, basil, thyme, 2 or 3 bay leaves
- 1/2 tsp (or to taste) red pepper flakes
- 1 cup water (or to taste)
- 1 tsp salt and fresh ground pepper to taste
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 lb. shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 lb. chopped clams plus liquid broth
- 1 lb. fresh crab (claw or lump)
- 1 lb. cod or other mild white fish (whatever is fresh at fish market) cut into bite-sized cubes

Steps

In a Dutch oven or other heavy soup pot:

1. Cook onion, parsley and garlic in 1/4 cup olive oil until soft but not browned.
2. Add chopped tomatoes and tomato sauce along with all spices, red pepper flakes and bay leaves.
3. Add cup of water (plus a little more water as soup base cooks down).
4. Add salt and fresh ground pepper to taste.
5. Cover and bring to a boil. Then, simmer uncovered, about 20 minutes, to cook down.
6. Add white wine, simmer for about 10 minutes more, uncovered.
7. At this point, remove bay leaves and use an immersion stick to blend soup mixture.
8. Add shrimp and fish; cook until done (approximately 8-10 minutes).
9. Add chopped clams, broth and crab meat.
10. Cook until clams are cooked through and soup is hot.
11. Serve with warm crispy bread or crostini.

NOTE: Add whatever seafood you like. Toss in fresh clams and mussels if you like and if available; eliminate or change the seafood to suit your taste. You cannot go wrong if you follow the general directions described above! Enjoy!



PAPER TOWEL CHICKEN CUTLETS

By Lisa Wegimont

Lisa is MKP's Executive Administrative Officer and a Project Manager at MKP.



*P*aper towel chicken cutlets came to be a 'thing' in my house because my son could not sit still. Mikey always had ants in his pants and it was a challenge getting him to sit long enough to eat. I would grab a chicken cutlet, wrap it in a paper towel, and say, 'okay, go!' This recipe is simple: no cutting, no plate and no utensils. Just a paper towel, a chicken cutlet and a dash of salt for a kid on the go—a great meal on the move. Years later, I still get requests from the kids in the family for paper towel chicken cutlets. My son is 19 going on 20 and still eats paper towel chicken cutlets, proving that this recipe is not just for children, but for anyone on the go. And that's how we roll in Queens!

Ingredients

- 1 pound of thin-sliced chicken cutlets
- Italian breadcrumbs
- Half a teaspoon each of onion powder and garlic powder
- 1 egg
- Drop of milk
- Olive oil
- Salt

Steps

1. Preheat the oil in a frying pan until you see tiny bubbles in the oil.
2. Mix egg and milk in a bowl.
3. Pour breadcrumbs, garlic powder and onion powder into a bowl.
4. Dip the chicken into the egg and milk and then into the breadcrumbs covering the cutlet.
5. Place the cutlet in the hot oil for about 3 minutes on each side until they are golden brown.
6. Place cooked cutlet on clean paper towel on a plate to absorb excess oil.
7. Grab a fresh paper towel, put a chicken cutlet in it and voilà!



GRANDMA ANNE'S MEATBALLS AND MEAT SAUCE

By Laura DeLaCruz

Laura DeLaCruz is MKP's Director of Business Development and a Senior Project Manager.



his recipe was a holiday favorite at my maternal grandmother's house and, whenever I make this sauce, the heavenly smell of it transports me to Grandma Anne's kitchen on Christmas Day. It's amazing how scents can do that. You can pair this low-and-slow sauce with any shape pasta, although my favorite is cavatelli, which Grandma Anne also made from scratch! Mangia!

Ingredients

- Olive oil
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 slices white bread
- Grated parmesan cheese
- 1 egg
- Salt and pepper
- 2 large cans of whole tomatoes with puree
- 2 large onions, peeled
- 3 large cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 pound sweet Italian sausage
- 3-6 pork chops (trimmed of excess fat)
- 1 small can tomato paste

Steps

Meatballs

1. Place ground beef in a large bowl. Wet the two slices of bread, squeeze out the excess water, break up the bread and add to the bowl. Add 2 Tablespoons grated cheese, egg, salt and pepper. Mix well.
2. Form meatballs and fry in a pan of hot oil.
3. Do not turn the meatballs until they are quite brown (or they will break when they simmer in the pot of sauce).

Sauce

1. Empty the contents of both cans of tomatoes in a large pot. Grandma Anne would crush the tomatoes with her hands, but if that grosses you out, crush them with a masher, fork or wooden spoon. Turn the stove on to a low simmer.
2. On another burner, on medium heat, put 1/4 inch of oil in a frying pan. Put in two whole, peeled onions (cut an X at the top of each onion) and the peeled garlic cloves. Brown the onions and garlic; mash garlic with a fork.
3. Add sausage to the pan (prick sausages with a fork). Brown lightly on all sides. Add onion, mashed garlic and sausages to the pot with the tomatoes.
4. Fry pork chops in the fry pan (a little darker than the sausage) and add to the pot. You don't need to cook them all the way through- they will continue to cook in the sauce.
5. Add cooked meatballs to the pot.
6. Meanwhile, add tomato paste and 1½ small cans of water (or red wine if you prefer) to the frypan. Simmer slowly for a few minutes, scraping up any yummy bits of meat stuck to the pan. Add the contents of the pan to the pot.
7. Simmer the sauce slowly for 2½ to 3 hours on a very low flame. The sauce should bubble lightly.
8. Do not stir too often – doing so could break the meatballs, and that would be very sad.



POTLUCK PORK AND QUINOA

By Pam Reich

Pam Reich is MKP's Director of Communications Strategy.



The MKP team has always gathered around our central “lunch table” during the holidays to share good food, company and gifts. (Santa always made an appearance, too!) Our holiday lunch is a chance to show off cooking skills and enjoy fantastic eats. When I first brought my pork tenderloin in, the team loved it and began to look forward to it every year. I pair it with quinoa as a side dish. It’s easy and so delicious. The pork serves as the base, and you can be creative with the marinade! I’ve made it with soy, honey and ginger; apricot jelly with garlic and wine; or just olive oil and mixed herbs. This recipe is just one version you can try!

Ingredients

- One pork tenderloin, usually about one pound
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons fresh chopped rosemary
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

Steps

1. Whisk together the marinade ingredients, then pour and spread over both sides of the pork, using a Ziploc bag or lidded bowl. Marinate for 4 to 24 hours for the best results.
2. Pre-heat oven to 425. Place the marinated pork in a cast iron pan and sear it on each side for 3 minutes. Then, move to oven for 15-20 minutes. Use a meat thermometer to prevent overcooking – 145 degrees is enough. Remove from heat and let rest for at least 15 minutes before cutting into ¼ inch slices. It’s that simple. This can also be prepared on the grill.
3. Make the quinoa. Sauté a finely chopped onion and a garlic clove in olive oil for 2 or 3 minutes. Then add 1½ cups of uncooked quinoa, stir in 2 ¼ cups water (or chicken or vegetable broth), season with salt and bring to a boil over high heat. Then, lower the heat, cover and simmer until the liquid is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes, then stir in about a half cup of chopped pitted olives and fresh rosemary.



MICROWAVE TRUFFLE RISOTTO

By Jeff Keller

Jeff Keller is a Creative Director at MKP.



first tried this dish in Tuscany, and I've loved Italian cooking ever since. I've tried different recipes and settled on this hybrid method of sauteing/microwaving—it gives you the toasty taste of slightly browned rice without the 25 minutes of stirring.

Truffles can be expensive, but you can get a good jar online for \$14. Or, you can get acceptable results by substituting truffle oil for sauteing and adding truffle zest at the end (don't add zest during the cooking process, it degrades the truffle flavor). This recipe gives you 14 blessed minutes in the middle of your meal prep when the rice is in the microwave. Stir for five minutes at the end and serve immediately. *Bellissima!*

Ingredients

- 3 oz olive oil
- ¾ cup chopped onion
- Large garlic clove, chopped
- 1 ½ cups Arborio rice (small-grained is best)
- 3 cups good chicken or veggie stock
- 1 cup white wine (cheap is fine, just not too sweet)
- 4 Tbs butter
- 2 cups or so grated parmesan (don't you dare use stuff from a box or jar)
- 2 oz black truffles, shaved
- Parsley or celery leaves for garnish

Steps

1. Combine stock and wine and start heating to a simmer.
2. Heat olive oil in a medium saucepan. Add onion and garlic, stirring for a minute or two until translucent.
3. Add the risotto and sauté over medium heat, stirring until the rice starts to turn color a little. Stop when rice color changes from white to light tan. Transfer rice to a microwave-safe baking dish big enough to hold rice and stock.
4. Immediately pour in a little more than half your stock, stir, place in a full-size microwave on high and cook for 7 minutes.
5. When the microwave stops, stir and add 1 to 1½ additional cups of stock, depending on how dry the rice is. You want the rice fully submerged once more. Cook on high for another 7 minutes.
6. When the microwave dings, it's go time! Add the butter and a handful of grated parmesan, then start stirring for 5 minutes or so, using your remaining stock to keep the risotto creamy and not pasty.
7. Taste the risotto along the way: you want it a just little chewy, so you can taste separate kernels. If it's already got the consistency you want, it's okay to add a little cold water to slow the absorption process.
8. Add your truffles, top with remaining parmesan and garnish with parsley or celery leaves. Mangia!

Recipe serves 4



PERFECT-EVERY-TIME GRILLED SALMON By Dennis Chalkin

Dennis Chalkin is Director of Photography at MKP.



It's not uncommon that I find myself the butt of the joke among my friends and family for just how much I enjoy salmon. In fact, I could eat it every day. When it comes to salmon, I consider myself a bit of an aficionado. There's nothing quite like a perfectly grilled salmon filet. For the first time, I'm excited to share my salmon secrets with the world. Shhh!

Ingredients

- 1 6-8 oz salmon filet per serving
- Salt, pepper and lemon to taste or marinade of your choice (e.g., soy sauce, sriracha, Soy Vey®, BBQ sauce, etc.)

Steps

1. (Only if using marinade) Marinate salmon for 30-60 minutes.
2. Preheat gas grill to approximately 500° F.
3. (Only if not using marinade) Sprinkle salmon with salt, pepper and lemon to taste.
4. Make aluminum foil tray with sides (sides are important so that your marinade or cooking juices don't spill into the grill).
5. Place makeshift tray on grill. Then, place salmon, skin side down, on tray. Close grill lid.
6. Cook 10-12 minutes, depending on thickness of filet, for medium temperature salmon. Try not to touch the salmon for duration of cooking. If you are using a marinade, you may baste the salmon with additional marinade once or twice while cooking. At the end of 10-12 minutes, cut into the salmon to check for doneness.
7. Carefully remove salmon from the grill. If grill is hot and salmon is cooked perfectly, often the skin will stick to and remain on your makeshift foil tray when you remove it from the grill. Once grill has cooled, discard tray with skin (and your grill is still clean!).
8. Serve with grilled vegetables, grain of your choice or other sides.



PEANUT BRITTLE

By Sandra Rota

Sandra Rota is MKP's Vice President and Chief Merger Communications Officer.



LOVE HOLIDAY BAKING! I find great joy preparing (and sampling) the baked goods, especially my Holiday Brittle – a 20-year tradition that uses only two ingredients. The cooking instructions seem simple, but the challenge is getting the sugar to the right golden consistency.

The tradition started out of a desire to bring gifts to friends and family during the holidays. It soon became a cult favorite. The requests have grown over the years, and so, to keep up with demand, my husband joined the production team, enabling me to make even more. The true joy comes from seeing everyone's faces light up when I show up with (or send them) their special package. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- Unsalted butter for greasing the pan
- 2 cups of sugar
- 2 cups of roasted peanuts (salted or unsalted)

Steps

1. Use butter to grease a low rimmed baking sheet.
2. Place sugar in a large, heavy skillet and turn the heat to low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sugar turns liquid. Then, stir constantly until it turns golden, but not brown.
3. Mix in the peanuts and stir until all coated, then immediately pour the mixture onto the greased baking sheet and flatten with a spoon.
4. Cool slightly, then score the brittle with a knife when it has solidified slightly but not yet fully hardened. Once almost hard, break into pieces.
5. Store in a container as long as you like.



BÛCHE DE NOËL

By Erin O'Brien

Erin O'Brien is a Project Manager at MKP.



during the pandemic, I started watching the Great British Baking Show with my mom. We loved watching the amateur bakers come up with amazing creations that looked so delicious! With all the spare time the pandemic afforded me, I started baking some of these recipes in my own kitchen. For Christmas last year, I put my baking skills to the test and created this holiday bûche de Noël for my family's Christmas Eve celebration. It is a huge crowd pleaser and will be the centerpiece on your family's holiday table! This recipe is based on the recipe found on the blog Life, Love and Sugar (lifeloveandsugar.com/yule-log-cake-buche-de-noel).

Ingredients

Chocolate Cake

- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup dark cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 4 large eggs, divided
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 5 tbsp sour cream
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Mascarpone Cream Filling

- 1 1/4 cups heavy whipping cream, very cold
- 3/4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 8 oz mascarpone cheese, softened but still chilled

Chocolate Ganache

- 8 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, finely chopped
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- Sugared cranberries, optional
- Sugared rosemary, optional

Steps

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 17×12-inch swiss roll pan with parchment paper.
2. Whisk and sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt together in a medium bowl and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine the egg yolks and sugar and whisk together.
4. Add the sour cream, melted butter and vanilla extract, and whisk together.
5. Add the dry ingredients and gently whisk together, then set aside.
6. Add the egg whites to a large mixer bowl and whip on high speed until stiff peaks form.
7. Gently fold about 1/3 of the whipped egg whites into the chocolate mixture to loosen up the batter.
8. Add the remaining egg whites and gently fold together until well combined.
9. Spread the cake batter evenly into the prepared pan and bake for 10-12 minutes.
10. Remove the cake from the oven and immediately lift the cake out of the pan and place it on the counter.
11. While the cake is still hot, remove it from the pan, and start at the shorter end of the cake to slowly roll the cake up. Note: it helps to use a tea towel to roll the cake. Set the cake aside to cool completely.
12. When the cake has completely cooled and is ready to be filled, make the filling. Add the heavy whipping cream, powdered sugar, vanilla extract and salt to a large mixer bowl and whip on high speed until soft peaks form.
13. Add the mascarpone cheese to the whipped cream and whip until stiff peaks form. It will happen quickly.
14. Unroll the cake roll very carefully, looking out for areas where it may be sticking to release it. You can use an offset spatula or something similar and run it along the parchment paper as you unroll the cake to help release it as it unrolls.
15. Spread the filling evenly onto the unrolled cake, then roll it back up without the parchment paper.
16. Wrap the cake up in plastic wrap with the seam side down and refrigerate for at least an hour to an hour and a half to firm it up.
17. When you're ready to decorate the cake, make the chocolate ganache. Add the chocolate to a medium sized bowl and set aside. Heat the cream in the microwave just until it begins to boil, then pour it over the chocolate.
18. Allow the chocolate and cream to sit for a few minutes, then whisk until smooth. Let the ganache cool to about room temperature (or cooler, you don't want it too warm/thin), then transfer to a large mixer bowl.
19. Whip on high speed until lightened in color and thick enough to spread.
20. To decorate the cake, use a large, serrated knife to gently cut off a piece of the log about 3 inches in length. Make the cut with a slight diagonal.
21. Use some of the chocolate ganache to attach the small log to the side of the larger log.
22. Spread the remaining chocolate ganache all over the cake, then use a fork to create bark-like lines all over it. Decorate with sugared cranberries and rosemary.
23. Refrigerate the cake until ready to serve.



VEGAN PEANUT BUTTER PIE

By Maxwell Chalkin

Maxwell Chalkin is MKP's Chief Digital Officer and a Senior Project Manager.



During a short time when I decided to become vegan, a friend of mine shared this recipe with me. Alas, making this recipe is the only thing from my vegan days that survived the test of time. Even now, I still make this pie because it is THAT good. Do NOT be put off by the silken tofu—it actually makes the texture of the pie heavenly. (And, unlike dairy-based ingredients, it doesn't add a ton of calories!) For anyone out there who loves chocolate and peanut butter, this pie is like a big peanut butter cup.

Note that this recipe doesn't need to be made vegan. You can just as easily make it with a regular pre-made pie crust and standard 2% cow's milk.

Ingredients

- 1 pre-made chocolate cookie pie crust (if you're trying to keep this recipe strictly vegan, many of the pre-made pie crust brands available at the supermarket are vegan)
- 1 (10 oz) bag vegan or regular semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup soy milk or 2% cow's milk
- 1 1/4 cups peanut butter, divided (1 cup and 1/4 cup)
- 1 (12.3 oz) box silken tofu (firm)
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1-2 tsp vanilla extract

Steps

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F.
2. Bake the crust for 4-5 minutes just to make it crispy and let cool.
3. Melt the chocolate chips in a stainless-steel bowl over boiling water. Whisk in milk until smooth. Scoop out about 1/4 cup of the chocolate mixture. Pour the remaining into the cookie crust. Place in the fridge until cool (at least 45 minutes).
4. While the filling chills, combine 1 cup peanut butter, the tofu, maple syrup and vanilla extract in a food processor or blender and process until very smooth. Pour the peanut butter mixture on top of the chilled chocolate filling in the cookie crust, smoothing it over the pie as you pour, and return to the fridge to chill for about one hour.
5. To serve, return the reserved chocolate filling to the double boiler (or the stainless-steel bowl over boiling water). Stir in remaining 1/4 cup peanut butter. Stir until the chocolate and peanut butter are very well combined and very warm. If the mixture seems too thick to drizzle, add some milk until runny enough to pour. Decoratively drizzle the mixture over the chilled pie in zigzags or swirls or use a small spatula to spread it smoothly over the whole pie. Refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes before serving.



PORTUGUESE NOODLE PUDDING (ALETRIA)

By John A. Martino

John A. Martino is MKP's Production Manager.



This is a traditional Portuguese Christmas dish. We always prepare it on Christmas Eve. It's simple to cook and (wink, wink) nutritious for you (Christmas sweets have no calories!)

Ingredients

- 1 16 oz. package of angel hair pasta
- 7 cups water
- 3 cups sugar
- 3 cups whole milk
- 8 egg yolks
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 sticks cinnamon
- Zest of 1 lemon

Steps

1. Mix all ingredients except the egg yolks and pasta in a pot and cook until boiling.
2. Add pasta and cook on medium-low heat until water is absorbed and it is thick.
3. Take pot off heat and let it cool a little. Then, add some of the cooled liquid from the pot to the egg yolks and beat.
4. Add beaten egg yolk mixture to the pasta mixture, put back on the heat and stir constantly for 2-3 minutes.
5. Pour into two platters, add cinnamon on the surface (use a stencil to make a pattern, if you like) and refrigerate overnight.



CHARLIE DOO'S DANK VEGAN BANAYNAY BREAD By Charlie Chalkin

Charlie Chalkin is MKP's Director of Video Production.



his recipe was born in Brooklyn on April 2, 2020. The pandemic lockdown had just begun in NYC. I was quarantining with Jason, my friend and roommate at the time. Jason is a great guy, but he's a vegan, which sometimes makes it tough to share in all the joys of food together. However, we found something that we both love: banana bread! And together, we set out to create the best vegan banana bread that many solitary hours of quarantining can buy. It took a lot of experimenting, but we did it. And now, I only make vegan banana bread. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 5 ripe bananas (the riper, the better!)
- 2 cups flour (whole wheat flour works nicely)
- 1/2 cup sugar (coconut sugar is recommended but I've been using regular cane sugar)
- 3 tsps baking powder
- 1/4 cup oil (we've been using olive oil)
- 1/4 cup non-dairy milk
- 2 tsps vanilla extract
- Optional mix-ins to taste:
 - Cinnamon
 - Vegan chocolate chips
 - Blueberries
 - Walnuts
 - Raisins
 - Coconut flakes
 - Use your imagination and have fun!

Steps

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Smash bananas in a bowl.
3. Add dry ingredients to bowl and mix until combined.
4. Then add wet ingredients and mix just until incorporated.
5. Bake for 45 minutes.
6. Remove from oven and cover with aluminum foil.
7. Then put it back in the oven for 10 more minutes.



MOSCOW MULE

By Grace Cuning

Grace Cuning is a Senior Project Manager at MKP.



wish I could say this were a holiday recipe but, in truth, I love a good Moscow mule any time of year! Long day at work? Moscow mule. Celebrating a special occasion? Moscow mule. Hydrating before a marathon? Maybe stick to water, but you get the point. Ginger contains vitamin C, magnesium and potassium, and it's known to improve blood sugar regulation, lower cholesterol and reduce nausea and inflammation. In other words, a Moscow mule is basically a health drink and although I'm a Senior Project Manager at MKP and not a medical professional, I feel like you can trust me on this one. Cheers!

Ingredients

- 2 oz chilled vodka
- 1 oz fresh lime juice (1 lime)
- 6 oz ginger beer
- Ice cubes
- 1 tsp. fresh ginger (optional)

Steps

1. In a copper mug or glass, pour in the ice-cold vodka, lime juice and ginger beer.
2. Add ice, stir and garnish with a lime slice.
3. If you're feeling fancy and looking for an extra kick, add grated ginger.



MEXICAN HOT CHOCOLATE

By Jackie Berkoff

Jackie Berkoff is an Assistant Project Manager at MKP.



This recipe is a family favorite because of how good it tastes and because it brings people together. Every holiday season, we host a big friends and family get-together, and this recipe never fails to impress. Hot chocolate is a classic winter drink, but this recipe adds a delicious twist. The cayenne pepper imparts more flavor than spiciness and the chocolate used here is a Mexican chocolate with a rich flavor. Cinnamon sticks and condensed milk are classic Mexican ingredients.

I always feel closer to my roots when making this drink. I remember those rainy nights in Mexico when my grandma would make the best hot chocolate ever.

Ingredients

- 4 cups whole milk
- 7 oz sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 (4-inch) cinnamon sticks (preferably Ceylon)
- Ground nutmeg (optional, to taste)
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- 8 oz Abuelita chocolate

Steps

1. In a large saucepan, combine milk, condensed milk, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg and cayenne pepper. Heat over medium heat until the mixture begins to steam, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes.
2. While the mixture heats, cut or break up the chocolate into small pieces so it melts evenly. Once the milk is steaming, add the chocolate and whisk until it's melted and incorporated.
3. Turn off the heat and discard cinnamon sticks. Use a whisk to mix the hot chocolate vigorously until it's frothy, 3 to 4 minutes, or blend in a blender for about 2 minutes.
4. Pour into mugs and top with desired toppings—marshmallows, whipped cream, grated chocolate, etc. (My usual preference is whipped cream, grated chocolate and a sprinkle of ground cinnamon.)



CAMPARI CHRISTMAS COCKTAIL

By Nick Puccia

Nick Puccia is a Creative Director at MKP.



great-great grandfather fixed the broken wheel on Gaspar Campari's cart when he broke down on his way to the 1860 festa del cocktail to introduce his signature aperitif. A Christmas fable if there ever was one.

Ingredients

- 1 part Campari
- 2-3 parts seltzer
- Crushed ice to fill the glass
- Wedge of lime
- Sprig of mint for garnish

Steps

In a low and wide (festive!) glass:

- Add Campari and seltzer
- Top with crushed ice
- Drop mint sprig on top
- Add lime wedge (squeeze juice into drink after presenting)

Enjoy!



MEZCAL MARGARITA

By Phil Ziff

Phil Ziff is a Project Manager at MKP.



The holidays are a time for family, which means at some point you'll want to reach for a drink or two, or four. The summer before college, I took a bartending class in NYC and I learned that most people don't use enough ice. Always err on the side of more ice. It keeps your drink cooler for longer and nobody wants a warm cocktail.

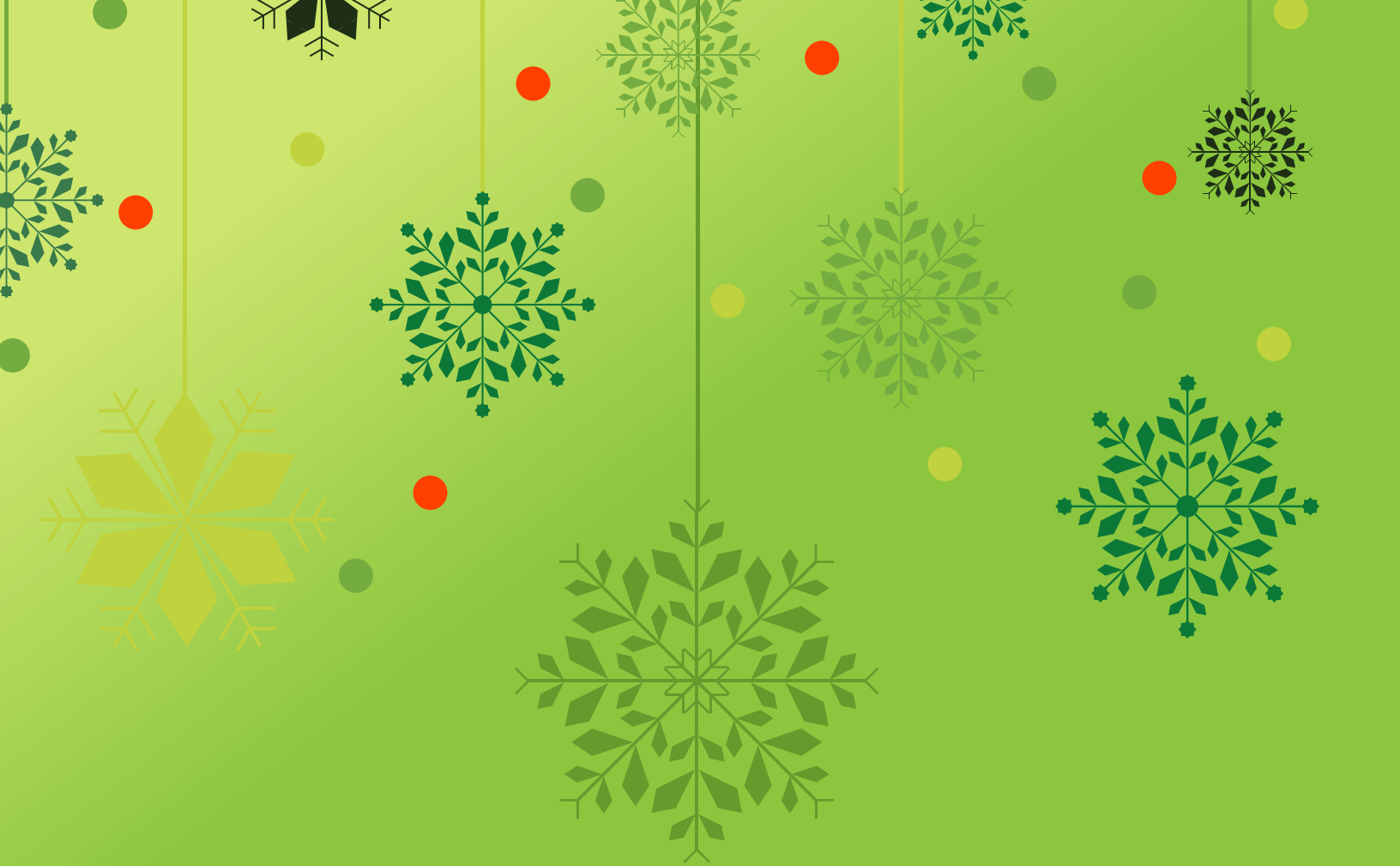
Mezcal, often referred to as tequila's cousin, has become quite popular. Its smoky taste makes for a perfect holiday drink that warms you up on a cold winter night. Cutting the smokiness of mezcal with sweet and sour flavors—like in this recipe—is a twist that adapts the classic margarita for the colder seasons. Cheers!

Ingredients

- 1.5 oz mezcal
- 1 oz Cointreau® (or any orange flavored liqueur)
- 1 lime
- Seltzer (flavored optional)
- Optional: 1/2 -1 tsp. agave syrup
- Optional: Chili-salt or regular salt
- Optional: Sliced jalapeño for garnish

Steps

1. Begin by slicing your lime in half along the length of the lime. Cut one half into 2-3 wedges, slicing along the length of the lime.
OPTIONAL: If you would like salt on your rim, run the inside of one of the lime halves along the rim (either half the rim or the entire rim) of your glass, and dip the rim in salt. It helps to put some salt on a plate for this part. For a little kick, use Tajín® or chili-salt.
2. Fill a cocktail shaker with ice.
3. Add the mezcal and Cointreau, squeeze the full lime half into the cocktail shaker, and shake!
OPTIONAL: For a sweeter drink, add ½ to 1 tsp. agave syrup. Start small, you can always add more!
4. Fill your (optionally salted) rocks glass with fresh ice.
5. Strain your shaker into the rocks glass.
6. Fill to the top with seltzer.
7. Garnish with a lime wedge or two if you're feeling frisky!
8. Take a sip, relax and say "ah, that's nice."



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mkpteam.com
(212) 983-5700

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