A TASTE OF THE Holidays 2014

RECIPES FROM YOUR NAVY FEDERAL BRANCHES
Dedicated to all servicemembers who cannot be with their families for the holidays to enjoy the memories they bring.

We wish all of our members in harm’s way a safe and joyful holiday season, and we patiently await your return. Thank you for all you have done across the globe.
The holiday season is a time for friends, family, and spending time with the ones you love. Often, memories are created around a dinner table, with recipes that are family traditions. Since 1933, Navy Federal Credit Union has always viewed its members and employees as family. Like many families during the holidays, we love to share recipes and create new memories, while reflecting on years past.

This year, employees from our branches provided the recipes. Branch staff are spread out all over the world in 259 locations, and they were kind enough to send us their favorite recipes and memories for you to enjoy. From our home to yours, happy holidays from Navy Federal!
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BREAKFAST
MONKEY BREAD

A holiday tradition in my home for Christmas Day is Monkey Bread. Ever since I can remember, my mother made this breakfast favorite served with hot chocolate as we opened Christmas gifts under our Christmas tree. As we grew older and began adding grandchildren to our family of seven, we continued the tradition. To date, my parents have thirteen grandchildren and two on the way. Monkey Bread with hot chocolate continues to be a crowd favorite.

Araceli L.
Recruit Training, Great Lakes

Dough:
> 2 tablespoons melted butter
> 1 cup warm milk
> 1/3 cup warm water
> 1/4 cup white sugar
> 2 1/4 teaspoons of bread machine yeast or rapid rise yeast
> 3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
> 2 teaspoons salt

Brown Sugar Coating:
> 1 cup packed brown sugar
> 2 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
> 1/2 cup melted butter

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 175° F.
2. In a large measuring bowl, mix together milk, water, melted butter, sugar, yeast, and salt. Once the dough is kneaded, you want to shape the dough into a round ball. Take the ball of dough and place in a well-oiled bowl with a lid. Let the dough rise in the oven for about 45–60 minutes.
3. Grease your 8 X 8 pan. In a bowl, mix brown sugar, cinnamon, and melted butter. Use a knife to cut 64 squares from the dough. Roll each square into a ball and dip each ball in the brown sugar coating mixture. Place each ball in the 8 X 8 pan.
4. Heat oven to 350° F. Bake the 8 X 8 pan for about 22–25 minutes or until golden brown. Frost the dough with plain icing or cream cheese icing. The final product should resemble cinnamon buns.

Tip: In the future, you can use walnuts, raisins, or pecans to give your Monkey Bread a crunch. Serve hot chocolate with this breakfast favorite for best results. Enjoy!

Servings: 10–15
STUFFED FRENCH TOAST CASSEROLE

Early Christmas morning, my mom would wake up and slide this casserole into the oven. Our entire house would wake up smelling the sweet aroma of cinnamon and nutmeg, reminding us that there are presents to open and family to cherish!

Cynthia Johnson
NW Pensacola

> 2 loaves sliced sourdough bread
> 2 bricks room temperature cream cheese
> 12 eggs
> 3 cups milk
> 1/2 cup pancake syrup
> 1/2 cup sugar
> 1 1/2 tablespoons cinnamon
> 3/4 teaspoon nutmeg
> Powdered sugar and additional pancake syrup for serving

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. With a bread knife, slice the crusts off of the sourdough bread and cut the slices into squares.
3. In a greased 9 X 13 baking dish, arrange half of the bread slices tightly into the bottom of the pan.
4. Using a knife or spatula, spread the cream cheese over the first layer of bread.
5. Tightly arrange the rest of the bread over the layer of cream cheese.
6. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, milk, pancake syrup, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg together until well-combined.
7. Carefully pour the entire egg mixture over the bread and cream cheese layers, making sure to saturate all of the bread.
8. Wrap the casserole tightly in aluminum foil and let it sit overnight in the refrigerator.
9. Bake the casserole with the foil still on for 40 minutes and then remove the foil and bake for an additional 10–15 minutes or until the eggs are set.

Tip: When the french toast is done, pull it out of the oven and let it sit for 10 minutes, sprinkle powdered sugar, and serve with warm syrup!

Servings: 8–10
HONEY-GLAZED BACON

This is a family favorite in our house. We eat this bacon as an afternoon snack as well as with breakfast.

Amanda G.
Fountain Valley

> 1 pound thick-sliced bacon
> 1 1/2 tablespoons honey
> 1 1/2 tablespoons syrup or Karo
> Juice of 2 oranges w/ pulp

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Mix honey, syrup, and orange juice together.
3. Line a cookie sheet with foil.
4. Dip bacon in juice mix to coat both sides.
5. Place bacon on cookie sheet.
6. Pour remaining juice over bacon on cookie sheet.
7. Bake until done to your liking.

Tip: For even baking, flip the bacon over after 15 minutes.

Servings: 6
K&A’S FAVORITE FRENCH TOAST

My daughters’ favorite breakfast is FRENCH TOAST! So we found a way to have fun on Christmas Eve by preparing the french toast, and then in the morning, they’re able to put it in the oven and serve breakfast to the family! This is a very easy recipe, and it allows you to enjoy Christmas morning with your family and not slave over a fantastic breakfast! K&A’s Favorite French Toast is delicious!

Summer Rivera
Jacksonville

＞ 1 stick (1/2 cup) butter, melted
＞ 12 slices Texas Toast, cut into pieces
＞ 1 cup brown sugar
＞ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
＞ 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
＞ 1/2 cup chopped pecans
＞ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
＞ 5 eggs
＞ 1 1/2 cups milk

Directions:
1. Melt butter and pour in a 9 X 13 pan.
2. Mix the brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and nuts in a bowl.
3. Whisk eggs, milk, and vanilla together in a separate bowl.
4. Layer bottom of the buttered pan with half the bread pieces and then sprinkle half the brown sugar mix over the bread.
5. Layer second half of bread. Pour egg mixture over the bread slices, making sure all are covered evenly. Sprinkle remaining brown sugar on top.
6. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
7. In the morning, preheat oven to 350° F.
8. Remove pan from the refrigerator and cover with a new piece of foil. Bake for 30 minutes.
9. Uncover and bake 15 more minutes. The french toast should be browned and set.

Tip: Pour a little bit of maple syrup on top of casserole. Place back in the oven and, using your oven’s broiler, broil for about 5–7 minutes to caramelize the top. From the Rivera Family, enjoy!

Servings: 5–6
SOUPS AND SALADS
CHRISTMAS SALAD

A great and refreshing salad with holiday colors to share with families and friends.

Carla B. Mililani

> 4 cups fresh baby spinach
> 1/2 pound fresh strawberries (sliced)
> 1/2 cup fresh blueberries
> 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
> 1/4 cup Catalina dressing
> 1/4 cup pecans or walnuts (optional)
> 1/8 cup craisins

**Directions:**
1. Mix the spinach, strawberries, and blueberries in a large bowl.
2. In a separate bowl, whisk balsamic vinegar and dressing until well-blended.
3. Pour dressing over salad right before serving.
4. Garnish with nuts and craisins.

**Tip:** Serve in a nice Christmas bowl to offset the colors in the salad. Don't add dressing until prior to serving, otherwise the salad will be wilted. Enjoy!

**Servings:** 6
CHERRY FRUIT SALAD

Marisa G.
Albany

- 1 21-ounce can cherry pie filling
- 1 30-ounce can fruit cocktail
- 1 15-ounce can mandarin oranges
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 large tub Cool Whip
- Chopped pecans (optional)

Directions:
1. In a large bowl, mix all ingredients.
2. Can be served immediately or refrigerated and served later.

Servings: 6–8
5-CUP SALAD

My niece was three years old when she discovered the thing that makes her most excited about holidays is the 5-Cup Salad that we always have as a side dish. She said this is what completes her Christmas list. She's now a senior at Penn State College who cannot wait to visit us in Norfolk just to have the famous 5-Cup Salad.

Juvy D.
Janaf

> 1 cup canned mandarin oranges
> 1 cup pineapple tidbits
> 1 cup sour cream
> 1 cup mini marshmallows
> 1 cup shredded coconut

Directions:
1. Drain mandarin oranges and pineapple tidbits and place in a large bowl.
2. Pour in the sour cream, coconut, and finally the marshmallows.
3. Mix together and place in the refrigerator to chill.
4. Serve when ready to eat.

Tip: It's always good when it's served chilled.

Servings: 4
FAMILY PISTACHIO SALAD

We always had Christmas Eve at my parents’ house. I am one of seven children, so it became a rather large party after a while. We would always have Pistachio Salad. Now that our parents have passed on, we carry on the tradition with our children and grandchildren, and one of them is to have Pistachio Salad every holiday.

Catherine K. 
Fountain Valley

- Pistachio pudding mix
- 1 12-ounce can crushed pineapple
- 1 1/2 cups mini marshmallows
- 1 small jar maraschino cherries
- 3/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 2 tubs (12-ounce) Cool Whip

Directions:
1. In a large mixing bowl, put in two slightly thawed containers of Cool Whip.
2. Open dry pistachio pudding mix and pour over Cool Whip.
3. Hand-stir both together without over-stirring.
4. Strain crushed pineapple and add to mixture.
5. Chop cherries in quarters and add to mixture, saving one whole cherry for later.
6. Add chopped walnuts.
7. Add marshmallows.
8. Mix all ingredients together without mixing Cool Whip.
9. Once all has been incorporated, transfer to serving bowl.
10. Add whole cherry on top and refrigerate for a couple of hours. Enjoy!

Servings: 15–20
WATERGATE SALAD

My grandmother makes this every year for Thanksgiving and Christmas. My whole family enjoys it each year, and it is a timeless tradition I will continue with my children.

Melissa S.
River City

> 1 3-ounce box of instant pistachio pudding mix
> 1 8-ounce tub of Cool Whip
> 1 15-ounce can crushed pineapple, undrained
> 1 cup miniature marshmallows
> 1 cup chopped pecans

Directions:
1. Mix dry pistachio pudding mix and undrained crushed pineapple together.
2. Mix Cool Whip, miniature marshmallows, and chopped pecans together in a separate bowl.
3. Gently combine all ingredients together in one bowl until well-mixed.
4. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

Servings: 6
TUSCANA SOUP

This soup brings me back to a time when my family was blessed and we were able to share with those who could not give back. The recipe brings together all the different cultures my family shares. Whether we are from the Caribbean or from Germany, we all look forward to this dish.

Valentina M.
Fort Campbell

> 1 pound ground chicken or ground turkey
> 1 pack mild Italian sausage
> Half a white onion, peeled and chopped
> 6 cups water
> 3 Maggi chicken bouillons
> 6 big potatoes, peeled and chopped
> White pepper
> 3/4 cup heavy whipping cream
> A bunch of kale

Optional:
> 1 can sweet kernel corn
> Bacon pieces

Directions:
1. Mix the chicken, sausage, and onion in a bowl.
2. Cook the meat mix in a skillet.
3. In a big saucepan, boil water with the chicken bouillons and potatoes.
4. Once the meat is brown, add to the saucepan, along with the heavy whipping cream.
5. Add white pepper, kale, and optional corn and bacon pieces.
6. Let it boil for about 15 minutes.
7. Add more white pepper or chicken bouillon if desired to taste.

Tip: For a full dinner meal, serve with rice and corn muffins during those cold winter nights.

Servings: 10-14
VIETNAMESE PHO (BEEF SOUP)

Every holiday, the whole family gets together to celebrate Christmas. We each make our own bowl of fresh hot Pho soup. My mom made this a family tradition that we look forward to every year.

Thanh-Van T.
Annandale

> 8 ounces rice sticks (noodles)
> 5 pounds beef and chicken bones
> 1/2 pound beef sirloin, finely sliced
> 3 large onions
> 4 ginger slices, julienned
> 2 carrots, julienned
> 1 small cinnamon stick
> 1 star anise
> 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
> 2 garlic cloves, crushed
> 1/2 pound bean sprouts
> 1 scallion, finely sliced
> 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
> 1 tablespoon peanut oil
> 4 chili peppers, sliced
> 2 limes, cut into wedges
> 3 tablespoons Nuoc Mam (Vietnamese fish sauce)
> Black pepper

Directions:
1. Slice two of the onions into 1/4 inch slices and cook in peanut oil until browned. Remove and drain. Slice third onion into paper-thin slices and set aside.
2. Rinse the bones and place in a stockpot. Cover with cold water and bring slowly to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered. (For a clear broth, skim off foam.)
3. After 10-15 minutes, add browned onion, ginger, carrots, cinnamon, star anise, garlic, and peppercorns. Bring to a boil.
4. Simmer the stock, partially covered for 6-12 hours, skimming regularly. If necessary, add more water to keep the bones covered.

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5. Strain the stock, skim off, and discard any fat.

6. Boil rice sticks and drain. Place equal portions in each soup bowl and cover to keep warm. Heat beef stock to boiling and season with fish sauce and pepper. Pour into a soup tureen or chafing dish.

7. Arrange the sliced beef on a platter. Garnish with reserved onion. On another platter, arrange the bean sprouts, chili peppers, and limes.

8. At the table, place the soup on a portable warmer to keep hot. Offer each guest a bowl of warm rice noodles. Each guest adds some beef and onion to a bowl and ladles the hot stock over the meat, stirring to cook the meat. Add the bean sprouts, chili peppers, and lime to taste. Enjoy with chopsticks and a soup spoon.

Servings: 4–6
CLASSIC HOLIDAY CHEESE BALL

When I met my husband, his grandmother made cheese balls to hand out at Christmas to family and friends. We always knew we would get one to enjoy through the holidays. I now like to make this to share with my friends throughout the holiday season. Everyone at the Cahoon Commons Branch enjoys this snack.

Andrea M.
Cahoon Commons

> 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
> 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
> 4 tablespoons finely chopped onion
> 4 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
> 1 tablespoon lemon juice
> 1 pinch salt
> 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
> Assorted crackers of your choice

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, thoroughly mix cheeses, onion, Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, and salt by hand or with a mixer. Shape into ball.
2. Spread chopped pecans across wax paper and place cheese ball on top.
3. Roll cheese ball in pecans, coating entire ball.
4. Wrap finished cheese ball securely in plastic wrap.
5. Refrigerate 2 hours or until chilled and firm.

Tip: You can split this recipe into 2 or more smaller cheese balls to hand out to friends!

Servings: 20+
SPICY BUFFALO CHICKEN AND CHEESE DIP

This dip is great for any occasion. Enjoy while watching sports or at any gathering!

Angela F.  
Mesa

> 2 10-ounce cans of chicken, drained
> 3/4 cup buffalo wing sauce
> 2 8-ounce blocks Philadelphia cream cheese
> 1 cup ranch dressing
> 1 1/2 cups shredded cheese
> 1 bag tortilla chips

Directions:
1. Heat chicken and hot sauce together in skillet over medium heat.
2. Stir in cream cheese and ranch dressing until well-blended.
3. Mix in half of the shredded cheese.
4. Transfer the mixture to a crock pot.
5. Sprinkle the remaining cheese over the top, cover, and keep on low heat.
6. Serve with tortilla chips and enjoy.

Tip: I like to make my own buffalo wing sauce by mixing Frank’s Red Hot with Texas Pete.

Servings: 10
SPICY COLLARD GREENS

This is the ONLY green vegetable I could get my son to eat. When he was little, we would watch old episodes of Popeye the Sailor Man. He would run around the house screaming, “Dat’s all I can stand!” in the cutest toddler voice. I somehow convinced him that if he ate the “spinach,” his muscles would magically grow just like Popeye’s. He took one bite, raised both his arms, and said, “I’m strong, Mommy!” I hope you enjoy!

Jonelle D. Millington

> 2 tablespoons bacon fat
> 1 medium onion, sliced from root to tip
> 1 ham hock
> 2 garlic cloves, smashed
> 1 quart chicken broth
> 1 to 2 cups water
> 8–10 cups chopped collard greens, about 2 pounds
> Vinegar and hot sauce to taste

**Directions:**

1. Heat the bacon fat in a large pot over medium-high heat.
2. Sauté the onion in the bacon fat for about 5 minutes, stirring often, until the edges begin to brown.
3. Add the ham hock, smashed garlic, chicken stock, and water and bring to a simmer.
4. Cover and cook for 1 hour.
5. Add the collard greens to the pot and cook another 45–60 minutes or until tender.
6. To serve, remove the ham hock, pull the meat off the bones, and chop.
7. Place the meat back with the greens and serve with vinegar and hot sauce at the table.

**Servings:** 4
SEAFOOD CORNBREAD DRESSING

Our family tradition is to have a pot luck-style dinner together on Thanksgiving Day in Pensacola, Florida. My grandmother loved family dinners and board games. Prior to dinner, everyone gathers in a circle and says one thing they are most thankful for. After dinner, we always play Pokeno.

> 3 boxes Jiffy corn muffin mix
> 1 box seasoned bread crumbs
> 2 cups chopped onions
> 2 cups chopped bell peppers
> 2 cups chopped celery
> 1 cup chopped green onions
> 2 14-ounce cans cream of shrimp soup
> 1 10-ounce can chicken broth
> 2 pounds peeled shrimp
> 2 pounds oysters
> 2 pounds crab meat
> 2 cups margarine
> Salt, black pepper, and garlic powder

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Prepare cornbread according to instructions on box.
3. Once the cornbread is done, crumble into a large bowl.
4. Combine box of bread crumbs with cornbread.
5. Sauté vegetables with margarine in a skillet.
6. Sauté all seafood with margarine in another skillet. Gradually add seasonings to taste.
7. Add vegetables to the bowl of cornbread and bread crumbs.
8. Add soup, broth, and all seafood to the bowl and mix well.
9. In a baking pan, add mixture from bowl. Add additional broth if more moisture is needed.
10. Bake for 1 hour or until golden brown.

Tip: Add a little moisture at a time to prevent it from being runny. Also, you can use any seafood you like.

Servings: 20
CLASSIC CRANBERRY MOLD

About ten years ago, I got tired of serving cranberries from a can, so I found this delicious and fresh recipe to try. I serve this every Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is a family favorite. My son, now married and with a child of his own, has been making it for his own family. He is on his first deployment, so his wife will be making it for the family in his absence.  

Kristine D.  
Nautilus Park

> 2 cups water  
> 3/4 cup sugar  
> 3 cups fresh or frozen cranberries  
> 1 package (6-serving size) raspberry gelatin  
> 1 8-ounce can crushed pineapple in syrup, undrained

Optional:  
> 1 medium stalk celery, chopped (1/2 cup)  
> 1/2 cup chopped walnuts  
> Salad greens

Directions:
1. Heat water and sugar to boiling in 2-quart saucepan, stirring occasionally. Boil 1 minute.  
3. Stir in gelatin until dissolved.  
4. Stir in pineapple, celery, and walnuts.  
5. Pour into ungreased 6-cup mold, 8 individual molds, or stemmed goblets.  
6. Cover and refrigerate at least 6 hours until firm.  
7. Place onto salad greens. Garnish with celery leaves and additional cranberries, if desired.

Tip: You can also add 1 can (11 ounces) of mandarin orange segments, drained, when you add the pineapple.

Servings: 8
CHICKEN CAESAR PASTA CASSEROLE

Great recipe! It can be made with chicken or leftover turkey.

Leanna L.
Dale Mabry

Directions:
1. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients except croutons and parmesan cheese.
2. Pour mixture into a greased 2-quart casserole dish.
3. Top dish with croutons and parmesan cheese.
4. Bake at 350° F for 20 minutes or until casserole is heated through and croutons are golden brown.

Servings: 4–6

> 2 cups tricolored pasta, cooked and drained
> 2 cups rotisserie chicken or leftover turkey, shredded
> 1 cup caesar salad dressing, creamy style
> 1/2 cup chicken broth
> 1/3 cup green onion, finely chopped
> 1/4 cup red pepper, diced
> 1 1/2 cups Italian cheese blend, shredded
> 1 cup croutons
> 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, shredded
THE BEST THANKSGIVING TURKEY

My family loves this recipe!

Carey Adkins
Fort Sam Houston

> 1 14–16-pound turkey
> 1 cup kosher salt
> 1/2 cup brown sugar
> 1 gallon vegetable stock
> 1 cup chicken stock
> 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
> 1 1/2 teaspoons allspice berries
> 1 gallon iced water

Aromatic Additions:
> 1 apple, sliced
> 1/2 onion
> 1 cinnamon stick
> 1 cup water
> 2–4 sprigs rosemary

Directions:
1. Two days before dinner, begin thawing bird.
2. Combine salt, brown sugar, chicken stock, vegetable stock, peppercorns, and allspice berries and bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally.
3. Remove from heat, cool to room temperature, and refrigerate.
4. Early day of dinner or the night before, combine brine, water, and ice in a 5-gallon bucket. Place thawed bird breast-side down in bucket. Be sure the bird is fully immersed.
5. Cover and store in a cool area or refrigerator for 8-16 hours.
6. Turn bird once halfway through brining.
7. On the day of the dinner, preheat oven to 500°F.
8. Remove bird from brine, rinse with cold water, and place on roasting rack in roasting pan or half-sheet pan.
9. Combine apple, onion, cinnamon, and water in a microwave-safe dish. Microwave for 5 minutes on high.

Continued...
10. Place steeped ingredients along with rosemary inside turkey’s cavity.
11. Roast turkey on the lowest level in oven for 30 minutes.
12. After 30 minutes, place thermometer in thickest part of the breast and reduce heat to 350° F. Set thermometer alarm for 161° F.
13. For a 14–16-pound bird, it will take about 2–2 1/2 hours to cook.
14. Allow turkey to rest, loosely covered in foil, for 30 minutes before carving.

Servings: 14–16
SIROVI STRUKLJI
(Or, as we pronounce it, “Strook-lah”)

Home is: the safety from any storm, the comfort of family warmth, and the mending of any things torn. Home is what this recipe represents for my family. When my dad was home on leave from the Navy, my grandma would have this dish ready. Every time my parents, my brother, and I drove two hours to my grandparents’ house for the holidays, my grandma would have this dish ready. It continues with my mom now. As my husband serves in our nation’s military, I do not return to my Colorado home often. However, when I am home, I know there will be Struklji; sometimes pre-made, sometimes my mom and I make it together. When my husband comes home from deployment, I guarantee that I will have this dish ready. Why? Because it’s tradition. Because it’s comfort. Because it’s home.

Danielle W.
Odenton

Dough:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup water

Filling:

- 1 pint cottage cheese
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs

Directions:

2. Cover dough with plastic and let it rest in a warm place for 2 hours.
3. Lightly brown bread crumbs in butter. Set aside.
4. Combine all filling ingredients and mix well.
5. Roll and stretch dough until paper thin.

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6. Spread filling and sprinkle bread crumbs evenly across dough.
7. Roll up like a jelly roll.
8. Place roll into a cheesecloth, tie ends and middle loosely with string, and place in very slow-boiling water for 1 hour. When cooked, unwrap and cut into 2-inch slices.
9. Top slices with more butter and browned bread crumbs. Serve warm!

Tip: When I was a kid, my grandma would add some fresh parmesan on the top before serving. Very good!

Servings: 4–6
QUICK & EASY POT PIE

The day after Thanksgiving and Christmas, it is a family tradition to use leftover turkey or chicken to make pot pie to eat while we sit by a fire and watch movies.

Alesia A.
Lackland AFB

- Leftover turkey or chicken (or 2-pound package)
- 1 package frozen peas and carrots mix
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cups milk, plus extra for brushing on crust
- 4 pie crusts
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon cracked black pepper

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. In a bowl, combine shredded or chopped turkey or chicken.
3. Mix in all other ingredients until well-mixed.
4. Press down two pie crusts into two pie dishes.
5. Pour in filling evenly between both dishes.
6. Place remaining two pie crusts on each dish, folding and pressing down edges.
7. Cut desired design into top of pie crusts and brush with milk for extra golden crispy crusts.
8. Bake in oven for 35 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes.
9. Cut and serve.

Servings: 4
PERUVIAN CEVICHE

My family and I used to go to a restaurant at the beach every Sunday to have lunch. This was the best feeling, to eat fresh from the sea to your plate.

Stefanie P.  
Centreville

➢ 2 pounds white fish (mahi-mahi is an excellent choice)  
➢ 3 or 4 sweet potatoes, boiled and peeled  
➢ 1 cup lime juice  
➢ 1 clove crushed garlic  
➢ 1 red pepper, diced  
➢ 1 large onion, finely chopped  
➢ 2 celery stalks, finely chopped  
➢ 2 lettuce leaves per plate  
➢ Cilantro, finely chopped  
➢ Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:
1. Wash and de-bone fish and cut into 1/2 inch chunks.
2. Season with lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Let marinate for 30 minutes.
3. Add onion, red pepper, celery, and cilantro. Marinate for 30 more minutes.
4. Serve on a bed of lettuce and a portion of sweet potatoes.

Tip: At the end, make sure you drink the juice from your plate. That way, you have learned the proper way to eat a Peruvian Ceviche.

Servings: 6–8
MOM’S POT ROAST

Pia Wood
Corona

1. beef chuck/pot roast
2. 1/2 onion, chopped
3. 2–3 carrots, chopped
4. 2–3 celery stalks, chopped
5. 6 or more small red potatoes
6. Pot roast mix
7. ½ cup Lee Kum Kee Stir Fry Sauce
8. ½ cup Heinz ketchup
9. ½ teaspoon ground pepper

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. In a small bowl, mix the pot roast mix, ketchup, stir fry sauce, and ground pepper.
3. Rub meat with the mixture.
4. Place meat in a baking bag and add vegetables.
5. Roast for 2 hours or until well-cooked.

Servings: 4–6
CORN CASSEROLE

I got this recipe from Lindsey. She used to work for Navy Federal. Each year, I make this corn casserole as a side dish for Thanksgiving dinner.

Josephine C.
National City

> 1 can whole kernel corn (juice, too)
> 1 can creamed corn
> 1 cup sour cream
> 1/4 cup white sugar
> 2 eggs, beaten
> 1/2 cup melted butter
> 1 8-ounce box Jiffy corn muffin mix

Optional:
> Cheese

Directions:
1. Mix all ingredients, adding muffin mix last.
2. Bake in large casserole or 9 X 13 pan at 350° F for 50–60 minutes or until set.
3. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Tip: You can serve this casserole warm or cold, and it’s easy to make, too.

Servings: 6–8
CURRY CHICKEN

We migrated from Jamaica to New York, and every year, my mom would bake a turkey. For about three years, we would sit around the table and eat the turkey as though we loved it, but there was a catch to this. Since we were not used to eating turkey, my brothers, sister, and I would eat the turkey with M&Ms since our family preferred dark meat. We used to laugh so hard when my mom talked about how everyone loved her turkey. I remember my mom trying to figure out where the different colors were coming from on the table. My family would cook different Jamaican food as side dishes. In Jamaica, that is not a holiday we celebrate, but we love to celebrate Thanksgiving since there is so much to be thankful for. During our feast, we would laugh and talk about the first time we tasted turkey in 1989. We enjoy eating turkey now and we still get a bag of M&Ms and put it on the table to remember the fun times. My mom eventually found out, but we had so much fun with it.

Michelle S.
Patrick AFB

> 1 whole chicken (about 3 pounds)
> 6 tablespoons Jamaican curry powder
> 2 potatoes
> 1 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil
> 2 cups water
> 3 stalks scallions
> 5 sprigs fresh thyme
> 4 cloves garlic
> 2 teaspoons salt
> 2 hot peppers, ideally scotch bonnet
> Lemon or lime juice

Directions:
1. Wash the chicken in lemon or lime juice.
2. Chop the chicken, onion, scallion, peppers, and garlic into small pieces.
3. Rub the ingredients in curry powder, except the potatoes.
4. Allow to marinate in the fridge for 2 hours.
5. Chop the potato into small pieces.
6. Fry the chicken until the chicken is seared (5-10 minutes).
7. Add all ingredients to a saucepan and simmer until it has a thick consistency (about 1-2 hours).

Continued...
8. Serve with rice and peas.

Tip: You can also use pieces of chicken already in the stores. Sometimes if I get the leg and thigh, I will cut them in halves. The smaller the chicken, the more the curry sauce gets into the chicken when it cooks and gives it more flavor.

Servings: 5–7
JUANITA’S CAKE

This is a recipe named after my Mamaw. She would bake this cake every year during the holidays. This became known as Juanita’s Cake in our family since this was her recipe. Even now, after her passing, all her daughters and granddaughters bake this cake during Thanksgiving and Christmas. We never have a holiday celebration without this being present. It’s our way of always having her there.

Natalie C.
Fort Sill

Cake:
> 2 cups flour
> 2 eggs
> 1/2 cup oil
> 1 teaspoon vanilla
> 1 cup boiling water
> 2 cups sugar
> 1/2 cup buttermilk
> 1 tablespoon cocoa
> 1 teaspoon baking soda
> Dash of salt

Topping:
> 1 cup brown sugar
> 1/4 cup canned milk
> 1 cup nuts (optional)
> 1/4 stick butter

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Mix together all the ingredients in the cake list.
3. In a pan, mix together all the ingredients in the topping list and bring to a boil.
4. Drizzle melted topping over cake batter.
5. Bake for 45 minutes.

Servings: 12–14
My grandmother used to come up with food challenges to get us to try new things. For Thanksgiving, I combined my favorite flavors, almond and pumpkin, and made these delicious treats. As always, I am truly thankful for food, but especially dessert! Enjoy!

Erika C.
Fort Knox

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cups sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup mascarpone cheese
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 3/4 cup pumpkin puree
- 3/4 cup ricotta (whole milk)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 3 scratches of fresh nutmeg

Shells:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Place almonds in a pan and toast them for about 5 minutes until fragrant and golden brown.
3. Chop almonds coarsely and mix with flour, sea salt, and orange zest in a bowl.
4. In a pot, boil sugars, heavy cream, and butter. Pour over almond mixture.
5. Stir to combine (I use the paddle attachment on my stand mixer).
6. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper or Silpats.
7. Use a 2-tablespoon cookie scoop to drip batter onto pan, leaving 3 inches between cookies.

Continued...
8. Bake 10–12 minutes until golden brown. Let cool 3 minutes.
9. Remove with a thin spatula and form cookies around the tube of a cookie baster.
10. Slide the tube out and let shells cool completely.

**Pumpkin Cream Filling:**
1. Beat the mascarpone cheese and powdered sugar until smooth.
2. Mix in the pumpkin puree, ricotta, cinnamon, ginger, and allspice until well-combined.
3. In a separate bowl, whip heavy cream until it holds stiff peaks.
4. Fold cream into pumpkin mix and add fresh nutmeg.
5. Pipe the cream into the almond shells and serve.

**Servings: 18**
PUMPKIN COBBLER

My family loves pumpkin pie during the holidays. The rest of the year, when we crave pumpkin pie, we make Pumpkin Cobbler. It has become a family favorite all year round, even during the holidays. I started making this for team potlucks a few years ago, and it is now a team favorite.

Jennifer B.
Paxuxent River

> 3 eggs, well beaten
> 1 15-ounce can pumpkin puree
> 1 box yellow cake mix
> 1 12-ounce can evaporated milk
> 1 cup sugar
> 1/8 teaspoon salt
> 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
> 1 teaspoon ground ginger
> 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
> 1 1/4 cups margarine, melted
> Nuts of your choice

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, mix eggs, pumpkin puree, milk, sugar, salt, cinnamon, ginger, and vanilla extract.
3. Pour mixture into an ungreased 9 X 13 baking pan.
4. Sprinkle yellow cake mix over the top.
5. Drizzle margarine over the top of the cake mix.
7. Top with nuts.
8. Bake for an additional 15 minutes.

Tip: You can use butter instead of margarine. I use pecans for the nuts. Enjoy!

Servings: 15–18
PUMPKIN PECAN CAKE

I wanted an easy and simple dish to bring to my first Thanksgiving, where I was cooking. I was excited to see everyone’s reaction to this cake, but my family was too full to try it, and I left for home, disappointed that it was a failure. That same evening, I received calls and texts from my family who fell in love with the cake once they tried it, and now it’s a holiday staple!

Timothy N.
Summerville

> 1 15-ounce can pumpkin puree
> 1 12-ounce can evaporated milk
> 3 large eggs
> 11/2 cups sugar
> 1 teaspoon cinnamon
> 1/2 teaspoon salt
> 1 box yellow cake mix
> 11/2 cups chopped pecans
> 1 cup butter, melted

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Grease bottom of a 9 X 13 pan.
3. Mix pumpkin, milk, eggs, sugar, cinnamon, and salt.
4. Pour mixture into greased pan.
5. Sprinkle dry cake mix over pumpkin mixture.
6. Top with pecans.
7. Drizzle melted butter over pecans.
8. Bake 50–55 minutes.

Servings: 8–10
WHIPPED PUMPKIN PIE

I have been making this recipe for nine years, and it became a fast favorite in my home. Whenever we have a family gathering or a church function, I am always asked to make this pie! It is an easy recipe and a wonderful new twist to the ordinary pumpkin pie.

Amanda M.
Fort Leonard Wood

> 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
> 1/2 cup milk
> 1 6-ounce serving size container of vanilla pudding
> 1 cup pumpkin puree
> 1 8-ounce tub thawed Cool Whip
> 1 pre-made graham cracker crust

Directions:
1. Whisk together vanilla pudding, spice, and milk until thick.
2. Add in pumpkin puree and whisk until blended.
3. Fold Cool Whip into mixture and place in graham cracker crust.
4. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm.

Tip: You can change it up by adding cinnamon or your favorite nuts on top!

Servings: 8
PEANUT BUTTER LOVE CUP

Growing up, my brother and I have always been Reese's Peanut Butter Cup fanatics. As we got older, we were able to save up and buy boxes of Reese’s to sell at a profit and indulge in them in the process. When he joined the Marines, I was very tempted to send him a box in boot camp but was advised not to. So when he was done with boot camp and off to his MOS training, I sent him a box of Reese’s. About a week later, he sent me an email thanking me for the Reese’s but said he had to cut down on sweets now that he was in the Marines. So instead, he broke the chocolate sides off the peanut butter cup and just ate the peanut butter. That was the light bulb for my Peanut Butter Love Cup. I decided to learn how to make the Reese’s peanut butter with a light hint of milk chocolate for his welcome home party. Now it has become a specialty treat, especially for the holidays.

Tony T.
Tierrasanta

Ingredients:
- 1 bag Hershey’s chocolate chips
- 1 jar peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar

Directions:
1. Empty jar of peanut butter into a bowl.
2. Mix powdered sugar with peanut butter evenly.
3. Mold peanut butter ball to desired size.
4. Melt Hershey’s chocolate chips in saucepan on low heat.
5. Dip peanut butter balls in pan, then lay on baking sheet lined with wax paper and let cool.

Tip: If you’re a real fanatic like my brother and me, you can add chopped nuts or crushed cookie crumbs for a nuttier texture.

Servings: 15–30
GREEN JELL-O SURPRISE

Holiday cookin’ with my Grams has always been a bonding experience unlike any other. I always got the fun stuff, like dessert. Here’s my favorite recipe for you to try!

Stephanie G.
Imperial Marketplace

> 2 boxes lime JELL-O
> 1 block cream cheese
> 1 can crushed pineapple, drained
> 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped

Directions:
1. Prepare JELL-O according to instructions on box.
2. Soften cream cheese by stirring in a bowl.
3. Combine JELL-O mixture with cream cheese and blend until smooth.
4. Add pineapple chunks and walnuts in a serving dish.
5. Cover and chill.

Tip: Top with whipped cream, if desired.

Servings: 8
GINGERBREAD CUT-OUT COOKIES

A tradition among my family and close friends when we were living stateside was to host or attend a cookie exchange. Each year, I looked forward to tasting everyone’s cookie creations, as well as gain some new recipes for my recipe box. Such delicious memories.

Sarah B.
Camp Casey

> 1/4 cup canola oil
> 1/2 cup + 2 tablespoons sugar
> 1/4 cup molasses
> 1/4 cup plain soy milk
> 1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger
> 2 cups all-purpose flour
> 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
> 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
> 1/2 teaspoon salt

Spice Blend:
> 1/2 teaspoon each ground nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon
> 1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together oil, sugar, molasses, soy milk, and fresh grated ginger.
3. In a separate bowl, sift all the dry ingredients together and then add to the wet ingredients. Mix until you get a stiff dough.
4. Wrap in plastic and chill for at least an hour.
5. Roll out the dough to about 1/4 inch thick and cut into shapes with cookie cutters.
6. Bake for 8 minutes for softer gingerbread cookies, and up to 11 minutes for crispier ones.

Tip: Don’t be afraid to get creative and poke holes for eyes with a chopstick (we are currently in Korea) and make smiley mouths with the edge of a teaspoon!

Servings: 12
VANILLA ALMOND SUGAR COOKIES

We started a tradition when I was little of baking and decorating sugar cookies every year with all of the kids that lived on my street. We would gather at one of the parents’ homes on my street, and all the parents would bake the cookies using their own special recipes. The kids would decorate them all and package them up. Then we would hand them out as gifts. Now that I am a parent, I still hold up that decorating tradition with my kids and friends. This is my favorite sugar cookie recipe we tried.

Chelsey B.
Mt. Pleasant Marketplace

> 3 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour
> 2 teaspoons baking powder
> 1 cup sugar
> 2 sticks (salted) butter, cold and cut into chunks
> 1 egg
> 3/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
> 1/2 teaspoon pure almond extract

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Combine the flour and baking powder. Set aside.
3. Cream the sugar and butter. Add the egg and extracts and mix.
4. Gradually add the flour mixture and beat just until combined, scraping down the bowl, especially the bottom.
5. The dough will be crumbly, so knead it together with your hands as you scoop it out of the bowl for rolling.
6. Roll on a floured surface to about 1/4 to 3/8 inch thick and cut into shapes.
7. Place on parchment-lined baking sheets and bake for 10-12 minutes.
8. Let sit a few minutes on the sheet and then transfer to a cooling rack.

Tip: I recommend freezing the cut-out shape on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before baking.

Servings: 12-24
GRANDMA’S CHOCOLATE PIE

My mom and dad married in 1955. For one of their wedding presents, they received a set of pots and pans. My mom said she didn’t have much experience cooking, so she relied pretty heavily on recipes. Enclosed with the pots and pans was a small spiral-bound cookbook.

When my mother passed away in 2013, one of the first things I packed up to take to my home was that ragged little cookbook. It is stained, and the pages are yellowed with age. It has been the victim of many a stray spill. This recipe is from that book, with my mom’s hand-written corrections and changes to more easily match ingredients she always had on hand and changes that she thought made it better. I have modified the cooking directions to make it a microwave recipe. So it’s really become a family recipe.

It is my son’s favorite recipe, and he says it’s just not Thanksgiving or Christmas without Grandma’s Chocolate Pie.

Sharon M.
Research Park

> 2 tablespoons flour
> 3 tablespoons cornstarch
> 6 tablespoons Hershey’s Natural unsweetened cocoa (regular or special dark)
> 3/4 cup sugar
> 1/2 teaspoon salt
> 2 cups milk
> 3 egg yolks
> 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
> 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
> 1 pie shell

Directions:
1. In a large microwavable glass container, blend flour, cornstarch, salt, and Hershey’s cocoa.
2. Slowly blend in milk, stirring constantly.
3. Beat egg yolks with a fork in a separate small bowl, then add to milk mixture.
4. Place in microwave, cook 2 minutes, remove, and stir.
5. Continue to cook in microwave, stirring every minute, until it thickens. Time will vary depending on your microwave wattage.
6. Remove from microwave and add butter or margarine and vanilla, stirring until melted.

Continued...
7. Pour into pie shell and place piece of plastic wrap directly on top of pie. This keeps a tough skin from forming on pie.

8. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.

Tip: You can skip the pie crust and place in individual dishes or one dish for a chocolate pudding-type of dessert.

Servings: 8
BAKLAVA

I make this recipe for Ramadan.

Lamiaa E.
Centreville

> 2 egg yolks
> 2 cups milk
> 1/2 cup melted butter, margarine, or oil
> 4 tablespoons flour
> 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
> 6 tablespoons sugar
> 2 eggs
> 1 pack Gollash (filo pastry), 500 grams

Sugar Syrup:
> 2 cups sugar
> 2 cups water
> Juice of 1 lemon

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. In a saucepan, mix milk, eggs, egg yolks, flour, sugar, and vanilla very well into a crème pâtissière.
3. Heat over medium heat, whisking constantly, until boiling.
4. Take off heat and leave crème to cool for about 20 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, prepare Gollash. Brush the bottom of a metal baking dish with butter.
6. Place one Gollash sheet at a time in the baking dish to make layers and keep brushing every other layer with melted butter or oil.
7. Split the quantity of Gollash in half and pour the crème pâtissière over Gollash sheets in the baking dish to form an even layer. Don’t let it reach the edges.
8. Start layering the rest of the Gollash sheets over the crème while brushing every other layer with melted butter or oil. Do not brush the top layer with butter or oil.
9. Repeat the process until all Gollash sheets are finished. Make deep cuts in Gollash pie to form squares or sectors.

Continued...
10. Bake for 30 minutes or until surface is golden.

11. Meanwhile, prepare the sugar syrup. Heat sugar in water until boiling, then add lemon juice and keep boiling until thickened.

12. To serve, pour cool syrup over Gollash immediately out of the oven, then leave to cool.

Servings: 10
APPLE CRUMBLE CHEESECAKE

I have always loved to bake goodies for people. I love to experiment in the kitchen and create new recipes. I am always nominated to bring desserts during the holidays to family gatherings, and last year I hosted Thanksgiving at my house and wanted to make something spectacular. I found a basic cheesecake recipe and added some of my twists, such as homemade caramel as a decadent topping. I hope everyone enjoys!

Cheryl C.
McChord AFB

Crumble:
> 1/2 cup brown sugar
> 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
> 1/3 cup rolled oats
> 1/4 cup butter, softened

Crust:
> 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
> 1/3 cup white sugar
> 1/4 teaspoon salt
> 1 large egg, beaten
> 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened

Apple Filling:
> 2 large Granny Smith apples, peeled and chopped
> 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
> 1 teaspoon lemon juice
> 2 tablespoons white sugar

Cheesecake:
> 3 packages Philadelphia cream cheese, softened
> 1 1/4 cup white sugar
> 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
> 1/4 cup apple butter
> 3 large eggs

Continued...
Drizzle:
> 10 caramels
> 1/2 tablespoon heavy cream

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Blend crumble ingredients together. Spread on baking sheet and bake for approximately 5 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.
2. Increase oven heat to 400° F. Mix crust ingredients together. Press into bottom of a 9-inch spring form pan and prick with a fork. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.
3. Reduce oven heat to 325° F. Cook apple filling ingredients over medium-low heat for 5 minutes until softened. Remove from heat to cool.
4. In a large bowl, beat cheesecake ingredients, slowly adding eggs until well-blended.
5. Double-wrap the spring form pan in heavy aluminum foil. Place the cooked apples evenly over the prepared crust. Pour cheesecake batter on top of the apples. Put the spring form pan into a larger pan and fill with about an inch of hot water. Bake for 50–60 minutes until set, but still a bit jiggly in the center. Remove from the oven and remove the spring form pan from the water bath. Unwrap foil and set on wire rack to cool. Once cooled, refrigerate overnight to set.
6. Before serving, remove sides of pan and sprinkle the prepared crumble over the top of the cheesecake. Heat the caramels and heavy cream in the microwave until melted. Stir to blend, drizzle over the crumble, and serve.

Servings: 8–10
PUMPKIN BARS

For seven years, the Newport News team has been devouring these treats in less than five minutes, leaving those absent with crumbs to spare. Such decadent bars bring out the greed in everyone, so make enough or just don’t share.

Vickie D.
Newport News

> 4 eggs
> 1 cup vegetable oil
> 1 16-ounce can pumpkin puree
> 1 2/3 cups sugar
> 2 cups flour
> 1 teaspoon salt
> 2 teaspoons baking powder
> 1 teaspoon baking soda
> 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

Frosting:
> 1 8-ounce block cream cheese, softened
> 1/2 stick butter
> 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
> Powdered sugar

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Using electric mixer, beat eggs, sugar, oil, and pumpkin puree until fluffy.
3. Add flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, salt, and pumpkin pie spice.
4. Mix until batter is smooth.
5. Pour into greased 9 X 13 pan.
6. Bake for 30 minutes.
7. To make frosting, mix cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add vanilla and powdered sugar to taste. Spread on cooled pumpkin bars.

Servings: 24–32
FOOL’S TOFFEE

During the Christmas season, I try my hardest to adhere to the four elf food groups: Candy, Candy Canes, Candy Corn and Syrup. It is a challenging feat each year, but this recipe for Fool’s Toffee gets me through.

Emma C.
Scott AFB

> 1–2 sleeves Club Crackers
> 2 sticks unsalted butter
> 1 cup dark brown sugar
> 1 12-ounce bag semisweet chocolate chips

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Line a cookie sheet with aluminum foil and top with a layer of Club Crackers. Set aside.
3. In a medium saucepan, bring butter and brown sugar to a boil, stirring continually to prevent burning.
4. Let boil for 3 minutes.
5. Pour the buttery sugar lava over the cracker layer. Spread evenly and quickly!
6. Bake for 10 minutes.
7. Immediately pour chocolate chips on top of the crackled top layer.
8. Let the chips melt for 5–10 minutes, then spread evenly to coat the sugary cracker crust.
9. Freeze for 2 hours.
10. Once set, peel aluminum foil from the back of the crackers and “crack” into bite-sized pieces. Keep refrigerated.

Tip: Try substituting half of the chocolate chips with butterscotch chips for a toffee taste!

Servings: 1 hungry elf or 4 humans
WAVERLY BARS

Growing up in rural Minnesota, bars and hot dishes were a staple for every gathering. My mother would only make Waverly Bars for very special occasions while we were growing up, probably because my sisters and I would eat the entire pan if left to our own devices. For such a simple recipe, they bring back some of the most treasured memories of my childhood. The smell of wood smoke from the fireplace, seeing the sheep and cows outside next to the barn, laughing in the kitchen with my family as the sky grew dark outside our kitchen window and the moon reflected on the drifts of snow outside. Even though I have grown up, moved far away, and have my own home, every time I make this recipe, I am transported back to that warm little kitchen on the cold winter evenings of my childhood. This recipe reminds me of family and of home.

Susan D.
Fort Gordon

> 1 package Club Crackers
> 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
> 1 cup brown sugar
> 1 cup finely crushed graham cracker crumbs
> 1/4 cup milk
> Large Hershey's bar or 1/2 bag chocolate chips

Directions:
1. Layer a 9 X 13 cake pan with one layer of Club Crackers.
2. In a medium-sized saucepan, melt butter, sugar, graham cracker crumbs, and milk on medium-high heat.
3. Stirring continually, mix for approximately 5-7 minutes until golden brown. Do NOT stop stirring caramel sauce or it will burn. Mixture will bubble/boil and become a little frothy.
4. Once the boiled mixture reaches the ideal golden brown, pour the mixture over the layer of Club Crackers in the cake pan.
5. Spread evenly.
6. Place another layer of Club Crackers on top of the boiled mixture. Let cool for about 5 minutes.
7. Melt the Hershey’s bar or chocolate chips and spread evenly over the last layer of Club Crackers.
8. Once the chocolate cools, you can cut, serve, and enjoy!

Servings: 10-12
COLONIAL PUMPKIN PIE

This pie is a family favorite. Anyone who has a piece, tell me that no other pie compares!

Noelle S.
Parris Island

> 1 1/2 cups pumpkin puree
> 1 cup packed brown sugar
> 3 eggs
> 1 cup evaporated milk
> 1/2 teaspoon salt
> 1 teaspoon cinnamon
> 1 teaspoon ginger
> 1/8 teaspoon allspice
> 2 tablespoons molasses
> 1 pie shell

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 425° F.
2. Blend all ingredients in blender until smooth.
3. Pour mix into pie shell.
4. Bake for 40–45 minutes.
5. Remove from oven and let cool.

Tip: I use baked pumpkin, not canned, for this recipe. Also, it will rise while it bakes, but don’t worry, because the pie will become flat when it cools.

Servings: 6–8
SUGAR COOKIES

This was passed on to me by a neighbor when we were stationed in Hawaii in 1995. I’ve made them every year since then. It brings back great memories of friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

Christine Y.
Stockbridge

> 2 cups sugar
> 2 cups butter, softened
> 6 eggs
> 7 cups all-purpose flour
> 4 teaspoons vanilla
> 6 teaspoons baking powder

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Cream sugar and butter until fluffy.
3. Add eggs and vanilla. Mix well.
4. Add flour, one cup at a time.
5. Add baking powder.
6. If dough seems soft, refrigerate for 1 hour.
7. Roll out dough and cut with your favorite cookie cutter.
8. Place on ungreased cookie sheet.
10. Enjoy!

**Servings:** 48
BUTTERSCOTCH CRUNCHIES

I originally received this recipe from my mother-in-law when my wife and I began dating back in 2002. I insisted that she give me the recipe after eating my first one. Now, during every holiday season, she will call ME to make a few batches for HER. It has become a tradition for both of our families and usually requires making at least six batches to ensure that everyone can enjoy.

Ryan F.
Walter Reed (WRM)

> 1 12-ounce bag butterscotch morsels
> 1/4 cup crunchy peanut butter
> 3 1/2 cups corn flakes

Directions:
1. Melt butterscotch bits and peanut butter over very low heat.
2. Stir in corn flakes. Mix well.
3. Drop teaspoonfuls onto wax paper and refrigerate until hardened (about 5 minutes).

Servings: 4
GRANDMA’S APRICOT STRUDEL

When I was a little girl, I often stayed with my grandmother while my parents worked. Every holiday season, we baked cookies and other sweets, but nothing could compare to her Apricot Strudel. While the recipe is quite simple, she was the only one in our family patient enough to make it. As I grew older, I helped more, while she gradually helped less. She passed away several years ago, but I have maintained the tradition in the family; this year, my five-year-old son is thrilled to help make Apricot Strudel for our family!

Patricia T.
Buckley AFB

> 8 ounces cream cheese
> 2 sticks butter
> 2 cups flour
> 1 cup chopped pecans
> 1 small package shredded coconut
> 1 jar apricot preserves

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Combine cream cheese, butter, and flour to make dough.
3. Divide into 3 parts and refrigerate for 1 hour.
4. Begin rolling out one part into a thin rectangular shape.
5. Spread preserves onto dough, leaving about a half-inch border preserve-free around the dough.
7. Roll the dough and pinch ends shut.
8. Repeat with the other two parts of dough.
9. Place on parchment paper-lined cookie sheet.
10. Bake for 1 hour.
11. Let cool before slicing with a cold knife.

Servings: 8
In 1992, we moved to Rota, Spain. My husband was an E06 in the U.S. Navy.
He was used to being away from home, always on deployments, but our kids and I were not.
The Navy is a very close-knit family. Overseas, we all had to stick together and support each other. We met some really nice friends there.

It was our first Thanksgiving in Rota, and we were homesick. But we weren’t the only ones. We met Linda, who was really nice. She was homesick, too. She told us about her holiday traditions, and we shared our stories, as well.

Linda said that every Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday, they would make Kris Kringle JELL-O. She shared her recipe with me. I made it for my family that Thanksgiving, and it has been a holiday tradition ever since.

Last year, our son called me from Anchorage, Alaska right before Thanksgiving. He is an E07 in the U.S. Army. He asked me if I could give him the recipe for Kris Kringle JELL-O. I gladly shared it with him as I know it will now be a tradition with his family.

Janet G. 
Corpus Christi

> 1 6-ounce package cherry JELL-O
> 1 can crushed pineapple
> 1 package frozen strawberries
> 1 pint sour cream
> 1 cup hot water

**Directions:**
1. In a pot, add JELL-O and hot water.
2. Heat on stovetop for 2 minutes under medium heat.
3. Turn off stove, add pineapple, and stir.
4. Slice frozen strawberries and add to JELL-O mixture.
5. Put half of JELL-O mixture in bowl and refrigerate until firm.
6. Add sour cream on top of refrigerated JELL-O.
7. Add rest of mixture on top of sour cream.
8. Refrigerate until firm.

**Tip:** The best time to make this is the night before so that the JELL-O mixture will set firm in refrigerator overnight.

**Servings:** 6
A woman once went to lunch at Neiman Marcus in Dallas for lunch and had a cookie for dessert. She thought the cookie was so wonderful and asked if the recipe was available. She was told she would be charged two-fifty. She agreed; however, when she received her bill, there was a charge for two hundred and fifty! She thought it was a mistake and said she should have only been charged two-fifty. Neiman Marcus advised her this was NOT a mistake, and since it was a non-refundable item, she would need to pay it. She did and vowed she would give this recipe to everyone she possibly could. She has asked for it to continue to be shared...HERE IT IS!

Amber M.
Arlington

- 2 cups butter
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 4 cups flour
- 5 cups blended oatmeal
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 24 ounces chocolate chips
- 18-ounce Hershey bar, grated
- 3 cups chopped nuts

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Cream butter and both sugars.
3. Add eggs and vanilla.
4. Mix with flour, oatmeal, salt, baking powder, and baking soda.
5. Add chips, candy, and nuts.
6. Roll into balls and place 2 inches apart on cookie sheet.
7. Bake for 6 minutes.
8. Enjoy and share the recipe!

**Servings:** 112
GRANDMA’S CHRISTMAS COOKIES

In the 1960s, we were stationed in Munich, Germany (my father was Active Duty Army), and every Christmas, no matter where we lived, my grandma Loney Montoya would bake anise cookies and mail them to us. When the package arrived this one particular Christmas, the three of us kids were around my mom anticipating the contents of the package. The first thing I remember is, when the package was opened, the aroma of anise filled the air! But by the time the package found its way to us from Colorado Springs, there was nothing but crumbs in the box. For some reason, it didn’t matter; it was a package from grandma. The smell of anise takes me back to my Christmas memories as a child.

Denise C.
Silverdale

1 cup shortening or lard
1 1/4 cups sugar, divided
1 egg
1 teaspoon anise seed
3 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
Extra sugar and cinnamon

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Add all dry ingredients together and mix well.
3. Refrigerate for 15 minutes and roll out with rolling pin.
5. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
6. Bake for 25 minutes or until golden brown.

Servings: 48–60
SIMPLE CHERRY COBBLER

I got this recipe from a church lady at Gethsemane Methodist Church in Houston, Texas shortly after I moved there in December of 1984. She brought this dessert to the holiday potluck. After raving over her creation, she gave me the simple recipe, saying, “Honey, I’ve never had a failure, and you won’t, either.” She was right.

Joni C.
Carlsbad

> 2 cans cherry pie filling
> 1 small can crushed pineapple
> 1 box white cake mix
> 1 stick butter or margarine, divided
> 1 cup pecan halves

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Butter a 10 X 12 glass baking dish.
3. Mix cherry pie filling and pineapple in the dish.
4. Pour cake mix over top of cherry/pineapple mixture and spread across mixture with a spatula to create an even top.
5. Place pecan halves over cake mixture.
6. Using remaining butter/margarine, dot the surface with pats of butter.
7. Cover with foil and bake for 45 minutes.
8. Remove foil and bake another 15 minutes or until slightly golden.

Tip: Cherry pie filling may bubble slightly over at the edges—this is fine and makes a lovely presentation. Don’t skimp on the butter pats; worry about calories later! If you need more than 1 stick of butter to cover the top, go ahead and add more—the pats should evenly cover the surface with no more than 1/2 inch distance between pats.

Servings: 8–10
SCOTTISH SHORTBREAD

Long ago in Scotland, shortbread wasn’t eaten often; it was an expensive luxury because of the ingredients. So for ordinary people, shortbread was a special treat reserved just for special occasions such as weddings, Christmas, and the New Year. In Scotland, the custom used to be to eat shortbread only for the New Year. Traditionally, it was offered to “first footers,” or the first people that visit your home after the bells of the New Year have been rung. The first footer was welcomed with shortbread and whiskey. To this day, it is a tradition that holds.

Growing up in Scotland, shortbread was made by the women in my family year round, but particularly when we had visitors. It brings with it many happy memories of sitting down with friends and family over a cup of tea and catching up on their news.

Tracy P.
Fleming Island

> 8 ounces all-purpose flour
> 1/4 teaspoon salt
> 4 ounces rice flour
> 4 ounces sugar, plus 2 tablespoons
> 8 ounces cold butter, cut into small pieces

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Put flour, salt, rice flour, and 4 ounces of sugar in the bowl of a mixer.
3. Put mixer on low to blend dry ingredients.
4. Add butter and allow to blend until it resembles bread crumbs.
5. Empty contents of bowl onto a floured surface and press together to make a dough.
6. Roll dough mixture until it is about 1/2 inch thick, pinching the edges in after it is rolled.
7. Shape into a large circle or square and place on a greased cookie sheet.
8. Prick with a fork and place in oven, baking for 30–40 minutes until golden brown.
9. Remove from oven and sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of sugar.
10. Cut into 2-inch squares while still warm and leave to cool.

Servings: 16
OREO BALLS

One of my kids' all-time favorite things to eat on the holidays.

Rachel W.
Fort Rucker

> 1 package regular Oreo cookies
> 1 8-ounce block cream cheese, softened
> Almond bark chocolate or white chocolate

Directions:
1. Put Oreos in blender.
2. In a large bowl, combine Oreos and cream cheese.
3. Roll into small balls.
4. Melt chocolate and dip balls into chocolate.
5. Put them on wax paper to dry.

Tip: We put ours in the refrigerator. So easy but so good!

Servings: 30
BUTTER MOCHI

This is an island favorite that was passed down and shared with me from my aunt. We make Butter Mochi every year for the New Year. The belief behind pounding and eating mochi is that it will purify your body while at the same time encourage wealth for the upcoming year.

Maria Lyn S.
Pearl Harbor

ROSS T^{x}<nan><nan>1 box Mochiko brand rice flour
> 2 cups white sugar
> 4 teaspoons baking powder
> 1 can evaporated milk
> 1 can water
> 5 eggs
> 1 stick butter

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Mix all dry ingredients except for the sugar.
3. Beat the eggs. Add milk, eggs, and water.
4. Add dry ingredients.
5. Thoroughly mix.
6. Line the bottom of a 9 X 13 pan with butter.
7. Pour batter.
8. Add thinly sliced butter pats on the batter.
9. Bake for 1 hour or until golden brown.
10. Enjoy!

Servings: 24
TRINIDAD’S PONCH-DE-CRÈME

This recipe has been a Christmas tradition since 1900, and you will not visit a home in Trinidad and Tobago that does not observe this tradition. It is symbolic of a warm welcome to anyone who enters the home on Christmas Day.

Vashti S.
North Landing

> 6 eggs, beaten
> 2 teaspoons grated lime zest
> 3 14-ounce cans sweetened condensed milk
> 3/4 cup evaporated milk
> 1 1/2 cups rum
> 1 tablespoon aromatic bitters
> 1 pinch freshly grated nutmeg

Directions:
1. In a large bowl, beat eggs and lime zest using an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Gradually pour in the condensed milk while continuing to mix, and then pour in the evaporated milk.
2. Stir in the rum and bitters, and sprinkle with nutmeg. Transfer to a bottle and chill for at least 1 hour before serving.
3. Serve over crushed ice.

Servings: 6
AMANDA’S ISLAND CHRISTMAS

This drink tastes exactly like I would think Christmas on an island would be. That’s how it got the name Amanda’s Island Christmas.

Amanda G.
Fountain Valley

➢ 4 cups cran-apple juice, chilled
➢ 1 2-liter bottle ginger ale, chilled
➢ 1 can pineapple juice, chilled
➢ 2-4 cups tropical fruit punch vodka, chilled
➢ Cinnamon to taste

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients together, serve over ice, and enjoy!

Tip: To make this drink family-friendly, omit the vodka, add 2 cups of Hawaiian Punch, and enjoy!

Servings: 8-10