

An American Country Christmas

An imaginative menu for a complete festive meal American style consisting of:

Braided Sweet Potato Bread

Spiced Carrot And Orange Soup

Creole Green Salad

French Dressing

Sautéed Red Cabbage

Leek And Corn Stuffed Peppers

Wild Rice Pilaf With Apples And Pecans

Cocoa Mock Mince Pie

East Riding Vegans

This recipe menu has been reproduced by East Riding Vegans from material obtained from the website of Vegsource (<http://www.vegsource.com>). This is an excellent source of vegan information of any kind.

East Riding Vegans are a very informal group of vegans who organise vegan events for the people of Hull and the surrounding area. To find out more about what we do;

- Calling Mark on 01482 471119
- Sending an e-mail to ervegans@merrydowncontrolware.co.uk
- Going to our website at <http://merrydowncontrolware.co.uk/ervegans>

Braided Sweet Potato Bread

Makes 2 loaves

A delightful, russet-coloured bread with a gentle hint of thyme.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 1 package active dry yeast
- ✓ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lukewarm water
- ✓ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup safflower oil
- ✓ 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ✓ $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups cooked, well-mashed sweet potato
- ✓ 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- ✓ 1 cup soya milk
- ✓ 3 cups whole wheat flour
- ✓ 1 cup unbleached white flour
- ✓ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cornmeal
- ✓ $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
- ✓ soya milk to brush tops of loaves

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C /350°F / Gas Mark 4.
2. Combine the yeast and the Water in a medium-sized mixing bowl and let stand for 10 minutes, or until dissolved.
3. Stir in the oil and thyme, then the mashed sweet potato, maple syrup, and soya milk. Stir gently until the mixture is smooth.
4. In another bowl, combine the flours, cornmeal, and salt. Make a well in the center and pour in the wet mixture. Work together, using a spoon at first, then hands, until thoroughly combined into a dough.
5. Turn out onto a floured board and knead for 8 to 10 minutes, adding additional flour until the dough loses its stickiness.
6. Place in a clean bowl and cover with a tea towel. Let rise in a warm place for 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or until doubled in bulk.
7. Punch the dough down and turn back out onto the board. Divide into six equal pieces. With hands, roll each piece into a long coil, about 1 inch in diameter.
8. To make each loaf, braid three coils and pinch the ends together.
9. Place the loaves on a floured baking sheet, cover with the tea towel, and let rise until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour.
10. Brush the tops of the loaves with soya milk. Bake in a preheated 180°C /350°F / Gas Mark 4 oven for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the tops are golden and the loaves feel hollow when tapped.

Spiced Carrot And Orange Soup

Makes 8 to 10 servings

A warming soup with the cheering colour of carrots and the zesty flavour of citrus.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 2 pounds carrots, thinly sliced
- ✓ 2 tablespoons unrefined peanut oil or other fragrant nut oil
- ✓ 2 cups chopped onions
- ✓ 2 large celery stalks, diced
- ✓ 4 cups water
- ✓ 1 ½ cups fresh orange juice
- ✓ ¼ cup dry white wine
- ✓ 1 teaspoon each: ground cumin, coriander, ginger
- ✓ ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ✓ 1 cup soya milk, or as needed
- ✓ salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- ✓ 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- ✓ 3 tablespoons finely minced scallion
- ✓ Reserve and set aside about ½ pound of the carrots.

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large soup pot. Add the onions and celery and sauté over moderate heat, stirring frequently, until golden.
2. Add the carrots (except for the reserved batch), water, juice, wine, and spices. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer over moderate heat until the vegetables are quite tender, about 30 minutes.
3. Transfer in batches to the container of a food processor or blender and puree until quite smooth.
4. Return to low heat and stir in enough soya milk to give the soup a medium-thick consistency. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Let the soup stand off the heat for several hours before serving.
5. Just before serving, steam the reserved carrots until crisp-tender and stir into the soup along with the parsley and scallion. Taste to correct consistency and seasonings before serving.

Creole Green Salad

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Ingredients:

- ✓ 2 cups stemmed, torn spinach leaves
- ✓ 2 cups watercress leaves
- ✓ 2 cups torn chicory leaves
- ✓ 2 cups endive leaves (if large, cut in half)
- ✓ 1 small onion, minced, or 3 bunches scallions, minced
- ✓ 1 large celery stalk, finely diced
- ✓ 1 pint cherry tomatoes, hulled and halved
- ✓ French Dressing (recipe follows), as needed

Method:

1. Combine the greens, onion or scallions, celery, and tomatoes in a large salad bowl. Toss together.
2. Add enough dressing to lightly coat and toss again; or pass the dressing around separately so that guests may dress their own salad.

French Dressing

Makes about 1 cup

Ingredients:

- ✓ ¼ cup light olive oil
- ✓ ¼ cup safflower oil
- ✓ 2 tablespoons wine vinegar
- ✓ 2 tablespoons tomato juice
- ✓ 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon mayonnaise substitute
- ✓ 2 teaspoons maple syrup
- ✓ 1 teaspoon paprika
- ✓ freshly ground pepper to taste
- ✓ 1 to 2 cloves garlic, split lengthways

Method:

1. Make the dressing at least an hour before it is needed. It can also be made several days ahead of time, as it keeps well under refrigeration.
2. Combine all the ingredients in a small mixing bowl and whisk together until smoothly combined. Use garlic according to how garlicky you like dressings--two cloves steeped in the dressing for a day or more will produce a fairly pungent garlic flavour.
3. Transfer to a covered container or cruet and refrigerate until needed.

Sautéed Red Cabbage

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Ingredients:

- ✓ 2 tablespoons safflower oil
- ✓ 1 large red onion, quartered and sliced
- ✓ 6 cups thinly shredded red cabbage
- ✓ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry red wine
- ✓ 3 to 4 tablespoons cider vinegar or red wine vinegar, to taste
- ✓ 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- ✓ 3 tablespoons poppy seeds
- ✓ salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet or 3-quart saucepan. Add the onion and sauté until golden.
2. Add the cabbage, wine, and vinegar. Cover and sauté until crisp-tender, about 12 minutes, lifting the lid to stir occasionally.
3. Stir in the maple syrup and poppy seeds and sauté over very low heat, stirring occasionally, another 8 to 10 minutes.
4. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then transfer to a serving container to serve.

Leek And Corn Stuffed Peppers

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Fresh southern corn is widely sold this time of year, and it is usually quite good. Use it if you can, leaving frozen corn only as a last resort. This dish makes an attractive centrepiece for this dinner, encircling the wild rice pilaf that follows.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 10 medium green or red bell peppers, or a combination
- ✓ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ✓ 4 large leeks, white and palest green parts only, chopped and well rinsed
- ✓ 2 tablespoons minced shallot
- ✓ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ✓ 4 cups cooked corn kernels, preferably fresh
- ✓ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fine bread crumbs
- ✓ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup minced fresh parsley
- ✓ 1 teaspoon dried summer savoury
- ✓ 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- ✓ salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- ✓ wheat germ for topping
- ✓ paprika for topping

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C /350°F / Gas Mark 4.
2. Carefully cut away the top stems of the peppers and remove the seeds. Cut a very thin slice from the bottoms so that the peppers can stand. Arrange, standing snugly against one another for support, in one or two very deep casserole dishes or a roasting pan.
3. Heat the oil with two tablespoons of water in a large skillet.
4. Add the leeks, shallots, and garlic. Sauté over medium heat, covered, lifting the lid to stir occasionally, until the leeks are tender.
5. Stir in the remaining ingredients except the toppings.
6. Cook, stirring, another 5 minutes.
7. Distribute the stuffing among the peppers. Top each with a sprinkling of wheat germ, followed by a dusting of paprika.
8. Cover the casserole or roasting pan and bake for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the peppers are tender but still firm enough to stand.
9. Arrange in a circle on a large platter surrounding the pilaf, following. Serve at once.

Wild Rice Pilaf With Apples And Pecans

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Wild rice, apples, and pecans just seem to belong together. The texture will invigorate your palate.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups water
- ✓ $\frac{2}{3}$ cup wild rice, rinsed
- ✓ $\frac{2}{3}$ cup long-grain brown rice, rinsed
- ✓ 1 teaspoon seasoned salt
- ✓ 2 tablespoons margarine
- ✓ 1 cup chopped red onion
- ✓ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely diced celery
- ✓ 2 medium tart apples, such as Granny Smith, peeled, cored, and diced
- ✓ $\frac{1}{3}$ cup orange juice (from 1 large orange)
- ✓ 2 scallions, green parts only, thinly sliced
- ✓ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup currants
- ✓ dash each: cinnamon, nutmeg
- ✓ freshly ground pepper to taste
- ✓ 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- ✓ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped pecans

Method:

1. Bring the water to a boil in a heavy saucepan. Stir in the wild and brown rice and the seasoned salt, return to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer, covered, until the water is absorbed, about 40 minutes.
2. Heat the margarine in a very large skillet.
3. Add the onion and celery and sauté, until the onion is golden.
4. Add the apple and sauté for another 5 minutes.
5. Stir in the cooked rice mixture along with the juice, scallions, currants, and spices. Season to taste with pepper.
6. Sauté over low heat, stirring frequently, another 5 minutes. This may be done somewhat ahead of time to this point, then left covered off the heat until needed. Just before serving, heat through, adding a bit more liquid if the mixture needs it, then stir in the parsley and pecans.
7. Mound in the center of a large serving platter and surround with the stuffed peppers, above.

Cocoa Mock Mince Pie

Makes one 9-inch pie

Mince pies are a long-standing Christmas tradition, but of course the standard versions use mincemeat or suet. If none of your guests have offered to bring additional desserts, you might want to double this recipe.

Ingredients--Pie:

- ✓ ½ cup water
- ✓ ¼ cup dry, unsweetened cocoa
- ✓ 1 teaspoon instant coffee
- ✓ ¼ cup light brown sugar
- ✓ 2 tablespoons molasses
- ✓ ½ cup currents
- ✓ ½ cup golden raisins
- ✓ 2 medium Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and finely chopped
- ✓ 1⅓ cup fine fresh bread crumbs
- ✓ ¼ cup finely chopped walnuts or pecans
- ✓ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ✓ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ✓ ½ teaspoon allspice
- ✓ ¼ teaspoon each: ground ginger and nutmeg
- ✓ 1 recipe basic pastry crust

Ingredients--Topping:

- ✓ 1 tablespoon margarine
- ✓ ¼ cup fine fresh bread crumbs
- ✓ 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- ✓ ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C /350°F / Gas Mark 4.
2. Combine the first 5 ingredients in a large saucepan. Bring to a simmer and stir until smoothly dissolved and combined.
3. Add the currants, raisins, and apples and simmer over low heat, covered, for 10 minutes.
4. Remove from the heat.
5. In a mixing bowl, combine the bread crumbs, nuts, vanilla, and spices.
6. Pour in the mixture from the saucepan and stir until thoroughly combined.

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7. Pour into the pastry crust.
8. Melt the margarine in the same saucepan used previously. Remove from the heat and stir in the bread crumbs, sugar, and cinnamon. Sprinkle over the top of the pie.
9. Bake for 35 minutes, or until the crust is golden.
10. Let cool and serve just warm or at room temperature.