



DISHIN' WITH DEBBIE!

June Greetings to you all. I hope this newsletter finds you cooking up a storm AS WELL AS finding me some recipes for the next newsletter! I am chagrined to say that I only got one recipe for BOTH this month and last month's columns. **You'll do better next month- yes?**

Some follow up from the April column: Both *Shirley Riley* of DEP and *Bonnie Fields* of PennDOT are clearly plant experts and identified this ->  as a Bleeding Heart (Dicentra). Nice work, ladies!

They will both receive a cutting from my  large and lovely plant.

And *Kris Landvater* of DGS and *Beverly Miller* of PennDOT identified the movie quote as coming from Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*. These are clearly two very cultured ladies! Since I missed last month- this month's DWD will be geographically diverse with both African specialties and Thai delicacies. This column is very educational- this month's lesson is geography. There's a geography quiz next month- so pay attention!



The ever faithful (as well as forceful, as you will see later...) Miss Tracey provided this interesting recipe for an African stew.

WEST AFRICAN GROUNDNUT STEW

Ingredients:

- 2 C. chopped onions
- 2 T. peanut or olive or other vegetable oil
- 1/2 t. cayenne pepper
- 1 t. garlic, pressed or chopped fine
- 2 C. chopped cabbage
- 3 C. cubed sweet potatoes (1-inch cubes)
- 3 C. tomato juice
- 1 C. apple or apricot juice
- 1 t. salt if you feel so inclined... I don't add salt but you can if you think it needs it.
- 1 t. grated peeled gingerroot or a half teaspoon of ground ginger.
- 2 T. chopped cilantro, fresh (more if you like it, none if you don't)
- 3 chopped tomatoes
- 1-1/2 to 2 C. chopped okra (if you like it. I don't and leave it out and no one complains) (Ed: Leave it out.)
- 1/2 C. peanut butter (yes, peanut butter!) (Ed: peanut butter gets extra points in my book! I think maybe 3/4 C. is called for- whatdya' think, Tracey?)



Directions:

- Sauté the onions in the oil for about 10 minutes.
- Stir in the cayenne and garlic and sauté for a couple more minutes.
- Add the cabbage and sweet potatoes and sauté, covered, for a few more minutes.
- Mix in the juice, salt, ginger, cilantro, and tomatoes.
- Cover and simmer for about 15 minutes, until the sweet potatoes are tender.
- Add the okra if you're going to and simmer for 5 minutes more.
- Stir in the peanut butter and simmer until ready to serve. DON'T LET IT BURN! Add more juice or water if it looks too thick.
- **I DON'T CARE WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE. Eat it... it will make your mouth happy. Trust.**



There's the forceful part. You'd better listen!

Here is a recipe from Food.com for a chicken and peanut soup I had in a restaurant once. It was quite yummy and I had no idea I was eating African food. I'm more adventurous than I thought! You can serve this soup either hot or at room temperature.

Senegalese Chicken and Peanut Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 t. cayenne pepper
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1/4 C. curry powder (Ed: this is a ridiculous amount of curry powder. Start with a tablespoon.)
- 1 T. yellow curry paste
- 1 qt. chicken stock
- 1 qt. diced tomatoes with juice
- 4 C. cooked chicken, diced (I used one whole cooked chicken)
- 3/4 t. sambal oelek chili paste (red chile paste) (Ed. Sambal is near thermonuclear material. Use at your own discretion. The soup I tasted had a pleasant twang, but wasn't overwhelmingly spicy).
- 1 C. chunky peanut butter
- 1 (14 oz) can coconut milk
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- Juice of one small lemon

Directions:

- Sauté onion, garlic and cayenne in oil until onion is translucent.
- Stir in curry powder and curry paste; sauté 1 minute.
- Add chicken stock and tomatoes in juice; bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes.
- Add cooked chicken and sambal; simmer for 10 minutes.
- Whisk in peanut butter a little at a time until incorporated (see Tracey's note above, adding peanut butter to anything makes it prone to burning. Keep an eye on it.)
- Add coconut milk and stir to incorporate.
- Turn soup to low and add cilantro and lemon juice to brighten the taste; check seasoning and adjust as necessary.



Perusing Food.com, I came across a recipe for this South African dessert that sounds quite delicious. It's my philosophy to always include at least one dessert item in each DWD, here it is!

Malva Pudding

pudding Ingredients:

- 3/4 C. sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 T. apricot jam
- 5 oz. all-purpose flour
- 1 t. baking soda
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2 T. butter
- 1 t. vinegar
- 1/3 C. milk

Sauce Ingredients:

- 3/4 C. fresh cream
- 3 1/2 T. butter
- 1/2 C. sugar
- 1/3 C. hot water
- 2 t. vanilla extract (Ed: I've told you before and I am telling you again, use the real stuff. It matters!)



Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. and grease an oven safe casserole dish.
- Beat the sugar and eggs together until thick and lemon colored. Add the jelly (jam) and mix through.
- Melt the butter (don't boil) and add the butter and vinegar to the wet mixture.
- Mix together: the flour, soda and salt and add this mixture with the milk to the egg mixture in the mixing bowl. Beat well.
- Pour into the casserole and bake until pudding is brown and well-risen about 30 minutes.
- In a saucepan, melt together the ingredients for the sauce and stir well.
- Pour it over the pudding as soon as it comes out of the oven. Serve warm.

Now, let's leave the Dark Continent and head on over to Thailand- it's just a hop, skip and a jump (at least on a map!). The food here shares some similarities with African food, particularly in the use of peanuts. My favorite Thai food is Pad Thai and the best place to get it in the Harrisburg area is Bangkok Wok (IMHO). I HAVE had really AWFUL Pad Thai. If it comes out of the kitchen a radioactive pink color and was so spicy and vinegary that you can't eat it... do not blame the Pad Thai. Blame the cook. This recipe is MUCH better.



Pad Thai

Ingredients:

- 12 oz. rice noodles (Vietnamese bahn pho or Thai sen-mee)
- 1/4 C. salted peanuts, finely chopped
- 1/2 t. lime peel, grated
- 3 T. fish sauce (Ed: Fish sauce makes the Pad Thai authentic, but it smells nasty and tastes only slightly better. Less is more.)
- 1/2 C. low-fat coconut milk
- 6 T. creamy peanut butter
- 4 T. light soy sauce
- 2 T. fresh lime juice
- 2 T. brown sugar
- 4-1/2 t. rice vinegar
- 1 T. chili sauce
- 3 T. cooking oil
- 1 lb. chicken breast, cut into bite-sized strips (boneless, skinless)
- 1 T. garlic, minced
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 C. fresh bean sprouts
- 1/3 C. green onion, sliced
- 2 t. grated gingerroot
- 2 T. fresh cilantro, chopped



Directions:

- Place noodles in a large bowl. Add enough hot tap water to cover; let stand for ten to 15 minutes or until pliable but not soft. Drain well in a colander.
- Meanwhile, for peanut topping, combine peanuts and lime peel; set aside.
- In a small bowl, whisk together the coconut milk, fish sauce (if you are brave), peanut butter, soy sauce, lime juice, brown sugar, rice vinegar, and chili sauce. Set aside.
- Heat one tablespoon of the oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken and garlic; cook and stir for six minutes until chicken is tender and no pink remains. Transfer to a bowl.
- Add eggs to the hot skillet and cook for 30 seconds. Turn egg with spatula and cook for 30 to 60 seconds more, just until set. Remove and chop egg; set aside.
- In same skillet heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil over high heat for 30 seconds. Add drained noodles and sprouts; stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add peanut butter mixture and chicken; cook 1 to 2 minutes more until heated through.
- Sprinkle with peanut topping, ginger and cilantro and Enjoy!

Many Asian cultures are not big dessert eaters in the western sense. I have a friend who visited China for two weeks and they had watermelon for dessert every day. Don't get me wrong, I like watermelon, but it's a fruit, not dessert. She said they had absolutely NO chocolate (The HORROR!). I did find one Thai dessert that sounded very light and refreshing. I hope you like it!

Thai Dessert Soup

Ingredients:

- 1/4 C. large tapioca
- 1 C. water
- 2 T. sugar
- 2 C. of fresh fruit (select from berries, mango, papaya, pineapple, kiwi, pomegranate seed, etc.)
- 2 T. sugar
- 2 C. coconut or almond milk
- 1 t. vanilla extract (do not use artificial)- See! I'm not the only one! or 1 t. rose water

Directions:

- Stir the tapioca into the water and boil, stirring constantly, until the pearls are translucent.
- Remove from heat and stir in sugar.
- Bring the mixture back to the boil. Remove from heat immediately and allow to cool.
- Prepare your fruit. Slice strawberries but leave other berries whole. Dice other fruits.
- Stir sugar into the milk of your choice and make sure it is dissolved.
- Stir in vanilla.
- Select 4 attractive chilled bowls for your desserts and put several tablespoons of tapioca pearls in each bowl.
- Divide the fruit into each bowl.
- Pour the sweetened milk over the fruit/tapioca and chill the desserts until ready to serve.

That's all for this month! Join me next month when we travel to prim and proper England and my special scone recipe. **Send me those recipes as soon as you can!**

July - England- what better way to celebrate the month of American independence?

August - From Russia With Love

September - Canadian Comestibles

October - Oktoberfest in Germany

November - Culinary Adventures from the Land Down Under (Australia/New Zealand)

December - South American Treasures

Please send recipes to dereihart@pa.gov. Hurry up and do it now so you



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UNTIL NEXT MONTH- KEEP ON DISHIN'!

-Debbie