



Maple Leather Company  
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*2013 Recipe Collection*



Maple Leather Company & GreatBags® presents...

Selections from our “Mucho Easy” Recipe Collection

### *Susie Levin's Apricot Chicken*

After the American Craft Council Show in San Francisco this month we took some time out to shop for leather and to visit friends and family. Our friend Susie fixed this easy and tasty chicken dish for us which we are looking forward to making for the upcoming Jewish holidays and on chilly winter evenings-we hope you will like it, too.

#### Ingredients:

1/3 cup red wine vinegar

1/3 cup olive oil

1/2 cup apricot jam

1/3 cup capers, plus a little juice

1/2 cup Spanish olives, drained and sliced

1/4 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup white wine

5 cloves of garlic, minced

2 Tablespoons additional olive oil

4 large chicken boneless and skinless breasts or equivalent

1/3 - 1/2 cup chopped apricots

Salt and pepper to taste

#### Preparation:

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients except the chicken and 2 Tbl. of oil. Stir until sugar is dissolved and jam is mixed well. Set aside.

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

Brown chicken in oil in large frying pan. Arrange chicken in single layer in baking dish and pour mixture over. Bake for 30 min or until done.

Serves 4. This recipe is easy to double to serve a crowd.

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### *Artichoke Spinach Lasagna*

We are still in lasagna mode since the weather has turned colder and really like this recipe from our friend Marsha. She says that she has served this recipe to people who are certain that they don't like artichokes and they absolutely love this lasagna. So try it, you just might like it as much as we do!

#### Ingredients:

9 lasagna noodles, prepared according to directions

Extra virgin olive oil

1 onion, chopped

4 cloves of garlic, chopped

1/2 cup vegetable broth

1 Tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary

1- 14 oz can of artichoke hearts, drained and well chopped

12 oz fresh spinach, chopped OR a defrosted box of frozen spinach, excess water squeezed out

42 oz of canned tomato pasta sauce, your choice

3 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

1- 4 oz pkg herb and garlic feta cheese

Boil lasagna noodles. Oil or spray with cooking spray a 9 x 13" baking dish and set aside. Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil on medium-high for 3 minutes or until onion is tender-crisp. Stir in broth and rosemary; bring to boil. Stir in fresh spinach; reduce heat cover and simmer 5 minutes. Stir in pasta sauce and artichokes. Preheat oven to 375.

Spread one quarter of sauce in bottom of dish. Top with 3 cooked noodles. Spread another quarter of sauce on top of lasagna and then sprinkle third of the mozzarella cheese. Repeat layers of lasagna, sauce, and mozzarella cheese two more times. Sprinkle with feta cheese. Bake covered for 50 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 minutes more. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting.

We have enjoyed this recipe and have experimented with substituting a low-fat layer of blended cottage cheese, eggs, and spinach for the mozzarella cheese, as well as adding chopped broccoli to the tomato sauce instead of spinach. Either way, it tastes great and the leftovers taste even better.

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### *Avocado Mango Salad*

This recipe was a big hit at our last summer gathering, courtesy of our friend Marsha. If you love mangos like we love mangos, give it a try!

2-3 Avocados, peeled and diced  
2-3 Mangos, peeled and diced  
1 sweet Onion, chopped  
1 Green or Red Pepper, chopped  
1 large Tomato, chopped or halved Grape Tomatoes  
1/4 cup fresh Cilantro or Parsley  
1/4 cup Lime juice, fresh if possible  
Salt and Pepper to taste

In a bowl combine avocados, mangos, onion, pepper, tomato, cilantro, and lime juice. Gently toss until evenly coated. season with salt and pepper.

(You could add balsamic vinegar and olive oil if you feel the need.)

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### *Becca's Brussel Sprout Salad*

It's hard to find room on our Thanksgiving table for any new dishes because we have so many favorites, but this year our daughters got together and chopped up a storm and produced this delicious salad that added a nice light touch and a new twist to our holiday meal. They doubled the batch and made half vegetarian without the prosciutto- both were delicious! We bought the sprouts on the stalk instead of bagged because they looked fresher and the taste was worth it.

Brussels Sprouts Salad with Apples (serves 4)

4 ounces sliced prosciutto (6 to 8 slices)

1/2 pound Brussels sprouts, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced cross-wise (2 cups)

2 apples, thinly sliced

1/2 cup chopped golden raisins

2 teaspoons red-wine vinegar

2 tablespoons olive oil

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 teaspoons mustard seeds, toasted if desired (optional)

Heat oven to 400° F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment and place prosciutto on sheet in a single layer. Bake prosciutto until crispy and beginning to brown, 12 minutes. Let prosciutto cool on baking sheet until cool enough to handle, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, slice Brussels sprouts and apples. Combine vegetables and mustard seeds in a large bowl. Crumble in prosciutto. Drizzle vinegar and oil over salad and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper. If the salad seems a little dry, mix up a little extra dressing to have on hand for those who prefer more dressing on their salad.

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### *Lemon Chicken with Olives or Artichokes*

You can easily adapt or modify this recipe to suit the ingredients you have on hand. We have made several different versions and it always turns out great. We like the tangy/savory combination of the ingredients.

#### Ingredients:

6-8 pieces chicken (or more if you are expecting a crowd)

1/2 c. flour

1/4 c. EVOO

2 lg. Leeks, sliced (or 2 onions, or combination of onions & shallots)

3-5 garlic cloves, sliced

1 cup chicken or vegetable broth

1/3 cup fresh lemon or lime juice

1/4 cup wine (or even beer would work)

2 tsp. Trader joes 21 seasoning salute or similar spice blend

2 Tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. pepper

1 cup chopped canned olives or artichokes

Dust chicken pieces with flour and brown in olive oil. Set chicken aside and saute garlic and leeks or onions until translucent. Add liquids, chicken, and spices to pan and simmer for 30 minutes until chicken is cooked through. Stir in olives or artichokes (or both!) and serve with rice, cous cous, or any side dish and a big salad.

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### *Lisa's Easy Coconut Flan*

This coconut flan was just the right touch this past winter when we travelled to Mexico for inspiration and a creative sabbatical. Now that it's getting hot here at home we are going to make it again for our next neighborhood gathering! The only scary part is making the caramel for the first time but after you make it once, it is a breeze. This recipe is for a large group and makes 2 9 x 9 pans.

Ingredients for caramel, which you make first:

1 cup white sugar

juice of 1 lime

2 Tbls. water

It is good to put the oven on warm when you start making the caramel and put the two pans in the oven to warm a bit so the caramel will coat the bottom instead of cooling in a small puddle. Don't worry if it does not cover all the bottom. Heat the sugar, lime, and water in a saucepan on medium/high heat, swirling the sugar mixture round and round until it bubbles and starts to turn light brown. Pour into the two pans. I make it in 2 9x9 pans instead of one big pan so it is easier to turn out. They can be round or square.

Flan Ingredients:

6 eggs (or 5 eggs and 2-3 egg yolks)

1 (12 fluid ounce) can evaporated milk

1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk

1 (15 ounce) can coconut creme

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Mix the eggs into the evaporated milk, then add the remaining three ingredients. You can use a mixer or I use a blender and pitcher when I am in Mexico. An immersion blender would work, too-use whatever works for you.

Baking time is about 1 hour at 350 degrees. Bake until the middle is not too jiggly and browned a bit on top. I always use bake it in a larger pan of hot water and check at 1 hour's time to make sure it doesn't get over-cooked.

Cool 4 hours or overnight in refrigerator. Run a knife or spatula all around the edge before you flip them over onto a pretty serving plate or tray with enough depth to hold the caramel sauce.

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### *Marinated Lentil Salad*

An incredibly easy salad with protein and your favorite veggie flavors.

Cook 1 or 2 cups of lentils according to package directions until tender, being careful not to over-cook.

I prefer the dark lentils for salads and used the small French "Dupuy" ones this time.

Chop and saute your chosen vegetables till tender crisp, 7-10 minutes:

1 onion, chopped

1 red pepper, sliced ( I substituted chopped sundried tomatoes and added them at the end)

1 celery rib, chopped

1 carrot , sliced in rounds or 1/2 rounds

1 c. broccoli florets (peeled and chopped stalks OK too)

Allow veggies to cool in large bowl and add drained lentils.

Mix the dressing:

Juice of 2 lemons

1/4 c. balsamic vinegar

Olive oil to taste

fresh parsley and cilantro to taste

Stir all together and add salt and pepper to taste.

You can also add:

1/2 cup thawed frozen peas

4 oz. feta cheese

Mix well and serve warm or chilled.

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*Mark Bittman's Carrot and Couscous Salad*  
*an incredibly easy salad with North African flavors*

I find life is just a little easier with a dash of inspiration and look for for it everywhere. I apply these motivating images, quotes, concepts, etc equally to handbag design, cooking, and pretty much all that I do. I discovered a great cookbook last week, "Mark Bittman's Kitchen Express". You might know of him already and his articles for the New York Times, but I've been kind of busy and somehow missed his writings up until now. This week's quote/goal from the ingredients chapter is "Get good food onto the table, fast, and have fun doing so". This works for us!

Cook 1 or 2 cups of couscous according to package directions. (We used a bag of Trader Joe's couscous blend that also has a little bit of almonds and other yummy things in it that gave it a little crunch).

While it cooks, shred 4-5 carrots and mix them with the juice of 1 - 2 lemons, a few tablespoons of fresh orange juice, about 1/2 cup of EVOO (extra virgin olive oil), 1 tsp cumin, and salt and pepper.

When the couscous is done, drain if necessary, fluff it gently with a fork, and add it to the carrots along with 1/2 cup of raisins (or more if you like it sweeter). And that's it!!

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## *Pesto Lasagna*

We are big basil fans and make this "Green" Pesto Lasagna in late summer or early fall while we can still find enough fresh local basil to make the home-made pesto. You could use pesto from the supermarket but we like to make it at home since this recipe uses a lot. It is very low fat since we omit the Mozarella cheese, but still very flavorful.

### Pesto Ingredients:

1 1/2 cup basil leaves

3/4 cup EVOO (extra virgin olive oil)

4--6 cloves garlic peeled and cut in half

Blend garlic in olive oil on high setting until liquified.

Add basil leaves in small batches and puree on high setting, pulsing to get all the leaves liquified. (Unlike most pesto recipes, we don't add any pine nuts when making lasagna and only add parmesan cheese on the top layer.)

### Lasagna Ingredients:

9 lasagna noodles

16 oz fat free cottage cheese, blend smooth

2 egg whites

1 pkg frozen chopped spinach, defrosted and excess water squeezed out

2 Tsp of oregano or italian spice blend

Fresh Grated Parmesan or Romano Cheese to cover the top (Of course you can also add grated mozzarella cheese on top if you really think its necessary for looks and that cheesy flavor).

Boil the lasagna noodles in salted water and set aside, drizzling with a little olive oil so they don't get stuck together. Combine remaining ingredients in bowl or food processor.

In a 9x9 pan spread 1/3 spinach mixture. cover with 1/4 of pesto, then a layer of noodles. Repeat 2 more times, saving enough pesto to cover the top layer of noodles.

Cover with foil and bake 1 hour at 350 degrees.

Sprinkle top with fresh grated Parmesan.

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### *Ponzu Dressing for Grilled Summer Vegetables*

We were shopping at one of our favorite local farm markets, Homestead Farm Market in Lambertville NJ, and happened upon our friend Roz grilling baby Bok Choy out back for their take-out department. It looked and smelled fabulous, so we picked up some to try at home ourselves. The secret ingredient, though, is a Japanese-inspired Ponzu sauce/dressing that tastes great on anything grilled:

Asparagus, Carrots, Zucchini, String Beans, Baby Bok Choy,  
or whatever you have in your kitchen.

I found a recipe for the magic ponzu sauce online from our favorite food mentor Mark Bittman, so I gave it my best try with the ingredients I had in the house. Feel free to experiment, I did! I added 2 TBL. black sesame oil and can't imagine it without it. He calls it "The Japanese equivalent of vinaigrette" and we're hooked.

#### Ingredients:

2/3 cup fresh lemon juice, more to taste

1/3 cup fresh lime juice, more to taste

1/4 cup rice vinegar

1 cup good-quality soy sauce

1/4 cup mirin (or 1/4 cup sake and 1 tablespoon sugar)

1 3-inch piece kelp (konbu)

1/2 cup (about 1/4 ounce) dried bonito flakes

Pinch cayenne

2 TBL black sesame oil

#### Method:

In a bowl, combine all ingredients. Let sit for at least 2 hours or overnight. Strain. Just before using, you might add a small squeeze of fresh lemon or lime juice. Covered and refrigerated, ponzu will keep for at least several days.

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### *Quinoa, Beet, and Arugula Salad*

We loved this super summer salad our friend Jeannie brought over for Lisa's Birthday Party this year. Give it a try and let us know what you think! Don't worry if you don't have any red quinoa, it looks very pretty using ordinary quinoa. The Arugula gives it just the right spicy flavor, too.

#### INGREDIENTS:

1/2 pound beets, peeled and sliced

1 cup red quinoa (We used ordinary quinoa and it was fine)

2 cups water

1/2 cup olive oil

1/2 cup red wine vinegar (or cider vinegar good also)

1 1/2 teaspoons white sugar or a little Agave sweetener

3 cloves garlic, crushed

1 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

2 green onions, sliced

3 ounces arugula, chopped ( We used more)

5 ounces goat cheese or feta , crumbled

Cook Beets and set aside.

Bring quinoa and 2 cups water a saucepan over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until the quinoa is tender and the liquid has been absorbed, about 15 minutes.

While the quinoa is cooking, whisk olive oil, red wine vinegar, sugar, garlic, salt, and black pepper together in a large bowl.

Remove quinoa from heat, then immediately add half of the vinegar dressing while fluffing the quinoa with a fork; reserve remaining dressing. Cover and refrigerate quinoa until cool, at least 1 hour.

Stir green onions, arugula, goat cheese, beets, and remaining dressing into cooled quinoa mixture. Toss lightly before serving.

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