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THE CHARLES “CHOW” WINKLER SERIES

## Chow's Chuck Wagon

### Recipes From Wide Open Spaces

By T. Edward Fox

Chow Winkler has spent all of his adult—and a lot of his teenage—life working with food. He knows what to do with just about any ingredient you can name.

He even knows what to do with things you probably would never order if you knew what they were.

This is a cook book, filled with recipes Chow has perfected over the years. Because he understands that there are cowboys as well as tenderfoots out there, he has kindly—with only a minimum amount of grumbling at the editor—supplied what he calls “tamed down” versions using more traditional ingredients.

However, if you can find the real thing, and have the heart and nerve to try them, he knows that you'll love the original recipes.

This book is dedicated to men—and women—who still roam the west. The cowboys, cowpokes, range rovers and so forth. They often work seven days a week, sixteen hour days, and give new meaning to the term, “saddle sore.” The thing that keeps them going is the food that range cooks, like Chow Winkler, provide. Rain or shine.

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## A COUPLE WORDS UP FRONT

I have hundreds o' recipes that I made up, borrowed, changed, made better and made worse over they years. Fact is, I never have thrown away anything I wrote down where it comes to food.

Fer years I worked the range and ranches in Texas and New Mexico as a cook. Made good grub for at least a thousand cowpokes an' more'n a dozen bosses. I've had a few complaints, but never twice fer doin' the same thing.

In these past years workin' at Swift Enterprises fer Tom Swift and his father, I've been responsible fer makin' everything from breakfasts to banquets to left-over dinners, plain and fancy. I'm right proud to say that I've cooked meals fer two Presidents of these United States, a couple dozen Senators and Congressmen, and several score of other dignitaries from around the world.

This little book contains some o' my favorites an' ones that folks here at Enterprises keep askin' me fer. I'm happy to oblige.

I've added a few o' the dishes I used to make out in the wide open, including giving ya the real ingredients.

To meet sensibilities of daintier folk (and to keep this feller called Editor of'n my backside) I've kept the strangest stuff to myself. No prairie oysters or gopher goulash. Well... not much.

I hope that you enjoy what I wrote in here.

Now I got a word or two fer ya all about recipes and cookin' in general.

Cookin' ain't so much follerin' recipes word by word. Heck. Most folks would burn things if'n they took the time to very carefully read and foller each step.

No. Cookin' is one o' them do it by feel and as the inclination hits ya. If I write that ya need a cup o' somethin' and you don't like it all that much, well put in half that and add something similar that you *do* like.

No use makin' it a miserable experience.

What I'm tryin' ta say is that regular cookin' ain't an exact science. It's all try it and see.

O' course, bakin' is different all together. It is a science, so when a bakin' recipe says to add just fifteen little bits o' somethin', ya best do just that.

Most o' what I've put in here can take a bit o' abuse such as a little extra cookin' if yer stove or oven runs a bit hot. Likewise, if I call fer a yellow onion, an' all ya got is a white one, it don't matter all that much. Might even be better, it's just not the way I've done it is all.

Have fun in yer kitchen. Get the kiddies involved. Ask yer husband or wife to help with some o' the stuff. Kitchens make great meetin' places fer friends an' strangers alike and are where families come together.

*Charles "Chow" Winkler*

(Ed—At Mr. Winkler's insistence, we have left his somewhat colorful way of pronouncing things just as they arrived on a series of audio tapes. We transcribed them directly to make this book. Forgive us if this is a source of misunderstanding. As I say, he *did* insist!)

## THE CHARLES "CHOW" WINKLER SERIES

**Chow's Chuck Wagon**

## FOREWORD

I've said it before and I'll say it again. Chow Winkler is a one-of-a-kind man and about the most colorful character I've run across in all my years on this Earth.

He spent almost four decades working in some of the more out of the way ranches and prairies in Texas and New Mexico, starting as a teenager, where he taught himself the art of cooking. Anything and everything.

Now, working at Swift Enterprises in a more private capacity, I have heard that he is starting to organize his hundreds and hundreds of recipes for things ranging from his famous rattlesnake stew right up to what he calls "Them banquet dishes!" He wants to make a cook book with everything; I've talked him into trying a sampler. This is it.

I've sampled just about all the recipes in this abbreviated cookbook and can say that I've enjoyed every one of them—with the possible exception of the one on page 20... it's a little odd to say the least.

As Chow would say. Bone apple-tight, folks!

*Victor Appleton II*

**PART 1 /****RECIPES WITH MEAT!**

Now, I don't give a hoot whatcha all think ya know 'bout cowboys. Chances are pretty good ya got all yer information from some old movie made by folks out in California who never set foot out in the open range. Either that or one o' them pulp western paperbacks.

Those authors generally are the kinda folk that know next ta nuthin' about what they're tryin' to pass off on unsuspectin' folk like your good selves.

I'm here ta tell ya that the life of a cowpoke don't start when the sun comes up. Heck. By that time the cows are already restless and wanderin' off. Ya got to git up before the sun does or you'll be playin' catch up all day long! And, cows ain't big on playin' games.

Cowboys don't just sit there in some comfy saddle on a shiny horse named Rex or Thunder, rollin' a smoke every now and agin', and having po-lite conversations with one another as they watch the sun go down.

Sometimes, ya don't see anyone else fer hours at a time.

Plus, ya don't always see a good meal 'cept at night just before ya hit the old bedroll.

If'n yer a ranch cook, or a range cook (and there IS a difference: ranch cooks have things like running water and even gas stoves. Range cooks have whatever wood they kin gather up, and heavy iron pots and sometimes pourin' rain and cantankerous hombres ta feed).

Anyways, no matter where you cook, it's always a challenge to git good food fixed in time and on the cowpokes' unschedule-like schedule.

Most of 'em like a good chunk of meat in their meal. The recipes in this first section contain meat. Now, they're not all meat, mind ya. But, they got enough of it to satisfy most without tying up their gut.

Oh, and the old movie scene of cowboys sitting 'round a fire and farting the Hal-a-lew-ya Chorus ain't too far fetched fer some. Beans is cheap and served by cooks who try to get by easy. Just, not in Chow's chuck wagon. I respect my cow pokes and feed 'em accordingly.

All my recipes are scaled down from my normal "make it fer twenty" ingredients. Most are now set to be real good portions fer five or six folk. Hungry folk!

## BOWL OF RED (CHILI)

A good bowl of red will set mighty well with most. Plus, it's a right nice mix of enough meat along with some vegetables so that it is nutritious to boot!

1-1/2	lb	Stew meat (good chuck or round, trimmed of most extra fat and diced at about 1/2 inch per piece)
1	big	Onion - white or yellow in 1-inch dice
6-7	cloves	Garlic - smashed and chopped a bit
10	ripe	Tomatoes, chopped (or a couple 16 oz cans of chopped or diced with juices strained out AND reserved)
1	can	Tomato sauce (about 16 oz)
3	Tbsp	Chili powder (spicy if you like it)
1-1/2	Tbsp	Cumin (ground, although pan-toasted seeds that you grind yourself are even better)
4-5	sprigs	Cilantro - really needs to be fresh 'cause dried just ain't very tasty! Chop it, stems and all
1	cup	Red wine - should be one o' them California or Oregon reds, not sweet at all, please!

You'll git everything ready before starting, if yer smart.

Heat up a heavy pot, at least a gallon size, over a good flame. If yer using one o' them non-stick ones, don't let it git too hot before you add a couple tablespoons of oil. If it is cast iron or enameled iron, as long as it's seasoned right, you only need a teaspoon of oil or so.

Only give the oil around 30 seconds before adding the meat, about 1/3rd o' it per batch. Ya need to get it nice and brown on all sides and if ya put in too much it'll just go gray and damp. Don't mind the smoke. That's why they make range hoods and blowers!

As each batch finishes, spoon it out and into a bowl for safe keeping. It'll leak a little juice and that's OK. You want to save that.

When the last batch is done, add about a half cup of water to the pan and stir things up to scrape the brown bits up. Those are flavor so keep 'em in the pot. Let most o' the water evaporate, until it's no more than a tablespoon or so.

Now, add the onion and turn the heat down to just over medium. Keep stirring them around every minute or so until they start to get a little see-through. Add the garlic and stir it around for 1 minute more.

If using canned tomatoes, pour all of the reserved liquid into the pot. Let it cook down until more than 3/4 of it has evaporated, then add the tomato solids. If using fresh tomatoes, add them all at once and let cook without stirin' for 5 minutes.

Put all the beef into the pot along with any juices that have come out.

Dump the tomato sauce into the pot along with 2 tablespoons of the chili powder and 1 tablespoon of the cumin. As I mentioned above, if you really want good cumin flavor, you need to put a real heaping tablespoon o' seeds for each finished tablespoon of powder you need in a hot skillet. No oil. Just keep swirling the pan around until you catch some strong aromas of the seeds and can see that they are changin' color a bit. Dump them into a small grinder (manual or one o' them coffee grinders that you ONLY use fer spices and NOT coffee!) and then grind it into a powder.

Anyway, cover the pot and turn the flame down to simmer and let her go fer at least an hour and a half. Check it then to

make sure the meat is really tender. If it all looks a little dry, add a bit of beef stock (or some water if that's all you got) and stir it all in. At the two hour point, add the rest of your spices plus the chopped cilantro and stir in. Only let it cook another 5-10 minutes before serving it up.

If you absolutely have to have yer food salty, you'll want to taste everything at the one hour mark and then add a little salt and black pepper. Don't do it before because you never know how much salt you'll get from canned tomatoes and tomato sauce.

At the end, if you're one of those who believe chili ain't chili without beans, serve the red over some good-quality pinto or kidney beans. Them small "navy" beans can also be used for a lighter flavor.

Personally, a bowl of my red with cornbread is about all I want. Some o' the Enterprise folks like theirs over rice.

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Now, I got ta tell ya something. I've made this same recipe with bison meat as well as lamb. The flavors are different, but they're pretty good substitutions.

Bud Barclay went on a bit of a crazy patch and tried being vega-tare-ee-un. I made his using small chunks o' tofu that I browned up all nice and medium-dark before using them. I'm not putting that in the NO MEAT section o' the book, but you should know that it actually isn't all that bad.

**BOWL OF GREEN (NOT PRECISELY CHILI)**

I got a friend who served in the Navy and went down to Mexico a lot. He swore by what they call Chili Verde. I took a hint from a recipe for that plus some stuff I learned from a fella I know from the Philippines. They make something called adobo, and this is also somethin' like that as well.

1-1/2 lb	Pork (I use boneless pork chops that I trim of all outer fat and dice into about 1/2 inch pieces)
1/2 cup	Cider vinegar
1/4 cup	White wine (a medium dry one: a little sweetness is fine for cookin' with pork)
1/2 cup	Water
1 tsp	Sugar - white, not brown
1 tsp	Salt (I like that kosher stuff instead of table shaker salt.)
1 big	Onion - white or yellow in 1-inch dice
5 cloves	Garlic - smashed and chopped a bit
4-5 ripe	Tomatillos, chopped (these kinda look like unripe small tomatoes, but have a distinct tart taste)
1/2 Tbsp	Cumin (ground, and you can see the recipe for RED CHILI for a good hint about usin' cumin seeds)
1 cup	Water
15-20 sprigs	Cilantro - really needs to be fresh 'cause dried just ain't very tasty! Chop it, stems and all
1/4 cup	Water mixed with...
1 Tbsp	Corn Starch
	Sour Cream to garnish

As always, git everything ready before starting.

Put the diced pork, vinegar, wine, the first 1/2 cup of water and sugar into a zip-topped bag. Make sure the sugar and salt are dissolved before putting into the fridge for an hour or two.

When you are about two hours from mealtime, heat a big pot and add a couple tablespoons of good oil to it. Lard is better if ya got it. Heat until it gets all shimmery but not until it starts to smoke. While it is heating, drain and pat dry the pork, **BUT KEEP THE LIQUID!**)

Dump about a quarter of the pork into the hot pan making sure that no piece is on top of another. Get it brown on at least a couple sides before takin' it out and settin' it aside in a dish.

You may need to add a little more oil for each batch, but don't do too much. You do want those browned pieces that stick to stay in the pot. After all, that's the whole point of brownin' the meat!

When the last batch is done, put all of the earlier pork back in the pot along with juices. Add the onion and let everything cook until the onion is startin' to get a little clear.

Add the garlic and stir it around for a minute or two.

Pour in the liquid from the plastic bag.

Make sure you didn't get any of the papery top bit from the tomatillos in with the good stuff, then add to the pot. Stir in the cumin and as much of the cup of water as is necessary to just about cover all of the ingredients. If it doesn't, don't add more water. You'll just need to stir everything about each 30 minutes to get the top stuff down to the bottom, that's all.

Otherwise, you can get this too watery.

Stir in about half of the cilantro bits. Be sure that you got a lot of the stems. That's where the real flavor is. If you discarded those, you might as well turn off the stove and go git fast food!

Cover the pot and turn the flame down to simmer. Let cook

slowly for an hour and three quarters.

Oh. You're gonna serve this over rice so the time to make it is about 20 minutes before meal time. Unless yer usin' brown rice. In that case you need to allow about 40 minutes.

If yer using instant rice, I really pity you and yer family. It'll work, but it isn't like using real rice!

A lot more expensive to boot.

OK. Now, with it about ten minutes before serving time, add the rest o' the cilantro along with the corn starch and water mixture. Stir it all in and wait for the pot to thicken.

Serve a nice ladle of the Green over the rice and then slap a good tablespoon or so of sour cream on top. That last bit is just my preference. If you don't like sour cream or have one o' them intolerance's to dairy, you can try plain (NOT VANILLA!!!) yogurt instead, or leave it off entirely.

And, if yer thinkin' "Maybe the old Chow Hound forgot about suggestin' to us about not usin' yogurt with fruit in it. If'n yer that stupid, pack up the kids and go make yourselves sick having fast food.

## SOUTHERN "BIRD" CHILI

I call this Bird Chili 'cause you use ground turkey instead of beef, bison or anything darker. It's still good and fills you up.

- 1-1/2 lb Ground Turkey - get the mix of light and dark meats; the all white meat has no flavor!
- 2 Tbsp Olive oil (or corn oil)
- 1 big Onion - white or yellow in 1-inch dice
- 4 cloves Garlic - smashed and chopped a bit
- 4 ripe Tomatoes, chopped (or a 16 oz can of chopped or diced with juices strained out. Drink the juices: they're good.)
- 1/2 can Tomato sauce (about 8 oz)
- 2 Tbsp Chili powder (spicy if you like it)
- 1-1/2 Tbsp Cumin (ground, although pan-toasted seeds that you grind yourself are even better)
- 1/2 lb Mushrooms - fresh *only*, either white or brown cut into quarters. Ya might even try portabellos cut into 1-inch chunks.
- 1 lb Okra - if using fresh, trim off the cap and and cut the rest into 1/2 inch pieces. Frozen is perfectly acceptable for this recipe
- 3/4 cup Red wine - should be one o' them California or Oregon reds, not sweet at all, please!
- 1 Tbsp Flour mixed with...
- 1/4 cup beef stock or water



Prepare all yer stuff ahead. Makes things easier.

Heat up a dutch oven or 4-quart casserole pot over medium high heat. Add the oil and give it a half minute to heat up. Put the ground meat into it, and break up as much as possible as it cooks. After about three minutes you can add the onion and garlic.

Stir and let cook another 2-3 minutes. Add the drained tomatoes, tomato sauce and chili powder and cumin. Cover the pot and turn flame down to low. Let simmer about 30 minutes.

Stir it all up then add the mushrooms, okra and red wine.

Note: Canned mushrooms are no better than boiled slugs, so don't go there. An' don't skip the okra. Some folk give it a bad name, but if ya cook it right, it's wonderful.

Re-cover and cook an additional 30-45 minutes. Stir and taste. You may need to add a bit of salt and certainly you'll want ta add some ground black pepper.

10 minutes before food is suppose ta hit the table, stir in the flour/stock (or water) mixture and turn the heat back up to at least medium. As it comes back to a near boil, everything should start to tighten up. That's what you want.

This goes nice over rice, but I really, really like it on grits. See the next recipe for the way to do those the right way.

### GRITS THE RIGHT WAY

There are many ways to make grits. To my mind, there are a heck of a lot more bad ways to ruin grits than there are ways to make a good batch. Here's my way (with and without cheese—try 'em both as a favor to yerself!) Oh, and why ain't grits with the other couple breakfast recipes? 'Cause grits isn't just fer breakfast!

- 1-1/2 cups Water - filtered if possible to avoid any flavors ya don't want
- 1/2 cup Milk - hopefully you have whole milk
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1/2 cup Grits - that's grits, not corn meal and not corn flour and not blue corn anything! An outfit out in Oregon called Bob's does a real nice bag of properly-ground grits ya can git almost in any store
  
- Oh, and NEVER use instant grits!
  
- 2 Tbsp Some more milk - this will vary  
Butter - not that ar-tee-ficial stuff!

The rest of this stuff is only if you're makin' cheese grits:

- 1 Tbsp Onion, finely chopped... really fine!
- 1/2 cup Whipping Cream or half-and-half
- 4 oz Cheddar Cheese, grated
- 2 oz Swiss Cheese, or Jarlesberg, also grated
- 1/8 tsp Black Pepper, ground

This kin go fast at various stages so be prepared in advance.

Heat up a 2-quart pot with the water, salt and milk in it. Just as it comes to the beginnings of a boil, quickly stir in the grits. Don't pause or answer the phone or head to the bathroom. You will only come back to a pan full of lumps an' muck if you don't stir the grits in completely.

Continue to stir as it comes back to the boil, then turn down to below medium and stir every 1/2 minute or so until it gets fairly thick, maybe after 3-4 minutes or so. Add the finely minced onion and stir to combine.

You ain't finished yet so don't go wanderin' off.

As it cooks some more an' thickens, you will want to add a little more milk every couple minutes or so to keep it from goin' too thick. Real grits need at least 20 minutes to cook to the point where the little bits of corn are all softened. If ya got the patience, 30 minutes plus a bit more water or milk will make 'em even nicer and creamier.

A few minutes before you want to eat, add the butter and stir it in. Turn the heat off, cover the pot, and let it sit for the minute or two it takes to get out yer bowls.

Sprinkle in the pepper. Give it one more stir before serving. It should be kinda smooth—no lumps—and not too stiff and not too loose.

#### For Cheesy Grits...

Heat up a 2-quart pot with the water, salt and milk in it. Just as it comes to the beginnings of a boil, quickly stir in the grits. Again, don't wander off. This needs your love and attention.

Continue to stir as it comes back to the boil, then turn down to below medium and stir until it gets fairly thick, maybe 3-4 minutes or so. Turn down to simmer and cook for 10 minutes. If it gets a little thick too soon, move on to the next steps, but add back the "lost" cookin' time at the end.

Add the butter and whipping cream an' turn the heat back to low. Let the temperature come back up a bit, maybe a minute, before slowly adding the grated cheeses. Keep stirring as you add these. After ya get the cheese in, turn everything back down to simmer. From this point, you don't want any kind of boilin' to happen.

This is going to need to cook another 8-10 minutes, so stir it every minute and add a little extra milk if it looks like it is stiffening too much. The end result should *almost* be able to be poured out of the pot.

If ya didn't heed my advice earlier, don't try to fix it right at the end by dumping in a lot of milk or water. Liquid needs to cook into the corn as you add it. Ya might be able to save a too-stiff batch—like if ya got a real important phone call and just *had* to take it—by slowly adding milk and stirring over low heat. Do it gradual and only until the consistency gets back to the "almost pourable" stage.

Add the black pepper and stir it once more before serving.

Either version can be eaten as is, or you can flash fry up a few fresh shrimp tails or even a couple of really nicely-caramelized scallops to put on top. Cain't abide seafood? Try fryin' up chicken chunks, about 1 inch across, in salted butter and a little cayenne pepper. Or, lamb chunks.

What I'm tryin' to say is that grits go with a lot o' stuff.

This last bit, addin' shrimp or such, ain't from my ranch days; I do this for the Enterprises folks. It makes a great starting course for almost any meal an' turns "grits" into "simmered corn polenta with seafood accompaniment" or some such twaddle.

## MANY MEATS BOLOGNESE SAUCE

Now, Chow ain't Eye-talian, but I found a variation of this recipe 'bout twenty years ago in one o' those Ladies Guild make-money-cookbooks. I met the woman who entered the recipe and she gave me permission to add it here. Nice lady and even nicer meat sauce. I call it my "One" recipe. I think ya kin see why.

1	Tbsp	Olive oil (or corn oil)
1	lb	Onions - white or yellow, grated
1	lb	Carrots - peeled and grated
1	Tbsp	Oregano
1	Tbsp	Thyme
1	Tbsp	Marjoram
1	lb	Ground Beef
1	lb	Ground Veal
1	lb	Ground Turkey
1	head	Garlic - see first step below on what to do with this
1	quart	Milk - 2% or even whole, not skim
1	quart	half-and-Half
1	can	Tomato Paste - 6 or 8 ounces
1	bottle	Red Wine - one of those Merlots or Pinot Noirs, the sort o' thing you'd drink!
1	can	Tomatoes - diced with juices drained and reserved

Like I been sayin', git everything ready before starting.

Garlic—take the whole head o' garlic and cut it in half cross-wise so that you can see the inside of every clove. Leave 'em

all in there. Put the two halves in an oven-proof dish and pour a little good-quality olive oil over everything. Roast them for about 45 minutes at 325° F. Let cool. You will want to do all this at least an hour or so before starting the sauce.

Okay. On to the actual recipe.

In a large pot of at least 6 quarts (8 might be better if you have one) put the oil in and heat it up for a couple minutes. Add the grated onions and carrots and stir to get everything coated with the hot oil. Cook this for about 6-8 minutes until you start to get a really nice smell comin' off everything. Add the three herbs and stir them in. Let those cook another minute.

Now, and this is important, you are gonna put the meat in **BUT NOT COOK IT**. At least, not brown it. To do that right, get your milk and half-and-half ready to go. Unwrap all the meat and set the things into your pot on top of the onions and carrots. Immediately add the dairy.

Using a large spoon, quickly break up all of the ground meats. You should have no large pieces in there.

Take the cooled halves of the garlic and give them a squeeze, upside down, over a bowl to drop out the cooked and mushy cloves. Smash this up with a fork and then add it to the pot.

Turn heat down to medium and cook, uncovered, for an hour or even two.

Stir in the can of tomato paste and continue to cook another two hours.

Now, uncork your wine, give it a little taste to make sure it's a good-un, and then pour the whole bottle into a small saucepan.

My editor tells me that you have to make certain you ain't usin' one o' them aluminum pans that might react with the acid in the wine. If you have a good one that's all stainless steel or even one that is non-stick, that's OK.

You'll want to reduce that whole bottle down until you have

only about 3/4 of a cup left. It might get a little thick and that's good.

When it is finished, scrape out all of it into your bigger pot and stir it into the meat sauce. This is the best time to add the chopped tomatoes. If you have fresh ones, I'd say to chop up at least five of them and add 'em, seeds and all.

Now the whole thing needs to simmer another couple hours until most of the liquid had disappeared and it is getting thick. I stir mine every 1/2 hour.

Check to see if it has enough herbs about half way through this last cooking period. Ditto, any needed salt or pepper.

This recipe makes a lot more than even eight hungry people can eat in a sitting, so you may want to put at least half of it into containers and right into the fridge for use tomorrow.

It goes great over spaghetti noodles and also over baked potatoes.

Add your favorite grated cheese like Parmesan or Mizithra or other salty, hard cheese on top.

That second cheese is a Greek cheese, but it is kinda nice as a change from the Eye-talian cheeses.

One o' my assistants stuffs it inside them great big hollow cannelloni pasta tubes! lays 'em in a baking dish and tops it with a cheesy white sauce, then bakes it all until the top is browned.

## NEW MEXICO BEAN CASSEROLE

Some might question the moniker of New Mexico in the name o' this dish. I put it there 'cause that's were I was livin' when I first tried makin' this recipe, suggested to me by a cowboy from somewhere over in Europe. It's pretty good and has the benefit of being one of those dump it in and walk away recipes!

1	Tbsp	Oil - olive, corn, etc.
1	clove	Garlic - very finely chopped
1	can	Butter Beans - with liquid
1	can	Tomatoes - chopped, with liquid
1	can	Beets - diced or shoestring with liquid (or 5 large fresh beets that you have roasted, peeled and diced yourself. After you get the red out o' your hands, you'll wish you'd used canned!)
2	Tbsp	Honey - Agave nectar can be substituted if you have a problem with honey, but don't use sugar
3/4	lb	Chicken meat, in 1-inch chunks
1	Tbsp	Fresh Dill - finely chopped
		OR...
1	Tbsp	Fresh Cilantro - finely chopped tops and stems
1	tsp	Salt
1/4	tsp	Black Pepper - ground

Do I need to tell ya to get everything prepared up front?

Heat up one of those slow cookers set on it's HIGH setting for ten minutes. Pour in the oil and add the chopped garlic and cover. Give that about five minutes so that the oil picks

up some flavor, then add everything else. Stir it once, cover, turn down to LOW and walk away for 5-6 hours.

When just about ready to serve, taste and add more fresh herbs if needed/wanted. I usually end up usin' cilantro and always double the amount 'cause I *really* like cilantro!

If it seems a little loose, mix a good heapin' tablespoon of flour with a couple spoons of water and stir that in. Cover and let cook another 5-8 minutes to activate the starches in the flour and thicken the dish.

If ya leave out the chicken, this is good as somethin' to accompany a nice steak, a piece of chicken or a pork chop as the vegetable dish. With the chicken added up front, it is good in a double portion as your entire meal.

I'd suggest adding a dollop o' sour cream (yogurt can do as well) to the top plus a bit more ground black pepper.

## RATTLESNAKE STEW

Snake is some mighty good eatin' if ya ask me. And, I know ya would if'n you was here. And your name ain't Bud Barclay! I hate to say it, but this works pretty well with a good chicken or even a pork sausage, like one o' them polish kielbasas.

2	Tbsp	Oil - corn, olive or vegetable
1	12-15 in	piece of center cut rattle snake - cleaned and the scales scraped. Don't let anyone skin it, yet!
2	Tbsp	Tomato Paste
1/4	cup	Wine - red or white, your choice
1/2	lb	Pearl Onions - peeled
1	lb	Potatoes - the red ones are best, diced
1	large	Sweet Potato - peeled and diced
1	large	Tomato - cut into about 12 crescents
1	large	Bell Pepper - your choice of colors
3-4	medium	Carrots - peeled and in 1/2-inch slices
1	clove	Garlic - thinly sliced
4	Tbsp	Flour
4	cups	Chicken Stock - low fat if ya can find it
1	Tbsp	Oregano
1	Tbsp	Parsley - fresh, chopped is best or 2 tsp dried
1	tsp	Cayenne Pepper
1	tsp	Curry Powder - sweet style
1	tsp	Paprika - sweet or spicy, as you like
1	tsp	Salt

Once again, it pays to get everything prepared up front.

Heat 4-quart pot or dutch oven over medium high heat. Add oil once yer pot is hot. Give it about 30 seconds and then place the snake in. Sorta coil it around the outside of the bottom with the top side (the spine side) up. Let it sizzle about a minute.

Put the tomato paste in the middle and move it around a bit. Pour the wine onto the paste and mix them. Let them get bubbly and reduce. It's good if the paste turns a little brown. It's flavor, again.

Now, put the onion in a layer in the middle, then the potatoes, bell pepper and carrots. Spread the garlic slices over everything as best you can. Sprinkle the flour on top and pour the chicken stock around.

Cover and let cook 20-25 minutes.

Using a couple forks and your fingers, ease the skin up and off of the snake. A lot of the bones might come up as well. Discard all of that.

Sprinkle the oregano and parsley on things along with the cayenne, paprika and curry. Stir things up good but don't break up the taters or the snake meat.

Let things simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

Serve in bowls.

Now, here's where tenderfoot sorta folks might want a different way of doing things. And, that's where the chicken or Polish sausage comes in. I prefer chicken, by the way. I got a good butcher that makes me chicken an' apple in 18-inch links and that's just perfect.

Since sausages tend ta have a bunch a salt in 'em already, don't add any of that from the ingredients list. Ya also don't have to skin a sausage, so ignore that step.

Depending on what sort o' herbs and spices they put in whatever sausage you choose, you may need to play around

with the extra herbs. Lemon thyme and sage go real nice with chicken sausage.

Some folks like to make some rice and place a scoop o' that in the middle of a big bowl, then ladle the stew around it.

No matter what, if you don't think the cayenne gives it enough bite, try a good whack of Tabasco sauce.

If your tongue is a bit on the sissy side, or if'n ya plan to serve this to youngin's, omit the cayenne altogether and substitute maybe one small finely diced jalopeño ring. Not a whole lotta pepper heat, mind, just a single ring worth. It needs *some* kinda zing!

**BEET AND CABBAGE RIBSTICKER STEW**

At Enterprises we got a mad Russian cook that works the swing shift. He's always tryin' to sneak in some o' that strange food like he grew up with. Some Enterprises folk like it. Most o' it ain't to my likin' not even a little bit. 'Cept for one thing he calls 'borsh' or the likes. I tinkered with a few recipes before coming up with my own that I like better. Not all watery like his.

- 2 Tbsp Oil - corn, olive or vegetable
- 1 lb Beef - round steak works just fine—  
slice it into thin strips
- 1 whole Chicken Breast - both sides—like the  
beef, slice it in thin strips maybe 1/4-  
inch wide
- 2 medium Red Onions, halved, peeled and in thin  
slices
- 1 large Red Cabbage - halved, cored and  
sliced to about 1/3-inch
- 2 large Carrots, peeled and in 1/4-inch slices
- 2 cans Beets - shoestring cut (Don't drain 'em)
- 3 cups Beef Stock
- 3 cups Chicken Stock
- 1 cup Red Wine - dry like a Cabernet
- 2 Tbsp Oregano - dried
- 1 Tbsp Thyme - dried

For Garnish

- Sour Cream
- Fresh ground black pepper

Once again, the recipe isn't for just a half dozen folks. It makes enough for as many as ten.

Heat 8-quart pot over medium high heat. Add the oil and let heat up a minute or so. Drop beef slices all over the bottom o' the pot and let sizzle for a couple minutes. Then, move 'em to one side. Add the chicken the same way and let cook about three minutes.

Drop in all of the sliced onion, cabbage, and the carrots.

Pour just the liquid from the beets into the pot along with both kinds of stock and the red wine. Depending on how large your cabbage was, it may not be completely covered. No matter. It will wilt and shrink down soon enough.

Stir things up a bit and then add the herbs. Taste it as it gets warmer. If it seems to need a little salt, add some, but be careful. The liquid will reduce and things'll get a tad stronger in time.

Cover the pot and set the heat to just around medium-low. It takes about two hours to soften the veggies. Check it then and add the beets. If it needs a bit longer, re-cover and check again in fifteen minutes. You don't want to overcook the cabbage as it'll get a little bitter. Not, as that feller on TV says, makin' it good eats!

Finally, ladle a good portion of everything onto a deep bowl, slap on a couple tablespoons of sour cream and then grind on a little black pepper.

This one may have a lot of vegetables in it, but it sticks with you. It'll warm ya up good on a cold winter day!

A good accompaniment for this is some small, peeled and boiled yellow or them Yukon potatoes. Get them just fork tender then drain them, put 'em in a bowl and drizzle over a little melted butter, then a pinch or two of salt and pepper.

I made a half batch once but it cooked too fast. Just put up with the fact that unless you're feedin' a small army of teenage boys, you'll have some leftovers.

## PROPER BUFFALO BURGERS

I hope you know that the only place you're gonna get buffalo is over in Southeast Asia. What we call the buffalo is really a bison. So, you'll be dealin' with bison here, even if the meat you buy says 'buffalo.' They're wrong, but the recipe is right!

2	Tbsp	Butter, slightly melted
1	lb	Ground Bison (Buffalo)
4	Tbsp	Onion - white or yellow, grated fine
1	Tbsp	Garlic - finely chopped
1	Tbsp	Tomato Ketchup (or catsup if you spell it that way!)
1	Tbsp	Worsterchestershire sauce (however it is really spelt... I don't know)
1	tsp	Basil - dried
1	tsp	Rosemary - dried and crumbled between your fingers, or 1-1/2 teaspoons fresh minced as fine as you can get it
1		Chicken egg, scrambled in a shallow plate
1/2	cup	Flour
1/2	tsp	Salt
1/4	tsp	Black Pepper, ground
3	Tbsp	Oil for frying

Mix everything down to the rosemary in a bowl. Don't overdo it and fer gosh sakes use your hands fer this. Gives you a good sense of what's goin' on in the bowl.

Cover with plastic wrap and put in the fridge for at least one hour. Two or three would be better.

When it comes time, form into six equal-size patties of about three quarters inch thick.

Scramble that egg in one dish and then mix the flour, salt and pepper in another one.

Heat a skillet large enough to cook at least three of them at a time, so that you can leave an inch or so of room around each one.

One at a time, dip a patty into the flour and then into the egg. Then, back into the flour. Set on a piece of waxed paper or plastic wrap until you have enough coated for your first batch.

This next step might sound a bit loco, but take your index finger and poke a hole right in the center of each patty. Clear through. This'll help 'em cook evenly.

Put about half of the oil in your hot pan and set the patties in. Cook them about 3 minutes on one side and then just under 2 minutes on the other.

**DO NOT PRESS ON THEM!** That only squeezes out the juices and makes them tough and tasteless. If your mother taught you to do that, ignore the old girl. She probably meant well, but she's a loco as a calf on tumbleweed!

Take them out and either serve immediately (if you have a pan big enough to do all you need for your family at one time) or put on a plate and stick it in a toaster oven set at the lowest temperature setting.

These do alright with a good cheddar cheese on 'em, but I like them with a bit o' ketchup, mayonnaise and blue cheese on a good bun.

Tom Swift likes his with that squishy brie cheese melted on at the last minute and his daddy prefers his with nothin' but sunshine. His momma takes hers with cheddar cheese and mustard and his sister goes craze for them if I melt swiss cheese and put a couple o' strips of pepper bacon on top. Feel free to enjoy them your own way!



## BEEF BURGERS

I know. A burger is a burger. You been makin' 'em for years and years. Ya could make 'em in yer sleep. OK. Fine. Just give these a try. By the way, this only makes 3 servings and can easily be doubled.

1	Tbsp	Oil - corn, vegetable or even olive
1	lb	Ground Beef - make sure it is either 90/10 or 85-15. Too much fat and it shrinks too much; too little fat and you miss out on some flavor
1	tsp	Smoked Paprika
1	Tbsp	Onion powder
1	Tbsp	Garlic powder
		Salt
		Black Pepper, ground

Divide the burger into 3 equal pieces. Using a piece of plastic wrap, press each piece down and shape it out into a patty about an inch wider than a hamburger bun. Using the end of a wooden spoon, push five holes into the patties so that they look like the number 5 on a dice.

That helps the burger cook faster and more evenly.

Sprinkle the paprika over the patties gettin' good, even coverage.

Do the same with the onion powder, garlic powder, salt and pepper.

Set on a plate and cover with plastic wrap. These should sit out and season/rest about an hour. If it's real hot in yer kitchen, put them in the fridge for the first 30 minutes, but let 'em out to come back up to room temperature for the last half of the time.

Put the oil into a skillet big enough to get three burgers in at once with a little room to spare.

Turn burner on to medium high and let the pan heat until the oil is shimmering.

Carefully place the patties into the pan, and don't splash any of the oil back on yerself.

Cook about three minutes on the first side. While cookin', sprinkle the uncooked side with a little more salt. Not a heap, just a little. Make suer them holes ya pushed into the burgers stay open.

Turn the burgers and give 'em about 2-1/2 minutes on side two. They'll end up being medium-ish. It all depends on the heat of your burner. If you need to have them a bit better done, give them an extra 30 seconds or so on the second side.

Remove from the pan and put them on a warm plate. Cover with foil for a minute or two to let finish cooking on their own.

These are great on buns with fresh lettuce and whatever condiments ya love. I melt a little cheese on mine and have it without the bun. Steak sauce goes well, too.

If yer doin' a double batch, undercook the first three a bit. Maybe shorten the time fer each side by 15-20 seconds. Put these on a plate, covered with foil, and into an oven heated to about 200°F. They'll finish up in there and still be juicy when the next ones are finished.

Fer extra flavor, try grillin' these on your bar-b-q.

## BISON TACOS

If'n you read a previous recipe, you know that we grow bison here in America, not buffalo. No matter. It's a good, lean and tasty meat and goes great in a taco fillin'.

3	Tbsp	Oil - corn, olive or vegetable
1	lb	Ground Bison
4	Tbsp	Onion, finely chopped
4	cloves	Garlic, finely chopped
1	Tbsp	Tomato Paste
1	Tbsp	Chili Powder
1/2	Tbsp	Cumin - powdered
1	Tbsp	Oregano - dried
1	medium	Bell Pepper, finely chopped
1	large	Tomato, finely diced
1	cup	Beef stock
2	Tbsp	Cilantro, finely chopped tops and stems
10-12		Taco Shells or Corn Tortillas

### Special Sauce

3/4	cup	Mayonnaise
1/2	tsp	Chili Powder
1/4	tsp	Cayenne Pepper
1	Tbsp	Store Bought Green Taco Sauce

### For Toppings

Chopped Tomatoes  
 Grated Cheddar Cheese or Queso Fresco  
 Thinly Shredded Lettuce  
 Jalopeño Rings  
 Sour Cream

Make the special sauce first and get the toppings into bowls and in the fridge.

Heat 4-quart pot or dutch oven over medium high heat. Add the oil and let heat up. Put the meat in and break it up pretty good with a spoon. Once it starts to brown a tad, add the onion, garlic and tomato paste.

Give that a minute or two over the heat, then stir in the herbs, bell pepper, tomato and the beef stock. Cover and lower the heat to simmer.

While it cooks for 10 minutes or more, prepare the taco shells or the tortillas. If you want to make yer own shells, or just want to bring out a bit more flavor from the tortillas, heat a tablespoon or so of corn oil in a skillet. One at a time, add the tortillas and cool over medium high heat a minute or so, turning once, to cook the tortilla. Let each one drain on paper towels a bit then gently form them into a shell before they cool too much.

Three minutes before serving, stir in the cilantro.

Put the filling in a large bowl and set everything on the table.

I don't know how you build yours, but I do mine like so:

Take a shell and sprinkle some cheese in the bottom. Spoon a good helping of the filling on top of that, then add a bit more cheese. I finish that off with jalopeño rings, the special sauce and finally lettuce. I put the sauce under the lettuce because otherwise it kinda drips out and gits on my fancy shirts.

But you make yours the way you want them.

**PRAIRIE CHICKEN GUMBO**

Let's git this straight from the git go. This ain't no Lu-ee-ze-anna gumbo. This don't have shrimp or any other type o' fish or seafood. It does have a lot of what those gumbos have in 'em, though and that's good enough fer me fer the name sake.

- 2 Tbsp Lard (or corn or veggie oil)
- 1 large Onion, chopped
- 5 cloves Garlic, diced
- 2-1/2 Tbsp Flour
- 1 large Bell Pepper - green or one o' the other colors, whatever is least expensive
- 2 stalks Celery, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 4-5 fresh Tomatoes - roughly chopped. This isn't nearly as good with canned tomatoes
- 5-6 inches Andouille Sausage or some other spicy sausage, cut into 1/3-inch slices It should be one o' them firm ones and not like an Eye-talian sausage
- 4 cups Chicken stock
- 2 whole Prairie Chickens. These are like grouse. I suppose ya could also use a couple o' them Cornish Game Hens (which is just little chickens!) or even one nice boiling hen. Plucked an' cleaned o' course!
- 3/4 lb Okra - trim tops and cut into 1/2-inch pieces if usin' fresh, or just use 1/2 package o' frozen, cut okra
- 1 tsp Sage - dried
- 1 tsp Thyme - dried
- 1 pinch Cayenne (only if yer NOT using a real spicy sausage)

- 1 Tbsp Gumbo Powder - also called Filé Gumbo
- 2 whole Bay Leaves
- 1/2 Tbsp Salt
- 1/2 cup Long Grain Rice - uncooked
- 1/2 cup White Wine

Cut the prairie chickens (or them other birds) into quarters. Actually, if using a boiling chicken, cut that into all the normal smaller pieces (wings, legs, thighs, and then cut the breast pieces into half, each.)

Saute the onion in the lard (or oil) until it is gettin' see-through, maybe 4 or 5 minutes over medium high heat. Add the garlic and stir it around for 1/2 minute. Stir in the flour and make sure it is all mixed with the oil. Let that cook about a minute more. Keep it moving with yer spoon.

Put in the pepper, celery, tomatoes, sausage and the chicken stock. Stir that to mix it up, then lower the meat into the pot. Cover and turn down to simmer fer 15 minutes.

Open it up then and add the okra and the herbs and spices. Cover again and let simmer another 25 minutes.

Finally, add the salt, wine and the rice. Stir it all in makin' sure the rice is all under the liquid and then cover and let simmer 25 minutes.

If it seems a bit loose to ya, mix a tablespoon or so of flour with a little more chicken stock or water or even wine. Stir that in and turn the heat up to medium fer 5 minutes. That ought to tighten things up.

A big slab o' corn bread or some buttermilk biscuits finish this off nicely!

Here's a note: if ya understand what them French call a roux (the flour and oil cooked fer awhile) then you might leave out the garlic early on and cook yer roux medium brown. It's flavor!!) Be sure to put the garlic in with the veggies.

PRAIRIE DOG HASH

When yer out on the range, ya sometimes run out o' meat or just git to the point where the hambres ya cook fer git a little antsy fer somethin' differ'nt. An' there are prairie dogs as far as the eye kin see in some places. This recipe uses a couple of the varmits. Guess ya might do this with a whole chicken or even a half pound of turkey meat... only in a pinch, mind.

- 4 Tbsp Lard - Ya kin use shortening or even vegetable oil, but it ain't gonna be the same!
- 2 whole Prairie Dogs - skinned and emptied (if'n ya git my drift), with the meat cut off the carcass and diced up into 1/3-inch pieces
- 2-3 links Sausage - a good, spicy pork one
- 2 pieces Bacon - the ones coated in pepper work mighty fine here but reg'lar'll do
- 1 medium Onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove Garlic, finely chopped
- 4 medium Potatoes, diced - your choice, but I use them Yukon Gold ones
- 1 medium Green Pepper, diced
- 2 stalks Celery, diced
- 2 medium Carrots, diced
- 1 tsp Oregano
- 1/2 tsp Black Pepper, ground
- 1/4 tsp Mustard Seeds left whole
- 1/4 tsp Fennel Seeds, left whole
- 1 Tbsp Brandy or Bourbon Whiskey

When I say "chopped" up there, I mean bits no bigger than a pencil eraser, and when I say "diced," I mean about half to two-thirds that big.

Anyway, melt the lard in a good, heavy-bottomed skillet like an old cast iron one. Soon as it is liquid, add all of the prairie dog meat (Yeah, yeah. Or, the chicken or turkey. An' that's raw meat not cooked, yet). Keep it movin' around in the fat for a good 4 minutes or more. Ya want to git a bit o' color on it.

Using a spoon or ladle with holes in it, git the meat out lettin' the fat drain back into the pan, then pour the fat back into a tin can fer safe keepin'. Ya kin use it agin' and agin'.

Squeeze the sausage out o' the casings and sort of break it up. Cut the bacon into 1-inch pieces. Put those into the pan—I hope you kept it hot—and let that cook down until it is all nice and startin' to brown.

Ease that meat out and add it to the prairie dog in the bowl.

Dump your onions and garlic in the still hot skillet and cook about a minute before you add the taters, green pepper, carrots and celery. That needs to cook at least ten minutes. You might want to cover it a bit to let some of the steam keep it moist.

One word of warning here: it practic'ly don't matter how non-stick your pan might claim to be. Those taters are gonna stick. It's OK, ya just don't want them to git burnt! Keep scraping them up every couple minutes or so with a spatula.

When you kin pick one of the tater pieces up and it feels right to your teeth, add the last four ingredients plus all of the meat you did previous.

Give it all about 3 minutes to heat back up through and through. It's ready ta go.

Lemme see. A couple things to think about. First, some folk like to have a bit of tomato ketchup added to the thing before that last few minutes of heating. Some like a few shakes of

that worsterchestershire sauce. A cowpoke I knew back in Texas like to have a couple eggs broke into the hash that last minute or so, just enough to set the whites.

And, there's always the ones who never think anything is salty enough fer 'em or spicy enough.

For the first ones... let them salt their own.

For the second ones... it always pays to have a bottle of hot sauce around. I found some Asian sweet and hot pepper sauce in a store here in Shopton a year or so back. Not that fiery stuff with no American letters on the squeeze bottle. This is in a proper glass bottle, like a quart or so, and seems like it was made over in China but bottled here in the good ole U. S. of A. A good tablespoon of it in the hash about the time you add back the meat works well I think.

## CHICKEN IN CHICKEN IN CHICKEN

This is as close as the old Chow Hound gets to that Hot Cousin (Ed—Mr. Winker obviously means *Haute Cuisine*) that ole Mr. Smarty Pants Editor jest corrected me on I see! I do this one fer banquets and when the Swifts entertain important Vee Eye Peas. And, yes, before you go an' correct me agin, Mr. Ed, I know it's VIPs. Dang!

3	whole	Chicken Breasts - both sides, skinned and deboned
1	Tbsp	Onion, finely minced
1	tsp	Marjoram, dried or 3 teaspoons fresh, minced
1/2	Tbsp	Turmeric
1/2	tsp	Salt
2	large	Eggs
1/2	cup	Whipping Cream
1/2	cup	White Wine - dry
1	clove	Garlic, sliced into about five pieces
1/2	cup	Bread Crumbs - I like to use them Panko crumbs from Japan
1	Tbsp	Shallot, finely minced
1	tsp	Yellow Mustard
1	tsp	Dijon Mustard
1/2	lb	Butter, chilled and cut into 1/4-inch pats
1/4	cup	Chicken Stock

Separate the two breast halves and cut away any cartilage from the connecting point. Pull off the tenderloin from the underside of each half as set aside.

Place each breast portion between two pieces of heavy plastic wrap and pound with the bottom of a small sauce pan or a meat tenderizer (flat side, not the part with points) until it is almost double in size and uniformly flat. Be careful to not break through at any point as this will cause problems later. If you do, cut a small piece from a thin corner and place it over the hole you made accidentally.

As you finish each one, place it on its own piece of waxed paper.

Next, take all of the tenders and cut out the one piece of tendon that runs about halfway into them. Dice up the rest of the tenders and place in a food processor. Discard the tendons.

Add the onion, marjoram, 1 egg, salt and turmeric to the processor. Pulse 8-10 times to break everything up. Turn on to steady speed and slowly pour in the whipping cream. Process only a few seconds after finishing adding the cream. Check consistency. It should begin to become mousse-like. Add the salt and black pepper and process until it becomes a mousse - about 30-50 seconds more.

Spoon a good dollop onto the center of each breast piece, near the smallest end. Roll each breast up keeping all of the mousse inside. You will need to tuck in each side before completing the roll. Use toothpicks to secure them. Place in fridge for 30 minutes.

While they are chilling beat the other egg well and place in in a shallow bowl or a plate.

Put the bread crumbs into a similar plate or bowl. If ya like, add a little garlic powder and some salt to the crumbs. If'n ya want some color, add a tablespoon of paprika—sweet—as well.

This is a good time to preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a large sauté pan, add the oil and the garlic. Heat the oil over medium heat watching the garlic carefully. Ya don't want it to get brown. It's just suppose to make the oil a bit

tastier. After a minute or two, pull out the garlic and toss it. Or, spread it on a piece of toast and eat it.

Take the chicken rolls out of the fridge and roll them around in the egg, then dredge them through the bread crumbs, pressing the crumbs in so they stick good.

Place each rollup with the seam side down in the hot sauté pan. Let them cook a minute and then turn them about a quarter way. Repeat this until they have been browned on all sides. Put into the oven and set a timer of twelve minutes.

In a clean sauce pan over medium high heat, add the white wine and the shallots. After one minute add both of the mustards. Stir well and reduce by about 1/2.

One or two at a time, add and stir in the pats of cold butter. Stir until each one is incorporated before adding the next one. Halfway through, reduce the heat to just under medium. This can't boil or it separates.

If the gods of timing work for you, you will finish getting all the butter into the sauce about the time the chicken is ready to come out.

Cover the pan with some foil for about two minutes before removing the toothpicks.

Spoon an equal amount of the sauce onto each plate and set a chicken rollup on it.

This is usually served hereabouts with either asparagus or tiny green beans, and with a puree of potatoes and roasted parsnips. The parsnips take about 25 minutes in the oven and smash down so they disappear into the potatoes, but they add a nice little somethin' extra.

If ya like to have things leakin' out when ya cut into them, put a small pat of butter inside along with the mousse fillin' before rollin' these.

## DRUNK CHUNKS

This recipe takes 2-1/2 full days and needs some refrigeration. I only use to make it at jobs on ranches where I had good facilities.

2	lbs	Beef Roast - a nice eye o' round is fine
2	Tbsp	Olive oil (or corn oil)
1	Tbsp	Salt
1	tsp	Black Pepper, ground
1	small	Onion - white or yellow, finely minced
3	cloves	Garlic - smashed and chopped a bit
6	oz	Tomato Paste
1	Tbsp	Worsterchestershire Sauce
1	bottle	Red Wine - Pinot Noir or even Cabernet Sauvignon
1/4	cup	Brandy

Get a large zip-topped bag ready and clear a space in the fridge.

Cut the roast up into 2-inch chunks. They don't have to be too neat, but don't make 'em much smaller.

Put the meat in the bag along with the oil, the salt and the pepper. Close the bag, squeeze out the air and massage everything to get all the meat well coated. Put the bag in the fridge for about 8 hours. A good hint is to do this in the morning before heading off to work. By the time ya git home, it's ready for the next stuff.

Get the onion and garlic ready then add them to the bag. Spoon in the tomato paste. Massage the bag a bit to spread around.

Carefully pour in the bottle of wine along with the worsterchestershire sauce and the brandy. Zip up the bag,

tryin' ta squeeze out as much air as possible.

Back into the fridge for another 2 days. Then, empty the liquid out and pat the meat kinda dry.

Fry the chunks in a bit of oil until browned on all sides. They are now ready to be served, after settin' a few minutes, with a good gravy.

Try 'em over pasta noodles with a lot o' melted butter.

Without the browning step, they can be used in any recipe that requires good, well seasoned beef chunks, like in a stew. All that wine makes most of the meat purple, but adds color and helps break down and tenderize the meat.

Out in New Mexico I generally used the chunks, cut down into 4 pieces each, on skewers along with chunks o' onion, bell pepper and whole mushrooms on the bar-b-q. Three pieces of each food per skewer and a full skewer per man. I liked ta baste all that with melted butter an' garlic and just cooked things enough to soften the onions and pepper, and to cook the meat to about medium.

One employee here, Hank Sterling, has a recipe for stro-go-noff. He uses these chunks cut down into wide strips (after all the soaking, that is) in that recipe. Swears by it.

I have to admit to tryin' this with chicken which didn't go as well as I expected. The thing is, all that soaking in the alcohol turns the meat a bit mealy. And purple! It does, however, work well with lamb, bison, venison (*really* well with venison if ya add some rosemary) and even some elk I once got hold of.

It doesn't work with any sort o' fish or alligator or other light meats. Pork is kinda suspect, too.

## ARMADILLO FRITTERS

I met an old Texas prairie cook once, long time ago, and he used ta tell me 'bout what he'd make fer his cowpokes when they'd been lucky enough to come across a Poor Man's Pig—that's what we used ta call 'em. There's a pretty good substitute I show if ya can't find an armadillo. It ain't as sweet and it is a whole lot saltier (so you'll want ta leave out the salt from the recipe in that case.)

1	piece	Bacon, diced fine and fried. Drain it
1	cup	Flour - the all-purpose kind
1/4	tsp	Salt
1/4	tsp	Baking Soda
1/2	tsp	Baking Powder
1	large	Egg
3/4	cup	Milk
1/2	cup	Corn Kernels
1	Tbsp	Onion, finely minced
6-8	oz	Armadillo meat - trimmed of all fat and gristle and then diced kinda small (Ya can use a half can o' SPAM diced up instead, but leave out the salt and the bacon, OR a 6-8 ounce chunk o' pork will do as well—keepin' in the salt and bacon in that case)

About 1-inch of oil in a deep skillet or pot fer cookin'

Fry up the bacon and give it a good drain on paper towels. It'll need to be a little cool so don't start the rest o' this until it is out o' the pot.

In the same pot—an' don't git rid o' that bacon grease—pour in enough cookin' oil (corn, vegetable, safflower, etc) to make it

about an inch deep. Heat that up to about 325°F or even a bit higher.

While it is heating...

In a mixing bowl, combine the flour, salt, baking soda and baking powder. Give it a good stir around to distribute things. Add yer egg and the milk and mix it up with a fork. Don't give it too much elbow time or else it'll git a little tough.

Finally, put in the corn, onion and the armadillo meat. Mix just enough to get those spread out.

Take heaping spoonfuls o' the fritter mix and kinda form it into rounds. Like little golf balls. About 5 at a time, lower then into the hot oil and fry them until they are brown on all sides and have puffed up some. You'll want ta push them around a bit bo make sure they cook all over.

Drain those on paper towels and put in a low heat oven (like under 200°F, to keep warm until ya git the rest o' the fritters made.

Let the oil come back up to 325°. It might have cooled down to as low as 275°. Repeat the cookin' until you run out o' batter.

Now, don't go gettin' all sneaky and try cooking all o' the fritters at once. Yer oil'll cool down somethin' fierce and cold oil soaks right into fried foods. Not good.

Take yer time and these'll be worth it.

I knows some folk who take a bit o' jam and some sugar and roll these in that. Makes it too sweet fer me. I did once try these with a bit o' maple syrup over 'em, and that was OK. They're just good right out o' the pan with nothin' on em' 'cept a little butter.

The man who gave me this recipe used to add a teaspoon of hot sauce to the batter to zip things up a might.



## SPICY LETTUCE SOUP

This is better'n you might think by the name. It comes from an old Portugee man I knew back when I was a tadpole. He made it and brought it to my school on one o' them "git to know foreigners' customs" days. He became a friend and cookin' mentor. I think of him every time I make this soup.

2	Tbsp	Olive oil (not corn or veggie oil)
1	medium	Onion, chopped
3	cloves	Garlic, diced
2	medium	Yellow potatoes, peeled and diced (do not use only baking potatoes. You need what they call these waxy tater for this)
1	large	Russet Potato, peeled and diced
3 1/2	cups	Chicken stock
1	6-in pc	Linguisa or spicy sausage cut into 1/4-inch slices
1/4	tsp	Fennel - dried and ground
1/2	tsp	Sage - dried
1	pinch	Cayenne (omit if using a real spicy sausage)
8-10	leaves	Romaine (large, chopped cross-wise in 1/3-inch chiffonade) with the leaf ribs
1/2	cup	Ricotta cheese
1	Tbsp	Brandy
8-10	olives	Black, sliced

By the way, chiffonade just means in long, narrow strips.

Saute onion and garlic in the 2 Tbsp olive oil until translucent.

Add both kinds of the potatoes, the stock and half of the sausage. Cook over medium-low heat for 20 minutes. If it starts to boil, back off on the heat a bit.

Add the herbs and optional cayenne. Using a stick blender, completely purée the soup. If you don't have a stick blender, then VERY CAREFULLY purée it in small batches in a blender or food processor. Be careful to not scald yerself!

Return the liquid to heat, add the rest of the sausage slices, and cook additional 20 minutes.

Add the kale, ricotta cheese and the brandy, stirring to thoroughly combine. Set the burner to lowest setting and simmer additional 8-10 minutes.

Taste it and add salt (by the pinch) stirring thoroughly until seasoned properly. If it aint' spicy enough, add a little Tabasco sauce or a spoon of the juice from some jalopeño peppers.

Serve in bowls garnished with the olive slices. Add a few grinds of black pepper for extra flavor.

## ALL NIGHT OATMEAL

Ya cain't get a good start on any day 'less you got a good, full stomach filled with somethin' that's gonna stick with ya. I used ta start this last thing at night, just as the cookin' coals were gettin' a might weak. Then, it finishes the next morning next to the fire I'd set before the cowpokes got up fer their coffee. I use to make a couple gallons of it, but this recipe is fit fer five or six folk.

4	cups	Water - good filtered stuff
2	cups	Milk
1-1/4	cups	Rolled Oats - NOT INSTANT!!!! I use somethin' called "steel cut" fer mine
2	pats	Butter - the sweet cream stuff
1	handful	Raisins or dried fig pieces - a handful is a little more'n a quarter cup but not quite a third of one, but use your judgement
1-1/2	tsp	Salt
1/8	tsp	Black Pepper - ground
1/4	cup	Honey
1/2	cup	Scotch Whisky - the good, sippin' sort

And, yes. I did say Scotch Whisky up there!

Do this all in one o' them slow cookers, startin' the night before and at least 10 hours before ya want to eat.

Turn on the slow cooker to LOW and let it start to heat up a bit. Put all of yer oats into a large skillet, a dry one, and set it over medium high heat. Toss the oats around for 5 minutes or until you can git a nice smell comin' off. That toasting gives the oats a little kick in the taste caboose.

Put the water and milk into the cooker along with the butter, raisins, salt and pepper. Stir in, slow and gentle, the oats and

pop the lid on.

A half hour before breakfast, open the lid and check to make sure the consistency is right. If it looks too loose, leave the lid off and let some of the moisture out. If it looks too stiff, stir in a little milk or even some cream.

Five minutes before you are gonna serve it, stir in the honey and the whiskey. If ya kin git a good, smoky one, that's the best kind fer this. If not, just make sure that it is a Scotch you would drink with friends.

I always used to serve this with a pitcher o' cream an' some extra honey.

You'll never make oatmeal from one o' them 2-minute paper envelopes again! Well, you might, but you'd regret it!

If'n yer makin' this fer little ones, or you have issues with usin' alcohol, then this isn't gonna taste as good. The alternative is to put the whiskey in at the first and let the alcohol evaporate out overnight. Again, not the same but it's a workable alternative.

Also, ya might give a thought to addin' a little cinnamon if ya cain't do the whisky. It needs somethin'!

## EASIEST FRENCH TOAST IN THE WORLD

Ya make this the day before and just bring it out and pop it into the oven for 45 minutes afore servin'. Find me an easier way an' I'll eat my words. Then, I'll ask you to find a *tastier* and easier way. I'll win!

1/2	cup	Brown Sugar
1/4	cup	Corn Syrup
1/2	stick	Butter - unsalted, please if ya got it
1	Tbsp	Water
10-12	slices	Whole Wheat Bread - a good dense one not that flimsy balloon bag stuff
6	large	Eggs
1-1/2	cups	Whole Milk
1/2	tsp	Vanilla Extract
1/2	tsp	Salt
1	tsp	Cinnamon - ground

Get ya a 9 x 9-inch or a 10 x 10-inch glass baking dish with straight sides at least 1-1/2 inches high. Don't grease it. Dry.

In a sauce pan put the sugar, corn syrup, butter and water. Heat it up over medium high heat until it all oozes together and gets bubbly. Immediately pour it into your baking dish and tilt the darn thing like crazy to get it coated all over the bottom before the sugar stuff sets up. Be sure ta git it all from the pan.

Trim the rounded top part of each bread slice so that everything fits together better. You should leave the rest of the crust on, however. they give better structure to the thing.

Now, lay in a couple of the mostly-whole slices side-by-side, then cut one of the other slices up in strips to fill in the parts of the dish these first couple don't cover. You should have a bread layer covering the entire dish.

Turn the dish 90 degrees and repeat with a second bread layer.

Do the turn again and add yer third and final layer.

In a mixing bowl, put the eggs and the milk plus the vanilla extract and salt in and give it a good mixing up. A whisk works fine in around a minute or an electric mixer in 30 seconds.

Pour this mixture, slowly, over all of the exposed bread. Unless you're usin' really thick bread, this should just about come to the top of it. It's OK if it is a bit high; it'll soak in.

Sprinkle the ground cinnamon all over and then slap on a piece of aluminum foil.

Into the fridge for overnight, or if ya forgot ta make it the day before, at least give it an hour or even two to all soak up. If ya do this the morning of, then forget the fridge. It will just git too cold.

If ya did do this like I said— meanin' the day before—then take it out and set it on the counter for an hour or so before you want to cook it.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Put the dish in, foil and all, for 25 minutes. Then, remove the foil and give it another 15 minutes. Test it by poking a toothpick in the center. It should come out mostly dry even if the middle of the bread looks a little spongy. If it ain't right, give it another 5 minutes in the oven.

Take it out, and give it 5 minutes to rest a bit and set up, then cut into 9 pieces and serve 'em up.

Be sure to scrape up some of the caramel from the bottom. With that, ya don't even need syrup or nothin'!

A word of warnin': if this is gettin' served to youngins, you might want to cut it up for them and let it cool a bit more. It tends to stay might hot in the middle fer quite a spell.

**PART 2 /**

**RECIPES WITHOUT MEAT  
(But still mighty tasty)**

There are those who say that a meal jest ain't a meal without a good helpin' o' meat in it. I use ta think so, too. That is, until one o' the great men here at Enterprises, Harlan Ames, started having troubles with his heart.

Our Doc Simpson diagnosed him as havin' too high o' the co-lester-all stuff and that it was caused by a combination o' his diet and his relatives. I cain't do anything about his kith and kin.

So, I had to start cookin' some foods without much meat in 'em. Even a few with no meat. Ya see, we also have us a few employees that don't eat any meat at all. I never used to trust those sort or hombres, but now that I come to know 'em, I kinda feel obligated to see that their needs are covered.

This part o' the book is the one that has a few of the recipes I came up with for those folks.

Now I got to say that one o' the previous recipes, the New Mexico Bean Casserole back on page 12 can be made without the chicken to make it a non-meat dish. I won't repeat that recipe here. You'll just have to make the adjustment yourself.

**SHAMBURGERS #1 — More Meaty**

I ate in one o' them healthy food restaurants over in Oswego a few months back. They served this burger—or as close as I think I've come to decipherin' it—along with chips made out o' thin deep fried carrot and sweet potato slices and a tasty dill pickle. They put those tiny alfalfa sprouts on instead o' lettuce, and it actually made for a good burger.

- 2 cups Veggie Stock
- 1 tsp Thyme - dried (or 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme)
- 1 Tbsp Butter, salted or margarine but not the soft stuff in tubs
- 1 cup Sweet Brown Rice (sticky type preferred)
- 1/3 cup Parmesan Cheese, grated
- 1/2 med Sweet Onion, finely diced
- 1/2 med Carrot, finely diced
- 1/2 stalk Celery, finely diced
- 2 Tbsp Sweet Onion, very finely diced
- 1/4 tsp Garlic Powder
- 1/4 tsp Black Pepper, ground
- 1/2 pkg Soysage (or any mild bulk-style soy sausage substitute, not links)
- 1 slice Whole Grain Bread, dried a day on the counter and then pounded into crumbs in a plastic bag

Heat up the veggie stock in a 2-quart sauce pan. When hot but not quite boiling, stir in the thyme and the butter. Once melted, add the rice. Bring to a boil, give it a final stir and cover it. Turn the heat down to lowest setting and simmer about 35 minutes.

Remove from heat then mix in the cheese, the first of the onion, the carrots and celery. Leave it covered for about 1/2

hour.

Check it. If it seems to be too wet, put it back on the stove for a few minutes, uncovered. Once it will stay heaped up on a spoon, let it cool and refrigerate overnight.

The next day, really finely mince the rest of the onion, then add that plus the garlic powder and the pepper. It's OK if the rice seems to be gettin' real sticky. That's the way ya want it. Add the soysage and bread crumbs and mix with yer hands so that it is distributed really well.

Form it into 4 or 5 equal patties. Remember that these don't shrink like hamburgers, so make them about the size you want once they are cooked. In any case, try to keep them under 1/2-inch thick for best cookin'. Just not too thin.

Lightly fry in skillet - using olive oil - until golden brown on both sides. Very lightly salt the hot side as you turn it over (a scant pinch per patty is enough). They are fairly soft until browned on both sides so be careful when turning.

They should be slightly crunchy on the outside and slightly sticky on the inside.

Wish I could say that this recipe can be doubled easily. It cain't. Somehow, it gets too loose and sloppy and the patties fall apart. Maybe you kin make it work!

Eats well with most condiments as a substitute burger patty.

The only thing I never cotton'd to is fake cheese on these, or anything! If you won't eat real cheese, then just eat these plain.

## SHAMBURGERS #2 - Mushroomy

This'n is based a lot on mushrooms and can be trickier than the first as you never know how much water a mushroom has in it. it needs the egg in it to bind things, so if yer one o' those vee-gans, I can't help ya 'cept ta say ya might try a quarter cup o' bread crumbs plus 2 tablespoons of mayonnaise.

1-3/4	cups	veggie stock
1	cup	sweet brown rice (sticky type preferred)
1	tsp	Oregano, dried (or 2 tsp chopped fresh)
1	tsp	Olive Oil - extra virgin for best taste
1	tsp	Salt
1/2	lb	Mushrooms - white ones and NOT CANNED, in smaller than 1/4-inch dice
1	clove	Garlic, finely minced
1	tsp	Olive Oil - yes, some more o' it!
1/4	med	Onion, finely diced to about 1/8-inch
1	med	carrot, finely shredded
1/2	stalk	celery, finely diced to about 1/8-inch
1/3	cup	grated Parmesan cheese
1/4	tsp	Curry Powder - a sweet one
1	medium	Egg, beaten
1/4	tsp	ground black pepper

Put the stock in a 2-quart pot and bring to almost a boil. Add the oregano, salt, and olive oil and then stir in the rice. Bring to boil then give a last stir and cover it before turning the heat down to the lowest setting. Let simmer 30 minutes.

In a medium skillet, dry sauté the mushrooms until they shrink by about 1/3, and then add the garlic. Turn off the heat and set aside.

When the rice is done, turn off the heat and set the pot aside

for 15 minutes. Keep covered all this time. If ya poke your nose into things and uncover the rice, you'll be askin' fer trouble. Understood? At the tend of the 15 minutes, uncover it and let it cool about 20 minutes.

Empty the mushroom and garlic into a large bowl. Return that pan to medium heat. Put the second teaspoon of olive oil in the pan along with the onion, carrot and celery dices. Cook for about 4-5 minutes or until they get a little soft. Remove pan from heat and dump these into the bowl with the mushrooms. Give them 10 minutes to cool a bit.

Add the beaten egg, the grated cheese, curry powder and pepper. Mix this up to distribute things evenly.

Using your hands, mix in the rice. It will be fairly warm, and you should hold off until you can actually handle the stuff. Elsewise, the egg will get cooked to much.

Form into 5 patties of equal size, about 1/2-inch thick. Fry these in olive or corn oil for about 4 minutes per side until slightly crispy outside and soft inside.

You can double or even triple this recipe and then freeze the formed patties. Lay them out on a baking sheet in the freeze box for an hour, then wrap 'em individually in plastic wrap and finally in foil. Keep frozen for up to a month.

### MEATLESS CHILI

I had to make this'n up fer a dang contest I got roped into a ways back. Had my meat all ruined in a mysterious way. Only thing I still had was tofu. Turned out better'n I thought it would.

- 1 1/2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 14-16 oz Extra Firm Tofu (see instructions on how to mash this up) drained
- 1 large Onion, cut into medium dice
- 4 oz Fresh mushrooms, in 1/4-inch dice
- 1 Tbsp Concentrated Beef Stock base diluted in 1/2 cup hot water \*
- 1 can Tomato Paste – 6 oz.
- 1 1/2 Tbsp Chili Powder
- 4-8 cloves Garlic, finely diced or crushed and chopped
- 1/2 Tbsp Dried Basil
- 1 Tbsp Dried Oregano
- 1/2 tsp Dried Thyme
- 1/4 tsp Black Pepper – freshly ground
- 1 can Tomato Sauce — 14 oz (low sodium)
- 1 can Diced Tomatoes (plain) 14-16 oz.
- 1 Bay leaf
- 1/2 cup Dry red wine (a good Pinot or Merlot)
- 2 tsp Ground Cumin
- 1 tsp Chili Powder
- 3 oz Cheddar Cheese, grated
- 2 Tbsp Cilantro (fresh, chopped with stems)
- 1 Tbsp Arrowroot (or Corn Starch)

\* (If you only have canned stock, start with 1 1/2 cups in a small saucepan and reduce down to about 1/2 cup before using in the recipe. Use low sodium if available.)

**MASHING THE TOFU:** Slice the tofu into 1/2-inch slices laying them out on several layers of paper towels. Cover with more paper towels and squeeze between your counter and a cutting board. Let drain for at least 5 minutes. Take each slice of tofu and break apart with a fork, mashing down in a criss-cross pattern so that you end up with the tofu broken up into pieces like you would get with ground beef, or about like large-curd cottage cheese.

Heat the olive oil in a 4-quart saucepan over medium heat. Once hot, add all of the tofu and cook, letting as much of the extra water evaporate as possible. The tofu should begin to lightly brown during this process. Occasionally, stir it gently to avoid any part getting too brown and to keep it from clumping together. Once most of the tofu has taken on some medium-tan color (12-15 minutes) add the diced onion and mushrooms. Continue to cook until the onion begins turning translucent and the mushrooms have given up a lot of their liquid. Add the garlic and cook about 1 minute.

Add the stock mixture and stir to combine. Allow to cook and reduce until less than a tablespoon of the liquid is visible. Add the tomato paste and first Chili powder. Stir and continue to cook until the mixture is uniformly dark red and begins to get dry and clumpy (3-4 minutes). Add all of the herbs, black pepper and the can of tomato sauce. Stir to combine. Cook until just about boiling. Add the canned tomatoes (juice and all), the bay leaf plus the wine. Stir to combine.

Turn the heat down to the lowest setting, cover, and simmer for about 2 hours. Stir about every 30 minutes. During this time the mixture should not dry out; it should remain fairly loose, but not soupy. About 20 minutes prior to serving, stir in cumin and remaining chili powder.

5 minutes before serving add the cheese, the chopped cilantro and the arrowroot or corn starch (dissolve it in 2 tablespoons of

water before adding to mixture). Stir well until thickened.

Remove from heat, pull out the bay leaf and serve. Long-grain, Basmati or Jasmine rice works best.

It's also mighty tasty over macaroni and cheese!

Fer anyone who feels they must have beans with chili, go ahead and knock yerself out. I cain't stop a stampeedin' cow and I cain't stop you.

Its just not the way I'd serve it!

## MEATLESS SPAGHETTI SAUCE

I was just gonna give ya a little description about how the meatless chili kin be changes a bit to make this spaghetti sauce, but my nosey parker Editor feller thinks ya ain't got enough smarts to refer from one recipe to the other for the steps. So it's all here, agin! If'n you take umbrage to this, write the hombre at his office out in You-Ki-Pah, or however ya spell it!

(Ed—It is Yukaipa, as Mr. Winkler well knows. It is on the back cover of his first book. And, please don't write to me about this. It is simply a company policy.)

1 1/2	Tbsp	Olive Oil
14-16	oz.	Extra Firm Tofu (see instructions on how to mash this up)
1	Large	Onion, cut into medium dice
4	oz	Fresh mushrooms, in 1/4-inch dice (Criminis if available for better flavor)
3/4	Tbsp	Concentrated Beef Stock base diluted in 1/2 cup hot water *
2/3	can	Tomato Paste - 6 oz.
1	can	Tomato Sauce - 16 oz (low sodium)
4-8	cloves	Garlic, finely diced or crushed and chopped
1	Tbsp	Dried Basil
1	Tbsp	Dried Oregano
1/2	Tbsp	Dried Thyme
1/4	tsp	Black Pepper – freshly ground
1	can	Diced Tomatoes (plain, not Italian Style) 14-16 oz.
1/2	cup	Dry red wine (Pinot or Merlot) OPTIONAL
1	tsp	Tapioca (small pearl, instant works best)

**MASHING THE TOFU:** Slice the tofu into 1/2-inch slices laying them out on several layers of paper towels. Cover with more paper towels and squeeze between your counter and a cutting board. Let drain for at least 5 minutes. Take each slice of tofu and break apart with a fork, mashing down in a criss-cross pattern so that you end up with the tofu broken up into pieces like you would get with ground beef, or about like large-curd cottage cheese.

Heat the olive oil in a 2-quart saucepan over medium heat. Once hot, add all of the tofu and cook, letting as much of the extra water evaporate as possible. The tofu should begin to brown during this process. Looking a lot like ground turkey. Occasionally, stir it gently to avoid any part getting too brown and to keep it from clumping together. Once most of the tofu has taken on some golden-tan color (12-15 minutes) add the diced onion and mushrooms. Continue to cook until the onion begins turning translucent (4-5 minutes). Add the garlic and cook about 1 minute.

Mix tomato paste with the stock/water. Add this mixture and stir to combine. Allow to cook and reduce. Stir and continue to cook until the mixture is uniformly red and begins to get dry and clumpy (3 minutes). Add all of the herbs, black pepper and the can of tomato sauce. Stir to combine. Cook until just about boiling. Add the canned tomatoes (juice and all) plus the optional wine. Stir to combine.

Turn the heat down to the lowest setting, cover, and simmer for about 2 hours. Stir about every 30 minutes. During this time the mixture should not dry out; it should remain fairly loose, but not soupy. About 20 minutes prior to serving, stir in the tapioca (1 Tbsp flour mixed with 2 Tbsp water or stock can be substituted if necessary) and cook, uncovered for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand, uncovered, last 10 minutes.

Makes about 7-8 goodly-sized servings, each with only about 190-200 calories.

Goes great on noodles, rice, or as a topping for baked potatoes. Just like any good sauce, it is even better the second day.



**MEATLESS LASAGNA**

Here we go agin'! Most of the same ingredients, but a bit different technique and end result. If'n ya git a might bored, ya know who to write to.

(Ed—Again, please don't write to me about this. It is simply a long-standing policy to try to keep things simple for the reader.)

- 1 1/2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 14-16 oz. Extra Firm Tofu (see instructions on how to mash this up)
- 1 Large Onion, cut into medium dice
- 1/2 lb Fresh mushrooms, in 1/4-inch slices (Criminis if available)
- 3/4 Tbsp Concentrated Beef Stock base diluted in 1/2 cup hot water \*
- 1 can Tomato Paste - 8 oz.
- 1 can Tomato Sauce - 16 oz (low sodium)
- 4-8 cloves Garlic, finely diced or crushed and chopped
- 1 Tbsp Dried Basil
- 1/2 Tbsp Dried Oregano
- 1 Tbsp Dried Thyme
- 1/4 tsp Black Pepper – freshly ground
- 1 can Diced Tomatoes (plain, not Italian Style) 14-16 oz.
- 1/2 cup Dry red wine (Pinot or Merlot) OPTIONAL
- 10 Lasagna Noodles
- 10-12 oz Mozzarella cheese, cut in thin slices
- 1 sm tub Ricotta cheese - low salt if possible
- 3-4 oz Parmesan Cheese, grated fine

**MASHING THE TOFU:** Slice the tofu into 1/2-inch slices laying them out on several layers of paper towels. Cover with more paper towels and squeeze between your counter and a cutting board. Let drain for at least 5 minutes. Take each slice of tofu and break apart with a fork, mashing down in a criss-cross pattern so that you end up with the tofu broken up into pieces like you would get with ground beef, or about like large-curd cottage cheese.

Heat the olive oil in a 2-quart saucepan over medium heat. Once hot, add all of the tofu and cook, letting as much of the extra water evaporate as possible. The tofu should begin to brown during this process. Looking a lot like ground turkey. Occasionally, stir it gently to avoid any part getting too brown and to keep it from clumping together. Once most of the tofu has taken on some golden-tan color (12-15 minutes) add the diced onion and mushrooms. Continue to cook until the onion begins turning translucent (4-5 minutes). Add the garlic and cook about 1 minute.

Mix tomato paste with the stock/water. Add the stock mixture and stir to combine. Allow to cook and reduce. Stir and continue to cook until the mixture is uniformly red and begins to get dry and clumpy (3 minutes). Add all of the herbs, black pepper and the can of tomato sauce. Stir to combine. Cook until just about boiling. Add the canned tomatoes (juice and all) plus the optional wine. Stir to combine.

Turn the heat down to the lowest setting, cover, and simmer for about 2 hours. Stir about every 30 minutes. During this time the mixture should not dry out; it should remain fairly loose, but not soupy. At the 1-1/2 hour mark, check to make sure you have enough herbs. Add more if desired.

In a 9 x 13-inch baking dish, soak the lasagna noodles in boiling water. Let them sit at least 1 hour. Move them around about half way to ensure that they get wet all over. If they are pretty thick noodles, you may need to change the water out and give them another 30 minutes or so. Let them drain on paper towels for 5 minutes before you are ready to use them.

At the end of the cookin' time, remove the sauce from heat and let stand, uncovered, at least 10 minutes.

Spread a small portion of the sauce in the bottom of the drained, dried 9 x 13 pan, just to act as a little lubricant. Place three of the noodles side-by-side. They probably will not stretch from end-to-end in the pan, so cut the 10th noodle into 3 pieces that will each fit at an end of a layer, cross-wise. It's OK if ya have a little free space. It'll all taste the same!

Layer your noodles with 1/3 of the sauce. Add a thin layer of mozzarella slices—maybe half of them—and then another layer of noodles. Start the next layer with dollops of ricotta cheese (part skim works great and saves calories) spreading it out as much as possible before adding another 1/3 of the sauce. Then the final layer of noodles, the rest of the sauce and another thin layer of mozzarella slices. If desired, top the last noodles with 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese before adding sauce and mozzarella.

Bake this in a 350°F oven for 30 minutes covered with a loose piece of foil and another 20 minutes or so uncovered. Here's a little hint. The foil'll stick to the cheese on top unless you give it a quick spray with one o' them spray on oils.

If ya are plannin' ahead, make this and pop it in the fridge overnight before cookin'. You do, however, have to take it out an hour or so before cookin' to let it come up to room temperature, and then extend the total cookin' time by about 15 minutes.

Makes about 8 man-sized servings, each with only about 420-450 calories.

I've given this recipe out to a couple dozen people at Enterprises and from what I hear back, none of their kids or spouses could tell it ain't full o' ground burger! Only one had to explain that it was "ground turkey" ('cause the tofu is kinda light colored, even once it's browned. Oh, well.)

## CHOW'S VEGETABLE SOUP FOR FOUR

There's some soups out there that are like thin, tasteless broth and then there's this'n. Only takes 1 hour. Yum!

- 1 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 medium Onion - White or yellow in 1-inch pieces
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 medium Carrot - peeled and diced
- 1 large Yukon Gold or red potato - diced
- 1 medium Sweet Potato - white or orange, diced
- 1 small Parsnip - peeled and diced
- 2 stalks Celery - in thin slices, about 1/8-inch
- 1/4 lb Green Beans - in 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 small Leek - cleaned and diced white part plus a couple inches of the tender green parts
- 4 cups Vegetable Stock - high quality or home-made, or chicken if you will eat that
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1/4 tsp Black pepper, ground
- 1 tsp Tarragon - dried and crumbled or 2 teaspoons fresh, chopped
- 1/2 cup Dry White Wine
- 2 Tbsp Dry Sherry - not "Cream" style
- 1 large Tomato - fresh, diced
- 1 tsp Brandy or Bourbon
- 1 Tbsp Flour in 2 Tbsp water
- 1 oz Parmesan Cheese, grated fine

Get your oven heated to 450°F.

In a large baking dish or a roasting pan, pour and spread out the olive oil. Spread all of the onion, carrot, parsnip, sweet potato and Yukon Gold potato over the entire pan. Toss things

to get oil coating most of the veggies.

Roast for 25 minutes, turnin' everything over once about half way through. hey'll come out lookin' wilted and a bit browned, if you did it right.

Scrape all of these into a 4-quart pot and put it on the stove over high heat.

Add the celery, green beans and the leek. Pour in the veggie stock (if yer a vee-gan, that is. Otherwise, if ya kin do chicken broth, it gits even better.) Bring to almost a boil then add the salt and pepper, plus the tarragon, wine, sherry, tomato dices and the brandy.

Cover and let simmer 10 minutes. Uncover and stir in the flour and water mixture. Let thicken about 4-5 minutes.

Serve in big bowls with a bit of the grated Parmesan cheese on top.

## A FINAL BIT ABOUT VEGETARIAN COOKIN'

I gained a new respect fer some people who decide to eat less o' the things that can clog ya up inside—an' by that I mean in yer blood, not yer innards—a couple years ago. Don't make me soft, just makes me more aware.

I still don't understand unrelenting vee-gans, though. And, ditto any folks who go see some non-doctor who gets 'em all hot an' bothered tellin' them about how they're bein' allergic to everything. Doc Simpson tells me that fewer than 5 percent o' folks who'll tell you they're allergic to things like dairy or wheat or even meat, actually only have an intolerance. Not a real allergy like folks that can die from eatin' a single peanut.

Evidently, some o' them brought it on themselves by not eatin' those things fer awhile an' their bodies just forgot how to handle them.

Anyway, you do what you feel is best fer you, but unless you've taken a real, bona-fide allergy test to things like, say, chicken, you might find that adding just a little to recipes you make with all veggies will give you a bit of extra protein.

Likewise, if you eat a lot o' meats, give havin' a vegetable-heavy or vegetable-only meal a try now an' agin. Most meat eatin' folks don't get enough fruits and veggies as it is. And, you might be pleasantly surprised.

Harlan Ames lost more'n 20 pounds in 8 months by just cuttin' down on his meat intake 3 out of every 4 meals. That an' switchin' from beef to chicken and fish.

He feels better, plus, his heart is much better for it!

What I really started out to say is that if and when you cook vegetarian, be sure to experiment with lots of spices and herbs. You'll be surprised how many ways you can make carrots taste.

**PART 3 /****SWEET STUFF****A COUPLE DESSERTS**

It might be said by those eyein' my bay window a bit too close, that old Chow likes his food. While that's true, my real weakness is the sweet reward at the end of a meal.

A bunch o' folks at Enterprises feel the same, 'cept not too many of them sport as big a middle as I do. I must be big boned or somethin'.

Here are four recipes that are sure to please anyone who can take a little whallop of sugar. I tamed them down a bit so they aren't so sweet that your teeth set to rattlin' around.

**UPSIDE DOWN PEAR TART**

Deceptively easy to make with one exception. I'll explain that later. Makes a great presentation to boot.

- 1/4 cup Raisins - I like those giant ones, not the bitty little ones that come in "snack" packs unless that's all ya got access to
- 1/4 cup Hot Water
- 1 Tbsp Bourbon
- 3 ripe Pears - fresh NOT canned. Peeled, halved and cored
- 1/2 cup Brown Sugar
- 1 Tbsp Corn Syrup - the clear stuff, not the dark
- 1 Tbsp Water
- 1/2 tsp Cinnamon - ground
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1 Pie Crust - see my little rant, below!

You'll need a sauté pan with sloped sides of about 12-inches across for this. One with vertical sides won't work too well when it comes ta' gettin' this out o' the pan and onto the plate!

Now, here's my little rant. If ya don't know how to make a good pie crust, then I cain't teach it to ya. Pie crust is more a feel and technique than it is a recipe. Go find someone like a grandmother—don't have to be yours, ya know—and see if she'll take pity of ya. If not, a high-quality store bought crust'll have to do. Likely, it'll be frozen. Just let it come up to close to room temperature but not all the way. Roll it out a bit on waxed paper and make sure it's big enough to span the entire pan. Try to keep it pretty round. Trim off any excess.

OK. That said, put the hot water, bourbon and the raisins in a bowl. Let it sit at least 15 minutes to plump up the raisins. Drain them.

In your pan put the brown sugar, the corn syrup, water, salt and the cinnamon. Heat it up over medium heat until it all melts together and bubbles just a bit.

Lay out the pear halves, round side down (and that's really important!) with the narrow top parts toward the center. Space 'em out so that they are like fat spokes on a wheel. You'll be cutting this up so that each serving gets an entire half pear, so make it neat and even.

Sprinkle the raisins around in between the pear halves. Let this all continue to cook a bit for around 5 more minutes. Turn off the heat, move the pan to somewhere it won't get disturbed, and let it cool for a good 30 minutes.

At the 20 minute mark, turn your oven on to 375°F and let heat up. Make sure your rack is right in the middle of the oven.

Pick up your crust and place it over the top of everything. Tuck the edges in around the fat bottoms of the pears. Since your not sealing anything, do not cut the crust like you might with a pie. It needs to be whole. The tuckin' in around the edge is important, too, 'cause it'll hold in the juices once this gets flipped upside-down.

Bake in your oven for 30 minutes, or until the crust gets a good, golden brown color to it.

Here's the tricky part: Once you take the pan out o' the oven, ya got to get a serving platter over the top of it (upside down o' course) and then use a couple good pot holders to grab opposite sides of the pan PLUS the platter and turn it over in the biggest hurry you can put on. Do it right and it all just sorta flops down onto the platter.

Do it wrong or too slow, and you might get burned, or the

thing hits the floor or some other calamity.

Don't be scared. Just practice the whole maneuver a couple times the day before you make this so you know what to expect.

So, now you got yerself a platter with the crust magically on the bottom, and the nice, round tops of each pear half stickin' up in a nice circular pattern. If they've moved a bit, poke 'em a little to move them back to bein' evenly spaced.

Give it at least 10 minutes to cool a bit before cutting and serving. If you know how to whip up cream—not how to push a button on a can or scoop out o'a tub—then take a half pint plus a teaspoon of sugar and whip it to medium stiff peaks. Dollop some next to the tart piece on each serving plate. Don't cover up the pear.

You will find a nice reward for making this. It's dirt simple and that's fer sure, and it's mighty tasty, too.

## BIG GRIN CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM

The big grin comes when you take a taste of this. It is about as chocolaty as you can get without just chompin' on a bar o' the stuff. By the way... you kin use this without freezin' it as a topping for vanilla ice cream or even to stir into hot milk. And, see my suggestion at the end for adding a bit o' zing to this.

2	cups	Whipping Cream - divided in half
1	cup	Whole Milk
3/4	lb	Dark Chocolate from a quality source, roughly chopped. (If you plan to use milk chocolate, <i>don't make this recipe</i> . That ain't chocolate; it's brown milk and sugar.)
1/2	cup	Sugar
1	tsp	Espresso powder - or quality instant coffee
1/2	tsp	Salt
3/4	tsp	Vanilla Extract

In a food processor, add the chocolate, the sugar, espresso powder and the salt and process until it is very finely chopped up, but not so long that it gets gummy.

Heat 1 cup of the whipping cream and the milk in a saucepan until it reaches about 185°F. Pour the hot liquid into your processor and pulse it 10-12 times, about 3 seconds each. The hot dairy mixture should have melted most of the chocolate.

Add the second cup of whipping cream. Process on high for two minutes. As the mixture processes and cools, it should thicken a bit.

Add the vanilla extract and process 30 seconds more.

Scrape it all out and into a bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and put in the fridge. It needs a couple or three hours to get cold

enough to use for ice cream. If ya got the ability to hold off, it is even better if ya leave it in the chill box overnight.

Now, we got us one o' them giant machines that makes a gallon o' ice cream in 12 minutes at Enterprises. My guess is that you will have, or maybe kin borrow, one o' the type that you put the bowl in your freezer for a day and then use that to churn everythin' in.

So, assumin' that, make sure your machine's bowl has a good 24 hours of undisturbed freeze time. Best to start that even a couple days before you make the mixture. The colder the better.

Use a spatula to put everything into the ice cream maker. Most o' them require that you have it runnin' when you put stuff in so it don't seize up. Foller whatever directions they gave ya.

You'll need to let this run a good half hour or so. It needs the time to both get cold as well as get a bit o' air into it. Once it is finished in the machine, scoop it out into a container you kin put in the freezer. It needs at least two hours there before you eat it.

It's not that hard to do and is so good it'll put a big grin on your face.

Here's the zing thing: If yer gonna make this just as a topping, try addin' a tablespoon o' good brandy to the processor when you add the second portion of cream. Just don't do that if yer gonna freeze it. The alcohol will NOT freeze and everything will be too loose. Keep that topping version in the fridge and use it within a week or so.

## PEARS IN HONEY

This is the fancy pants recipe for impressin' people at fancy dinner parties. And, it's mighty tasty and easy enough to make even for a family dinner. It looks like you went to more bother than you actually did. Go ahead... take all the credit.

- 2 ripe Pears - Bosc or Anjou work well. They need to be ripe but not too soft. Asian pears are too round and don't take to this sort o' recipe fer some reason
- 1 bottle Merlot or Pinot Noir wine - the sort you'd drink but not to pricey!
- 1 cup Apple juice
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1/2 cup Sugar, but only if ya want these more sweet
- 3 whole Cloves (that's cloves as in the spice, not cloves o' garlic)
- 1 3-inch Cinnamon Stick - not ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup Honey - clear type, not whipped

Twist the stems off then cut in half from top to bottom. Carefully scoop out the core and seed area and trim out any of the inner stem stringy stuff.

Put these in a 3-quart or so sauce pan. Drop in the cloves and the cinnamon stick. Pour in the wine and the juice and add the salt (and optional sugar). The pears should be mostly covered. If not, add as much as a cup of water, but no more. If it still doesn't cover 'em, perhaps ya got too big a pot.

Bring up to almost a boil, but NOT a boil, and then back off on the heat to simmer. Cover the pot and simmer 1 full hour, turning them a bit half way through to ensure that all parts of each pear half get some of the red from the wine soaked

in.

At the end of the cookin' time, take off the stove and set aside for a couple hours.

An hour or so before you want to serve them, drain out the liquid (it's actually kinda tasty so you might want to save it to mix with soda water and serve over ice—a good little hint!)

Set the halves carefully on paper towels and let dry, You'll want to pat them a little on top to get moisture from the upper parts.

10 minutes before serving, turn on your oven to BROIL and set the top rack about 6-inches from the elements.

Roll each pear half in the honey and set them in a foil-lined baking dish. Be sure they are coated all over.

Broil for 3-4 minutes or until the top begins to bubble and darken. Don't let the honey burn, so keep an eye on 'em!

Serve a half pear draped over a small scoop of vanilla ice cream in a nice bowl, with a bit more honey drizzled around the sides. I also did this once serving it over home-made pistachio ice cream. Different and pretty good.

Obviously, this serves 4 people, but you can do 6 servings by adding a pear, just as long as it fits without being crammed into the pot. They need space around them so the wine reaches everything.

Doin' a big party? Double everything. Ya kin even use the same liquid fer two batches, one after th' other.

## HUMDINGER EGG NOG—WITH HOOFS

O' course this don't have real hoofs. It *does* have quite a kick, which is a surprise especially since it doesn't have all that much alcohol per glass. Must be the combination that does it.

12	large	Eggs - separated with the whites in a sealable container
1	cup	Sugar
1	tsp	Vanilla Extract
1	quart	Half-and-Half
1/2	gallon	Whole Milk
1	cup	Brandy
1	cup	Bourbon
1/2	cup	Rum - the clear stuff
1	quart	Whipping Cream - kept really cold

Start the day before your party.

Take the egg yolks and the sugar and put them into a big mixing bowl. You'll need a lot o' space eventually. On low, beat for a minute to combine, then add the vanilla extract. Turn up to medium speed and let it go fer 3 minutes. This all needs to git a little lighter and smooth to mix right.

Turn the speed down to low. Pour in the half-and-half and the whole milk. If you only keep skim milk, add an extra half pint of whipping cream to the bowl (an extra purchase, not from the quart you'll use later).

Let mix a couple minutes. Next, pour in the three liquors. Let mix at least a minute before shutting the machine off.

Pour all o' this into a clean gallon container, like an old milk jug. Refrigerate 24 hours. It needs to season fer a day to work and taste right. Ya kin do this a couple days ahead if need be. The alcohol sorta keeps things preserved.

About a half hour before people arrive, put the egg whites into a clean mixing bowl. Whip them up until they form medium-stiff peaks. Don't overdo it or it will be durn hard to git this to come together.

Take out your gallon jug and pour the stuff you made the day before into the serving bowl. Plop the egg whites onto the top o' this and then just let it be.

Take the ice cold whipping cream (ya might want ta put it into the freezer for around 45 minutes to git it really, really cold which makes it whip faster), and put it into the mixing bowl. Whip it, starting on low and working up in speed, until it gets to the soft peak stage. Don't go too far. Stiff peak stage makes it impossible to mix into the nog and further than that gives ya butter.

Pour and scrape it onto the egg whites and all.

Take a big spatula or big spoon and start to fold everything together. You won't be able to get it all smooth 'cause the whites and cream will want to come back to the top, but it needs to get mostly folded together. Don't be too violent; ya want to keep some o' the fluff in the whites and the cream.

Serve with a big ladle and wide cups.

Let everyone know they need to sorta move things around to get a bit o' everything in their cups.

One big cup o' this has less alcohol than a glass o' good wine, but has a much stronger flavor. People'll think they're gettin' more than they do.

It is very rich and has a fair number o' them calories, but heck! Chances are you're gonna serve this only once a year. Right?

Now, if ya want to, ya kin make this without the alcohol, like a small batch fer kiddies. In that case, instead o' the booze, cut everything else in half 'cept the whipping cream.



## SOME FINAL WORDS

Now, some o' the folks I've known over the years might take a look at the recipes in this little book and say that old Chow has lost it. These ain't real out o' doors cookin' recipes. Not proper victuals. Not *real* cowboy!

I'll say two things about that.

First, I've changed a bit over the years and so have the methods and equipment I use. I could give you recipes for possum and cactus meat that would curl your toes. And, fer parts o' a sheep that ain't fit fer polite conversation. Ditto, I could insist that you use only a cast iron pan and an open fire, else it ain't gonna be real cowboy food. And to not bother cleanin' it 'cause you're gonna use it again in a couple hours. Or, maybe ya need a bit o' dust in it.

You want that? I don't think so. I mean, we cooked every *thing* we could get our hands on, and that included things that might turn your stomach. It was out o' necessity, and it ended up tasting good, but it ain't right in my book to suggest that refined folk slaughter a young pig and start makin' things with the innards first.

Ya wanta explain about why the kiddies are eatin' Piglet's tummy and liver. I don't want to.

The second thing is that a lot o' the hombres that might complain about how I've tamed stuff up cain't read. So phooey on 'em! They'll never know. You know I don't mean you, Sim and Arizona Tucker. Right?

I still have my original recipes. Got hundreds o' cards with everything I ever made on written down on 'em. Even the stuff I never want to make again.

Some day I may write a big fancy book with the real recipes and flog it over to the Frenchies. I hear that they'll eat anything that wiggles, squirms or is slimy!

(Ed—While we would normally ask Mr. Winkler to curtail using words of a derogatory nature such as his reference to the people who live across the English Channel from, well, England, the truth is that their government just enacted a 75% tariff on all imported books regarding cooking. So, we say “Well Done, Chow. We don't care what you call them!” Our personal favorite is “Cheese-eating Surrender Monkeys!” by the way.)

If you are of an adventurous nature, or live somewhere that you can git some o' what they call exotic meats—like alligator, ostrich, nutria, ox, etc.—then I really invite ya to experiment with 'em. For instance, the recipes for the red and green chili, plus the one for rattlesnake stew and prairie dog hash, are excellent when made with alligator or ostrich.

If yer a big fish head, I'm sorry. We never had it out int he wide open. I cook with plenty o' it now, but didn't feel that it belonged in this book.

And, even though I never worked a ranch that had sheep, I love lamb. Wonderful roasted, in chops and cut up in stews. Even makes a fair meat loaf if you mix in a little pork lard to keep it all moist.

Just make the old Chow Hound a promise: learn about the meat ya wanta use. Some don't take kindly to overcookin' **NO MATTER WHAT YOUR MA TOLD YOU!** Ask a friend. Heck. Call up your favorite restaurant and ask the chef if he, or she, can give yo a few hints. Butter 'em up good first and they'll spill the beans for you most times.

Except at them snooty French restaurants. But, you ain't gonna cook snails anyway, are ya?

*Yer Ol' Pal, Chow*