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Your Cooking Questions— Answered!

Huevos Rancheros Spaghetti





What's an easy way to spice up roast chicken? Is there a dinner party dish that satisfies vegetarians and carnivores alike? How do I eat more kale—without feeling like I'm eating more kale? For these and other issues that bedevil home cooks, we asked chefs and cookbook authors to share their expert advice.

BY *Kate Rockwood*
PHOTOGRAPHS BY *Gentl & Hyers*

Q: *I didn't have time to stop at the grocery store. What can I make for dinner?*

A: "People are always surprised by the healthy, tasty meals you can pull from pantry ingredients," says Melissa d'Arabian, host of the Food Network show *Ten Dollar Dinners* (her cookbook by the same name was just published). The trick, she says, is to get adventurous with ingredient swaps—say, replacing meat with canned beans or fresh vegetables with frozen. "Familiar flavors are comforting, but don't hesitate to present them in a new package," she says. In her dinner-friendly variation on the Mexican breakfast dish huevos rancheros, d'Arabian substitutes spaghetti for the usual tortillas. When serving, break the egg yolk and mix it into the salsa for a silken pasta sauce that's light, fresh—and wholly original. (For recipe see page 194.)



RECIPES

"YOUR COOKING QUESTIONS—ANSWERED!" (page 176)

Huevos Rancheros Spaghetti

- 12 ounces spaghetti
- 1½ cups frozen corn
- 1½ cups canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 eggs
- Kosher salt
- Ground black pepper
- 1½ cups salsa, plus more for garnish
- ¾ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup chopped green onion (optional)

1. In a large pot, bring salted water to boil and cook spaghetti according to package instructions. In the last 3 minutes of cooking, add corn and black beans.

2. Meanwhile, heat oil in a pan and fry eggs, in batches if needed. Season with salt and pepper.

3. When spaghetti is finished cooking, reserve a cup of the pasta water. Drain spaghetti, beans, and corn, returning the mixture to the pot. Add salsa and ¾ cup pasta water, tossing to coat. Add more pasta water if needed. Divide pasta onto 4 serving plates and place a hot fried egg and 3 Tbsp. Cheddar on each. Garnish with additional salsa and green onion, if using. Serve immediately.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS.
Total time: 20 minutes

Vegetarian-Friendly Fish or Bean Stew

Peter Berley serves this stew with Parmesan toasts, which he makes by brushing baguette slices with olive oil, sprinkling on freshly grated Parmesan cheese, then baking in a 375° oven for 5 minutes, or until the cheese is golden brown.

Stew:

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large sweet onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 tsp. sea salt, plus more to taste
- 1 tsp. fennel seed, crushed or chopped
- ½ tsp. turmeric
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 fennel bulb, halved lengthwise and cut into ½"-thick pieces
- ½ pound potatoes, peeled and cut into ¼"-thick pieces
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into ½"-thick pieces
- 1 (14-ounce) can whole plum tomatoes, broken up
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 cup cooked great northern or cannellini beans
- 8 ounces firm white fish fillet (such as fluke, bass, grouper, blackfish, or monkfish), cut into 1" chunks
- Ground black pepper

Rouille:

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 small cloves garlic
- ⅛ tsp. cayenne pepper
- ¼ tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 roasted red bell pepper (about ½ cup)

1. To make stew: In a 3- to 4-quart saucepan, warm olive oil over medium heat. Add onion, salt, fennel seed, turmeric, bay leaf, and rosemary. Sauté 5 minutes, or until onion softens. Add garlic and sauté 2 minutes more. Add sliced fennel, potatoes, carrots, and tomatoes (including juices). Pour in wine and 2 to 3 cups water, or enough to cover vegetables by 1". Bring stew to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer and let cook, partially covered, 30 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.

2. Transfer half the stew to another saucepan. Add beans to one pan and fish to the other. Simmer each stew 3 to 4 minutes. Discard rosemary and bay leaf. Season with salt and black pepper.

3. Meanwhile, make rouille: In a food processor fitted with the metal blade, puree all ingredients until smooth. Ladle stew into bowls and drizzle in rouille or spread it on Parmesan toasts.

MAKES 4 TO 6 SERVINGS.

Active time: 25 minutes

Total time: 1 hour

Red-Wine Velvet Cake

Cake:

- 18 Tbsp. unsalted butter at room temperature, plus more for greasing
- 2¼ cups packed dark brown sugar
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk
- 2¼ cups red wine
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
- 3 cups plus 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups Dutch-process cocoa powder
- ¾ tsp. baking soda
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¾ tsp. salt

Frosting:

- 24 ounces cream cheese (three 8-ounce boxes),



- at room temperature
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, at room temperature
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3½ cups confectioners' sugar

1. To make cake: Preheat oven to 325°. Line the bottom of three 9" round cake pans with parchment paper. Grease parchment and sides of pan. Place butter in a large bowl. Using an electric mixer, cream butter on medium speed until smooth. Add brown and granulated sugars and beat until fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add eggs and yolk and beat until incorporated, then add red wine and vanilla. (Don't worry if the batter looks a little uneven and grainy.)

2. In a medium bowl, mix flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Sift dry mixture over wet ingredients. Mix until ¾ combined, then fold in remaining dry mixture with a rubber spatula.

3. Divide batter among prepared pans. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until a cake tester inserted into the center of each layer comes out clean. The top of each cake should be shiny and smooth. Cool in the pan 10 minutes, then remove cakes from pans and let cool completely on a rack. (If cakes have domed a bit and you want even layers, trim tops using a long serrated knife held horizontally.)

4. To make frosting: In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer to beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Mix in vanilla, then gradually stir in confectioners' sugar.

5. To frost cake, place one layer on a cake stand or plate and spread with 1 cup frosting. Repeat with next 2 layers and spread top and sides with remaining frosting.

MAKES 1 CAKE, TO SERVE 16 TO 20.
Active time: 30 minutes
Total time: 1 hour