

Across the Fence

Awesome Autumn Recipes – September 2019

Marco Ayala's Recipes

White Chocolate Banana Bread

2 cups all-purpose flour (spoon & leveled)
1 tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. salt
½ tsp. cinnamon
½ cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
¾ cup packed light or dark brown sugar
2 large eggs, at room temperature
⅓ cup plain yogurt or sour cream
2 cups mashed bananas (about 2 large ripe bananas)
1 tsp. vanilla
¾ cup chopped pecans or walnuts

Adjust the oven rack to the lower third position and preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9×5-inch loaf pan or coat with nonstick spray. Set aside. Whisk the flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon together in a large bowl. Using a handheld or stand mixer fitted with a paddle or whisk attachment, beat the butter and brown sugar together on high speed until smooth and creamy, about 2 minutes. On medium speed, add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the yogurt, mashed bananas, and vanilla extract on medium speed until combined. With the mixer running on low speed, slowly beat the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until no flour pockets remain. Do not overmix. Fold in the nuts, if using. Spoon the batter into the prepared baking pan and bake for 60 to 65 minutes. Loosely cover the bread with aluminum foil after 30 minutes to help prevent the top and sides from getting too brown. A toothpick inserted in the center of the loaf will come out clean when the bread is done. Remove from the oven and allow the bread to cool completely in the pan set on a wire rack. Cover and store banana bread at room temperature for 2 days or in the refrigerator for up to 1 week. Banana bread tastes best on day 2 after the flavors have settled together.

Notes: Cream Cheese Frosting: This banana bread also tastes fantastic with cream cheese frosting on top! To make it, beat 4 oz. softened cream cheese and ¼ cup softened unsalted butter together on medium speed until smooth. Beat in 1 cup confectioner's sugar, ½ teaspoon vanilla, and a pinch of salt until combined. Spread on cooled loaf.

Banana Bread Muffins: Use this banana bread recipe to make 2 dozen banana bread muffins. Pour the batter into a lined or greased muffin pan and bake for 5 minutes at 425°F then, keeping the muffins in the oven, reduce the oven temperature to 350°F. Bake for an additional 16 to 17 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. The total bake time for the banana bread muffins is about 22 to 23 minutes. The initial burst of hot air helps those muffins rise nice and tall!

Blueberry Zucchini Squares

2 cups shredded zucchini (do not pack)
½ cup buttermilk
1 Tbsp. grated lemon zest
3 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 cup butter, softened
2½ cups sugar
2 large eggs
3¼ cups plus 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour, divided
1 tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries

Glaze:

2 cups confectioner's sugar
¼ cup buttermilk
1 Tbsp. grated lemon zest
2 tsp. lemon juice
⅛ tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13x9x2-inch baking pan. In a small bowl, combine zucchini, buttermilk, lemon zest and lemon juice; toss to combine. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. In another bowl, whisk 3¼ cups flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture alternately with zucchini mixture, mixing well after each addition. Toss blueberries with remaining flour; fold into batter. Transfer batter to prepared pan, spreading evenly (pan will be full). Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until light golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack. In a small bowl, mix glaze ingredients until smooth; spread over top. Let stand until set. **Yield:** 2 dozen squares

Corn 'n' Squash Quesadillas

2 medium ears sweet corn, husks removed
2 medium yellow summer squash, halved lengthwise
½ small sweet onion, cut into ¼-inch slices
1 to 2 jalapeno peppers
1 Tbsp. minced fresh basil
1½ tsp. minced fresh oregano
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. ground cumin
6 flour tortillas (8 inches), warmed
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1 Tbsp. canola oil

Grill corn, covered, over medium heat for 10 minutes; turn. Place the squash, onion and jalapenos on grill; cover and cook for 5 to 6 minutes on each side. When vegetables are cool enough to handle, remove corn from the cobs, chop the squash and onion, and seed and chop the jalapenos. Place in a large bowl. Stir in the basil, oregano, garlic, salt and cumin. Place ½ cup filling on one side of each tortilla; sprinkle with cheese. Fold tortillas over filling. On a griddle or large skillet, cook quesadillas in oil over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes on each side or until heated through. Cut into wedges. **Yield:** 6 servings

Maple-Roasted Chicken & Acorn Squash

1 medium acorn squash
4 medium carrots, chopped (about 2 cups)
1 medium onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
6 bone-in chicken thighs (about 2¼ lbs.)
½ cup VT maple syrup
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. coarsely ground pepper

Preheat oven to 450°F. Cut squash lengthwise in half; remove and discard seeds. Cut each half crosswise into ½-inch slices; discard ends. Place squash, carrots and onion in a greased 13x9x2-inch baking pan; top with chicken, skin side down. Roast 10 minutes. Turn chicken over; drizzle with maple syrup and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast 25 to 30 minutes longer or until a thermometer inserted in chicken reads 170° to 175° and vegetables are tender. **Yield:** 6 servings

Carolyn Peake's Recipes **Peanut Pumpkin Cupcakes**

1⅓ cups flour	1 cup canned pumpkin (not pie filling)
1 tsp. baking soda	2 eggs
1 tsp. baking powder	2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
½ tsp. ground cinnamon	½ cup semisweet chocolate chips
1⅓ cup sugar	1 cup dry roasted unsalted peanuts

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease 12 cup muffin pan with non-stick spray or line with paper liners. Stir together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, mix the sugar, pumpkin, eggs and vegetable oil until well combined. Add the flour mixture and stir just until dry ingredients are moistened. Stir in chocolate chips and half the peanuts. Spoon batter into prepared muffin cups and sprinkle with remaining peanuts. Bake in the center of the oven for 25 - 30 minutes, or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool on wire rack.

How to prepare a pumpkin:

Whether it is to bake or to eat, preparing your own pumpkin puree is easy.

- Cut the pumpkin in half, from top to bottom (not side to side), then remove the seeds and stringy bits (keep the seeds to toast, if desired).
- Next, place both halves cut side down on an aluminum foil lined baking sheet and place in a preheated oven for about an hour and 15 minutes or until soft. Remove from oven.
- When cool, use a scraper to scoop the flesh from the skin of the pumpkin. Place in a bowl and keep refrigerated until ready to use in recipes, such as pies, muffins or desserts. You can also put some in the freezer; just make sure there's no air in the containers or bags you freeze. So easy!

Hearty Alphabet Soup ('O' Oh So Good!)

½ lb. beef stew meat	1 envelope onion soup mix
1 can (1 lb.) Italian-style diced tomatoes	½ cup uncooked alphabet noodles
1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce	1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen Italian-style vegetables, cooked
3 cups water	

Cut beef into small cubes. In a slow cooker, combine meat, tomatoes, tomato sauce, water, and dry soup mix. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 8 hours or until meat is tender. Turn control to HIGH. Add noodles. Cover and cook on HIGH for 15 to 20 minutes or until the noodles are cooked. Stir in cooked, drained vegetables. Serve hot.

Raspberry Pear Crisp

2 medium ripe pears, peeled and thinly sliced	¼ cup honey
2 cups fresh raspberries	3 Tbsp. butter, melted
2 Tbsp. sugar	1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 cup quick-cooking oats	½ tsp. ground nutmeg

Place pears in an 8-inch square baking dish that has been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Sprinkle with raspberries and sugar. Combine the remaining ingredients and sprinkle over the berries. Bake at 350°F, uncovered, for 30 to 35 minutes or until pears are tender and mixture is bubbly.

Golden Baked Onions

6 large sweet onions, thinly sliced	⅛ tsp. pepper
¼ cup butter	3 cups (12 oz.) shredded Swiss cheese, divided
1 can (10¾ oz.) condensed cream of chicken soup	6 slices French bread (¾-inch thick)
½ cup milk	2 Tbsp. butter, melted

In a large skillet, sauté the onions in butter until tender, about 12 minutes. In a bowl, combine the soup, milk, pepper, and two cups of cheese. Stir in the onions. Transfer to a greased, 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Brush bread slices with melted butter on one side. Arrange them butter-side up over cheese. Bake uncovered, at 350°F for 25 to 30 minutes or until bubbly. If desired, broil 4 to 6-inches from heat until bread is golden brown. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Recipes from Giveaway Book, “Delicious Suppers”

Corn and Green Bean Filled Sweet Potatoes

4 red-fleshed sweet potatoes, about 9 oz. each
1 cup frozen fava beans
Scant $\frac{3}{4}$ cup frozen corn kernels
4 oz. green beans
1 Tbsp. olive oil

1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
Ground black pepper
5 oz. tomatoes, cut into small pieces
2 Tbsp. torn fresh basil leaves, plus extra leaves to garnish

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Scrub the sweet potatoes and pierce the skin of each potato with a sharp knife several times. Arrange on a baking sheet and bake in preheated oven for 1¼ hours, or until soft and tender when pierced with a sharp knife. Keep warm. Meanwhile, bring a pan of water to a boil, add the fava beans and corn, and return to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover and let simmer for 5 minutes. Trim the green beans, cut in half, and add to the pan. Return to a boil, then reduce the heat, cover and let simmer for 3 minutes, or until the green beans are just tender. Blend the oil with the vinegar in a small bowl and season to taste with pepper. Drain the corn and beans, return to the pan, add the tomatoes, and pour the dressing over. Add the torn basil leaves and mix well. Remove the sweet potatoes from the oven, cut to half lengthwise, and open up. Divide the corn and beans filling among the potatoes and serve at once, garnished with basil leaves.

Quick Broccoli Soup

12 oz. broccoli
1 leek, sliced
1 celery stalk, sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
12 oz. potatoes, diced

4 cups vegetable stock
1 bay leaf
Ground black pepper
Crusty bread or toasted croutons, to serve

Cut the broccoli into florets and set aside. Cut the thicker broccoli stalks into ½-inch, dice and put into a large pan with the leek, celery, garlic, potato, stock, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat, cover, and let simmer for 15 minutes. Add the broccoli florets to the soup and return to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover, and let simmer for an additional 3 to 5 minutes, or until the potato and broccoli stalks are tender. Remove from the heat and let the soup cool slightly. Remove and discard the bay leaf. Puree the soup, in small batches, in a food processor until smooth. Return the soup to the pan and heat through thoroughly. Season to taste with pepper. Ladle the soup into warmed bowls and serve at once with crusty bread or toasted croutons. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Viewer Recipes

Cheddar Apple Salad

Wendy Whaples Scully – Winooski, Vt.

4 crisp apples, unpeeled and diced
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 ½ cup celery, diced
1 cup pineapple chunks
1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. sugar

6 oz. sharp cheddar cheese cubed
1 cup chopped walnuts
½ cup mayonnaise
½ cup plain yogurt

Sprinkle lemon juice over apples. Add celery, pineapple, cheese and nuts. Toss. Combine remaining ingredients in separate bowl. Pour over apple mixture. Chill before serving.

Carrot Cake

2 eggs
¾ cup brown sugar
1 cup oil
1½ cups coarsely grated carrots
2 cups whole-wheat flour
1 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. nutmeg
1 cup roughly chopped walnuts
Butter, for greasing

Topping:
½ cup half-fat cream cheese
4 Tbsp. butter, softened
¾ cup confectioner's sugar
1 tsp. grated lemon rind
1 tsp. grated orange rind

Preheat the oven to 375°F. In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs until well blended, add the sugar and oil. Mix well. Add the grated carrots. Sift in the flour, baking soda, and spices, then add the walnuts. Mix everything together until well incorporated. Spread the mixture into a greased and lined 9x13x2-inch pan and bake in the center of the preheated oven for 40 to 50 minutes until the cake is nicely risen, firm to the touch, and has begun to shrink away slightly from the edge of the pan. Remove from the oven and let cool in the pan until just warm, then turn out onto a cooling rack. To make the topping, put all the ingredients into a mixing bowl and beat together for 2 to 3 minutes until really smooth. When the cake is completely cold, spread with the topping, smooth over with a fork, and leave to firm up a little before cutting into 12 portions. Store in an airtight container in a cool place for up to 1 week. **Yield:** 12 servings.

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