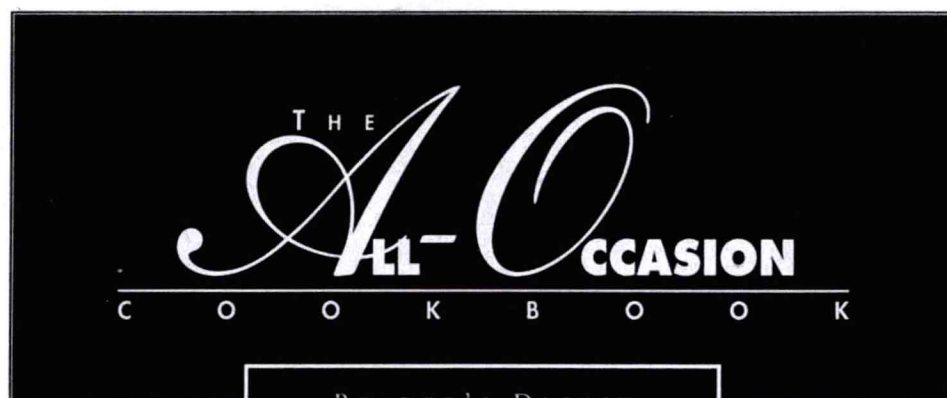


THE  
*ALL-OCASION*

C O O K B O O K

READER'S DIGEST  
BOOKS FOR COOKS

142 SENSATIONAL RECIPE IDEAS FOR ENTERTAINING AT HOME



READER'S DIGEST  
BOOKS FOR COOKS

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藏书章



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## INTRODUCTION

Between family suppers, potluck parties, birthdays, and celebrations large and small, there is always a reason for people to gather for a delicious home-cooked meal. But a menu for a family lunch just won't do for a formal dinner party, nor will cocktail party fare be suitable for a Christmas family reunion.

*The All-Occasion Cookbook* was created to provide sensational—and easy-to-prepare—food for all types of gatherings. In doing so, it takes the worry out of deciding what to cook for every occasion. The book offers a wide range of imaginative recipes, from a romantic dinner for two to a Fourth of July party for a crowd. There are casual dishes for family and friends, and elegant recipes for those times when only the best will do. Just take a look at a few of the recipes—homey Parmesan Oven-Fried Cod (page 56), stylishly simple Lasagne Rolls (page 107), and the sophisticated Double Rack of Lamb (page 50)—for a sample of the dishes to come. These are recipes that will become real family favorites (and “most requested” by friends), the kind of food that will make everyone ask for more.

Whether an event calls for an informal, a semi-formal, or formal menu, *The All-Occasion Cookbook* offers loads of possibilities. Need some recipes to add sparkle to midweek dinners? Looking for a festive dish that is just right for a holiday meal? Or expecting special guests and want a dish that will really impress? *The All-Occasion Cookbook* has these recipes and more, and makes the food and the event a double celebration.

This book promises not only great-tasting, great-looking food, but also a practical, streamlined approach to preparing it. Many of these recipes can be made at least partially in advance—a bonus for cooks whose time is short. And, because everyone wants dependable recipes, each has been kitchen-tested for accuracy and convenience. Over half of the recipes are illustrated with beautiful color photographs that provide a mouthwatering look at the finished dish.

Besides delivering great food, these recipes take the guesswork out of the preparation and planning stages. Each recipe contains serving quantities, preparation and cooking times, and clearly numbered steps that are easy to follow. Prepare-in-advance tips, ideas for recipe variations, and serving suggestions are included so that cooks have every option available at a glance. Whenever possible, substitute ingredients are offered. And, because an organized cook is an efficient cook, each recipe contains a



*Special occasions call for special dishes like Lasagne Rolls with Tomato Sauce (page 107). Stunningly presented yet simple to prepare, these rolls can be served as an appetizer for a fancy dinner party or as a main course for a sophisticated summer lunch.*

complete list of equipment and appliances needed to speed the cooking process. A master list can be found on page 8.

As a bonus, there are three complete menus for special-event dining, with tips for advance planning to make preparation a snap. And, as healthier eating is on everyone's mind, the recipes make liberal use of such ingredients as low-sodium soy sauce and lowfat yogurt, and the good health values are reflected in the special nutritional information section at the back of the book.

## Planning Ahead

With a little thought and organization, it's possible to create no-fuss menus suitable for any occasion.

For everyday cooking, long-term meal planning is advisable, especially if time is an important factor. Work out a series of related menus to use over a period of several days or even a week. Choose ingredients that can be cooked in different ways and therefore repeated in more than one dish. Another practical idea is to design meals with built-in leftovers so that if the initial cooking process is fairly lengthy, it can be cut short—or avoided—the second time around. For instance, a roast that is served for a special family meal on Sunday can do double duty the following day as lunchbox sandwiches, or it can be reused in a stir-fry for a quick and casual supper if friends drop around.

Before planning a meal, consider what's freshest and best at the market. Gearing the menu to foods that are readily available and plentiful makes sense for a variety of reasons. They taste better and are lower in cost. Fresh asparagus and peaches at the height of their season are great buys, but they become luxury purchases out of season.

For entertaining, other considerations include the type of occasion, the number of people that will be catered for, and the budget. These factors will all help determine the best strategy for creating an appropriate menu. After planning what is to be served, write out a preparation timetable. Decide what items can be cooked and frozen in advance, what can be prepared a few days ahead, what must be left for the last minute, and so on.

And, since timing a meal can be complicated—especially if there are several courses or all the dishes have to be served at once—it pays to prepare a cooking schedule. This will include the order of cooking, starting with the dish that takes the longest. Check off each step as it is completed.

*Get an early start on Fourth of July celebrations with this trouble-free brunch menu (page 134). Prepare-ahead recipes with a minimum of last-minute work ensure that the cook will be able to join in the festivities. Broccoli and Cheese Pie (page 135) features an all-American cornmeal crust and Almond Pound Cake (page 125) offers a new twist on an old-fashioned favorite. This menu is guaranteed to please.*



*Brimming with a hearty stuffing accented with dates, oranges, and almonds, this glazed roast pork (page 46) is the perfect main course for an autumn dinner. Round out the menu with a vegetable salad, brown rice, and baked apples for dessert. The next day, use the leftovers in sandwiches made with pumpernickel bread, or as the basis for a cold supper salad.*

## Tools of the Trade for the All-Occasion Cookbook Kitchen

Listed below is all the equipment used in this cookbook. It is not essential to own every item. A blender can often double as a food processor; a large heavy skillet can replace a wok. To improvise a double boiler, use a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water. To make a baking pan substitution, choose one with the same volume and a similar depth. To determine volume, measure the amount of water the pan holds when filled to the rim. Allow more baking time when using a deeper pan than the one called for in the recipe.

### EQUIPMENT

Small bowls, 2 cups to 1½ quarts  
Medium-size bowls, 2 to 3 quarts  
Large bowls, 3 to 4 quarts  
Blender  
Electric hand mixer  
Food processor with metal blades  
Flameproof dish  
Shallow glass dishes, 7" x 11" and 9" x 13"  
Toaster oven or toaster  
Pasta machine  
Vegetable steamer

### BAKING

Baking pans, 9" x 13" and 8" and 9" square  
Baking sheets, 12" x 18" and 11" x 15"  
Jelly-roll pan, 10½" x 15½"  
Bundt pan, 10"  
Layer cake pans, 8" and 9"  
Loaf pans, 4" x 8" and 5" x 9"  
Pie pans, 8" and 9"  
Springform pans, 8" to 9½"  
Tart pan, 9"  
Tube pan, 9"  
Cookie cutters, 2" and 3" round and other assorted shapes  
Muffin pan, standard size (12-cup)  
Pastry bag with plain, star, and other assorted tips  
Pastry cutters, plain and fluted  
Pastry blender  
Pie weights  
Rolling pins, 10" to 12"  
Sifter  
Wire racks

### MEASURING

Glass measuring cups for liquids, 1 to 4 cups  
Measuring cups for dry ingredients: ¼ cup, ⅓ cup, ½ cup, and 1 cup  
Measuring spoons: ¼ teaspoon, ½ teaspoon, 1 teaspoon, and 1 tablespoon  
Kitchen scale

### POTS, PANS, AND CASSEROLES

Small saucepans with lids, 2 cups to 1½ quarts  
Medium-size saucepans with lids, 2 to 4 quarts  
Large saucepans with lids, 5 to 6 quarts  
Double boiler  
Stockpot with lid, 8 quarts  
Small skillets, 6" to 8"  
Medium-size skillets with lids, 8" to 10"  
Large skillets with lids, 10" to 12"  
Nonstick skillets, 8" to 10"  
Crêpe pan, 8"  
Broiler pan  
Deep-fat fryer with basket  
Wok  
Baking dishes, 1½, 2, and 3 quarts  
Casseroles, 1½ and 3 quarts  
Square casserole, 10"  
Dutch ovens, 4 to 6 quarts  
Gratin dish, 8"  
Quiche dish, 10"  
Ramekins or custard cups, 6 ounce, 1 cup, and 2 cup  
Roasting pan with rack  
Soufflé dish, 1½ quarts

### UTENSILS

Bulb baster  
Cake testers  
Can opener  
Candy thermometer  
Carving board  
Citrus juicer  
Citrus stripper  
Cocktail forks  
Colanders, 8" to 10"  
Corkscrew  
Cutting board  
Fine wire mesh sieves, 2" to 3"  
Funnel  
Grater  
Kitchen scissors  
Kitchen timer  
Kitchen tongs  
Lobster crackers  
Long-handled fork  
Meat mallet  
Meat thermometer  
Melon-ball cutter  
Oven thermometer  
Pastry brushes  
Pepper mill  
Potato masher  
Poultry shears  
Salad servers  
Salt shaker  
Skewers, metal or wooden, 10" to 12"  
Spaghetti fork  
Vegetable brush  
Vegetable peeler  
Wire mesh strainers, 6" to 8"  
Wire whisks, stainless steel, 8" to 12"  
Yeast thermometer  
Zester

### KNIVES

Cannelé knife  
Palette knife  
Paring knife, 3" to 4" blade  
Boning knife, 5" to 6" blade  
Utility knife, 6" to 8" blade  
Serrated knife, 8" to 9" blade  
Chef's knife, 8" to 10" blade  
Carving knife and fork, 10" blade  
Knife sharpening steel

### SPATULAS

Large metal spatula  
Rubber spatula  
Thin metal spatula

### SPOONS

Long-handled metal kitchen spoons  
Slotted stainless steel spoon  
Soup ladle  
Wooden spoons

### SUPPLIES

Airtight plastic containers in assorted sizes  
Aluminum foil  
Cheesecloth  
Kitchen twine  
Muffin pan liners, paper or foil  
Paper towels  
Plastic food storage bags  
Plastic wrap  
Pot holders  
Toothpicks  
Wax paper

## Preparing, Cooking, and Freezing Ahead

These days most people's schedules are busy, and make-ahead recipes have become a real convenience. Many of the dishes in this cookbook can be prepared ahead, which leaves the cook free to spend more time with family or guests. Look for stews, soups, casseroles, baked pasta dishes—all of which taste even better when left to mellow for a day.

Prepare big batches of frequently used ingredients in advance. Vegetables can be minced, sliced, or chopped quickly in the food processor and stored in the refrigerator or freezer. Grated cheese, nuts, and fresh bread crumbs can all be frozen for several months. Or slice and wrap extra meat for storage in the freezer so there's always a supply on hand.

Maximize the oven's power as well: When you roast a chicken in the oven, toss in a half dozen extra potatoes—even if they're not on the menu for supper. Potato salad for lunch is always welcome!

If a very large crowd is expected, make several different kinds of casseroles or stews, or prepare a double or triple batch of the same recipe. When cooking in bulk, be sure to follow any instructions in the recipes regarding multiplication of ingredients.

Another time-saver is to make the best use of the freezer. Keep it filled with favorite homemade dishes frozen in serving-size portions, which can go directly into the toaster oven or microwave. "Saucy" foods, such as soups and stews, are especially good candidates for freezing. Stock up on meats, poultry, fruits, and vegetables in season, and on staples such as frozen waffles, pastas, and pizzas, which can be the base of a simple breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

*Keep the cold at bay with Indian-Style Beef Stew with Vegetables (page 42). Chock-full of beef and vegetables simmered in a spicy sauce, it makes a no-fuss one-pot meal. In fact, it can be prepared a day ahead and reheated just before serving. The extra day allows time for the spices to blend to a rich, mellow flavor. Make an extra batch to freeze and keep on hand for impromptu gatherings of family and friends.*





*Elegance is easy when the menu features Lobster Salad with Tarragon Dressing (page 61). Ideal for a warm weather luncheon, it can be prepared well in advance, chilled, and, for a dramatic presentation, spooned into lobster shells at serving time. Accompany the salad with homemade melba toast and fresh asparagus spears. For dessert, offer a light chilled fruit soup.*

## Great Menu Ideas

Creating an attractive and appetizing menu, with recipes that complement and enhance without overwhelming one another, is not difficult. Balance is the key.

Begin by selecting the main course. Then add side dishes, a dessert, and perhaps an appetizer, keeping complementary colors, textures, shapes, and flavors in mind. Aim for a balance between rich and light foods. For example, serve a highly seasoned curry with a bland pilaf, and a hearty beef stew with a light dessert. Avoid repeating ingredients within the menu: spaghetti with marinara sauce should be served with a green salad, not a tomato salad.

Consider the particular occasion as well. A casual Saturday supper with relatives calls for a homestyle dish, such as Potato-Topped Beef Pie (page 43), scrumptious Cashew- and Mustard-Coated Turkey Drumsticks (page 73), or a steaming pot of Tex-Mex Style Bean Soup (page 26) served with tortillas. For a more formal party, pull out all the stops with Lobster Salad with Tarragon Dressing (page 61) or Grilled Squab with Lime Marinade (page 78).

Cooking a meal for, say, a graduation or welcome-home party? Roast Chicken with Lemon Sauce (page 71) teamed with Individual Layered Potato Molds (page 87) would be suitable and delicious. So would the Pork and Vegetable Stir-Fry with Linguine (page 105), which takes all of about 10 minutes to cook!

For a romantic anniversary dinner, offer sumptuous Broiled Lamb Chops with Garlic and Rosemary (page 49) along with Biscuit Hearts (page 119) and a simple green salad. For the grand finale, make a dreamy Chocolate Truffle Cake (page 127).

Throwing a party for a big family reunion or the office gang? Plan the meal around a casserole or stew, and half the work will be done. This type of dish can be as simple or fancy as desired, is easy to prepare, and can be put together well in advance. Southwest-Style Chili Chicken Stew (page 69) is a wonderfully effortless example. Then, all that is needed are simple accompaniments, such as salad, some crusty bread, and pretty platters of cheeses and fresh fruits.

For brunch entertaining, dazzle guests with Fresh Spinach and Mushroom Pie (page 33), Chicken, Tomato, and Rotini Salad (page 104), and Nectarine Tart (page 121).

For a fantastic summer barbecue, serve Grilled Turkey Steaks with Corn Salad (page 74), Potato Salad with Mustard Dressing (page 97), and Watermelon Basket with Fruit and Cheese (page 34)—an all-American meal guaranteed to entice jaded warm-weather appetites.

*What could be simpler than a side dish that doubles as a table decoration? Use refreshing Watermelon Basket with Fruit and Cheese (page 34) to brighten a brunch buffet, or serve it as a finale to an outdoor barbecue. All the components can be prepared in advance and assembled almost effortlessly at serving time. The fruit and cheese combinations can also be varied to showcase fruits in season.*



## Entertaining Ideas

When planning a party, minimize stress by keeping the menu as simple as possible. Choose favorite recipes with tried-and-true results rather than new ones that sound complicated. Remember, even simple recipes can be enhanced with a special flourish, such as a unique garnish.

Why not try no-fail Hot-Peppered Chicken with Onions (page 72), which tastes great either hot or at room temperature on a buffet? Avoid choosing menus that require lots of last-minute preparation, since this will cut down on time spent with guests.

Theme menus are fun to do for company. Create a meal with an Italian flair by serving Pork Loin Stuffed with Zucchini, Salami, and Parmesan Cheese (page 47), accompanied by refreshing Spinach and Radicchio Salad with Tomato Dressing (page 95). Or, for a country French brunch, offer guests a choice of Basque Pepper, Onion, and Tomato Omelet (page 31) or delectable Turkey and Spinach Crêpes (page 37). Serve the meal on dainty blue-and-yellow crockery and add a centerpiece of sunny marigolds. Browsing through this book will suggest many other possibilities.

No matter what the occasion, set the proper mood so that guests will feel at home. Fill the room with bold and beautiful flowers; have candles glowing and soft music playing. Set the table with attractive accents such as colorful fabrics, fine china, and gleaming silverware.

For a simple but impressive table centerpiece, try a bright arrangement of fruits and/or vegetables and unshelled nuts; it is less expensive than flowers and looks lovely in a shallow bowl or basket.

## Garnishing and Decoration

Great-looking food appeals to all the senses. Whether cooking for family or guests, strive to make the food look as good as it tastes. Three colors on a plate look far more appealing than, say, a “white” menu of poached chicken, mashed potatoes, and cauliflower.

Garnishes are needed to add color and an element of interest to food. Simple garnishes, such as fresh herbs, look best. Beyond basic parsley, try using rosemary branches, whole chives, or sprigs of mint. Colorful fruits and vegetables, cut attractively, also make pleasing finishing touches. A sprinkling of nuts or paprika can add flourish to a bowl of soup or an omelet.

In presenting the food, let personal style and imagination be the guide—and then, whatever the occasion might be, let everyone savor the irresistible results!

*Just one or two ingredients can make all the difference in food presentation. This delightful Italian Blueberry Cheesecake (page 125) has a garnish of fresh blueberries and mint leaves to carry through the blueberry theme, making the cheesecake extra-special.*



## A P P E T I Z E R S

*T*his appetizer assortment includes a smooth, tangy cheese dip for casual entertaining, savory filled pastries for a cocktail buffet, a lemony marinated antipasto for a summer dinner on the patio, and a sensational spinach custard that will set a sophisticated tone to a dinner party.

*Stone Crab Claws with  
Lime Dip.*



## Stone Crab Claws with Lime Dip

2½ pounds cooked, frozen stone crab claws, thawed (20 claws)

### LIME DIP (1¼ CUPS)

- 1 8-ounce container plain lowfat yogurt (1 cup)
- 2 teaspoons grated lime peel
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
- 1 tablespoon mango chutney
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro (coriander leaves) or fresh parsley
- Grated lime peel (optional)

*Easy elegance is the keynote of this appetizer. The meat of the stone crab claws has a firm texture and sweet succulent flavor, which makes a delightful contrast to the tangy dip. Stone crab claws are usually sold precooked and frozen, but if they are unavailable substitute large cooked shrimp or poached chunks of a firm white fish.*

- 1 Rinse the crab claws under cold running water. Drain well and pat dry with paper towels. Arrange the crab claws on a serving platter, cover with plastic wrap, and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
- 2 Meanwhile, make the Lime Dip. Line a fine sieve with cheesecloth or a paper coffee filter. Place the sieve over a medium-size bowl. Spoon the yogurt into the sieve and let drain for 30 minutes.
- 3 In a medium-size bowl, combine lime peel, lime juice, mustard, chutney, and cilantro. Stir in the drained yogurt until well blended. Transfer the dip to a small serving bowl and garnish with the grated lime peel, if desired.
- 4 Remove the crab claws from the refrigerator and place the bowl of lime dip on the serving platter. Serve immediately.
- 5 To extract the crabmeat: Using lobster crackers, crack the claws, being careful not to crush the meat. Wedge a small cocktail fork between the cracked shell and the meat and carefully extract the meat.

4 SERVINGS  
PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES PLUS  
30 MINUTES TO CHILL AND DRAIN

### EQUIPMENT LIST

Grater  
Citrus juicer  
Utility knife  
Colander  
Paper towels  
Plastic wrap  
Fine sieve  
Cheesecloth or paper coffee filter  
2 medium-size bowls  
Kitchen spoon  
Lobster crackers  
Small cocktail fork

## Hot Cheese and Spinach Dip

- ½ cup milk
- 1 pound pasteurized processed cheese spread, cut in cubes
- 1 8-ounce package herbed cream cheese, softened
- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped (½ cup)
- 1 4-ounce jar chopped pimentos, drained
- 1 large clove garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives or chopped green onion tops
- ⅛ teaspoon dry mustard
- ⅛ teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Fresh vegetables (optional)
- Tortilla chips (optional)

*This hot and savory dip is the perfect appetizer for a casual gathering. Although it can be served in a bowl, a more spectacular presentation would be in a hollowed out red cabbage.*

*To hollow out cabbage: Using a utility knife, cut off the top quarter of a large head of cabbage and a thin slice from the stem end so that the cabbage will stand upright. Cut away the inner leaves, leaving a ½" shell. If preparing the cabbage ahead, wrap the shell in damp paper towels and refrigerate until ready to use. (Wrap trimmings in plastic wrap and reserve for another use.) Place the cabbage in a shallow basket lined with lettuce leaves and surround it with crisp, fresh vegetables, such as broccoli florets, snow peas, bell pepper strips, and baby carrots.*

- 1 In a medium-size saucepan, combine the milk, cheese spread, and cream cheese. Cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes, or until the cheeses are melted.
- 2 Squeeze excess moisture from spinach and add to cheese mixture. Stir in celery, pimentos, garlic, chives, mustard, and hot pepper sauce. Season to taste with the pepper. Cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes, or until mixture is heated through.
- 3 Serve the dip warm with a selection of fresh vegetables and tortilla chips, if desired.

4 CUPS  
PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES  
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES

### EQUIPMENT LIST

Utility knife  
Strainer  
Kitchen scissors  
Pepper mill  
Medium-size saucepan  
Kitchen spoon

## Fennel-Walnut Filled Pastries

*These little pastries are familiar as a dessert, but they make a wonderful basis for an appetizer. When preparing them for a buffet platter, add variety by using different fillings.*

*To make a crab-parsley filling: In a small bowl, combine 8 ounces lump crabmeat, ¼ cup mayonnaise, 2 tablespoons heavy cream, 1 teaspoon dry mustard, ⅛ teaspoon hot pepper sauce, and 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley. Stir until well blended. Fill pastries as directed.*

- ½ cup cold water
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- 2 large eggs

### FENNEL-WALNUT FILLING (⅔ CUP)

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 tablespoon chopped fennel
- 2 ounces chopped walnut pieces (½ cup)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne)
- ⅛ teaspoon salt, or to taste

- 1 Preheat the oven to 400° F. Lightly grease a baking sheet. To make the pastries: In a medium-size saucepan over high heat, bring the water and butter to a boil. Add flour all at once and stir quickly with a wooden spoon until the mixture forms a ball and pulls away from the side of the pan.
- 2 Remove pan from the heat. Add the eggs, 1 at a time, beating well, until fully incorporated.
- 3 Using a teaspoon, drop 36 spoonfuls of pastry dough, 2" apart, on the prepared baking sheet. Alternatively, fill a pastry bag fitted with a plain tube and pipe the pastry dough in small mounds.
- 4 Bake for 20 minutes, or until the pastries are golden. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and make a small incision in the side of each pastry to allow the steam to escape. Transfer the pastries to a wire rack and cool completely.
- 5 Meanwhile, make the Fennel-Walnut Filling. In a small bowl, mix together the cream cheese, fennel, walnuts, parsley, ginger, red pepper, and salt until well blended.
- 6 Cut each pastry in half horizontally and spoon a little filling into each one. Top with the lids and serve immediately.

## Herbed Cheese Pastries

*Great to serve at cocktail parties, these bite-size pastries are simple to prepare. Substitute crushed red pepper flakes for the basil, and grated Romano or Pecorino for the Parmesan cheese.*

- ½ cup cold water
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- 2 large eggs
- 2 ounces grated Parmesan cheese (½ cup)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil, or 1 teaspoon dried basil leaves, crumbled
- ¼ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ¼ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- Vegetable oil

- 1 In a medium-size saucepan over high heat, bring water and butter to a boil. Add flour all at once and stir quickly with a wooden spoon until mixture forms a ball and pulls away from the side of pan.
- 2 Remove pan from the heat. Add the eggs, 1 at a time, beating well, until fully incorporated. Stir in the Parmesan cheese, basil, and salt and pepper. Preheat the oven to 200° F.
- 3 In a deep-fat fryer or deep heavy skillet, heat 2" of oil to 350° F. Using a teaspoon, carefully drop 4 or 5 spoonfuls of pastry dough into the oil and cook for 30 seconds on each side, or until golden.
- 4 Using a slotted spoon, transfer the pastries to a plate lined with paper towels to drain, then transfer to a baking dish. Keep warm, uncovered, in the oven while cooking the remaining dough in batches as directed. Serve immediately.

36 PASTRIES  
PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES  
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES

### EQUIPMENT LIST

Sifter  
Utility knife  
Baking sheet  
Medium-size saucepan  
Wooden spoon  
Kitchen spoon  
Teaspoon or pastry bag fitted with plain tube  
Wire rack  
Thin metal spatula  
Small bowl

36 PASTRIES  
PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES  
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES

### EQUIPMENT LIST

Sifter  
Utility knife  
Medium-size saucepan  
Deep-fat fryer or deep heavy skillet  
Thermometer  
Wooden spoon  
Kitchen spoon  
Teaspoon  
Slotted spoon  
Plate  
Paper towels  
Baking dish

# Mediterranean Antipasto

*In this pretty and easily prepared antipasto, the vegetables, which are marinated in a hot dressing, absorb its flavor and still retain their crispness. Serve the antipasto for a special summer dinner.*

**1** To make the Hot Herb Dressing: In a small saucepan, combine the oil, lemon juice, garlic, basil, and oregano. Bring to a boil over high heat. Remove the pan from the heat.

**2** To make the antipasto: In a large bowl, combine zucchini, yellow squash, and mushrooms. Pour the dressing over the vegetables, stirring to coat. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes. Remove the plastic wrap and let vegetables cool for 25 minutes, or until completely cool. Stir in artichoke hearts and red onion. Re-cover the bowl with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for 4 hours.

**3** Remove the antipasto from the refrigerator and remove the plastic wrap. Stir in the tomatoes, olives, capers, tuna, and feta cheese. Season to taste with the pepper.

**4** Transfer the antipasto to a serving dish and garnish with a sprig of fresh basil, if desired. Serve the antipasto chilled or at room temperature with assorted breads, if desired.

6 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES PLUS  
4 HOURS AND 40 MINUTES  
TO STAND, COOL, AND CHILL  
COOKING TIME: 3 MINUTES

## EQUIPMENT LIST

Utility knife  
Paring knife  
Colander  
Fork  
Pepper mill  
Citrus juicer  
Small saucepan  
Kitchen spoon  
Large bowl  
Plastic wrap

- 1 medium-size zucchini, trimmed and sliced (2 cups)
- 1 medium-size yellow squash, trimmed and sliced (2 cups)
- 4 ounces mushrooms, trimmed, cleaned, and halved (1 1/4 cups)
- 1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and halved
- 1 small red onion, chopped (3/4 cup)
- 7 ripe cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 1 3 1/4-ounce can whole pitted black olives, drained
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained and rinsed
- 1 6 1/2-ounce can solid white tuna in water, drained and flaked
- 4 ounces feta cheese, cut in 1/2" cubes (1 cup)

Freshly ground black pepper  
Sprig of fresh basil (optional)  
Assorted breads (optional)

## HOT HERB DRESSING (2/3 CUP)

- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 large clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil leaves, crumbled
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crumbled



*This prepare-ahead antipasto has both eye and palate appeal.*

# Pork-Filled Lettuce with Ginger-Sesame Dressing

*Wrapping food in the outer leaves of iceberg lettuce is a technique borrowed from the Chinese. It is easily mastered and the results are delicacies that are not only delicious but also make a lovely presentation. Prepare these "bundles" a day ahead and serve them cold, or serve them at room temperature as a prelude to roast duck or an Asian-inspired stir-fry.*

6 SERVINGS  
PREP TIME: 35 MINUTES PLUS  
3 HOURS TO CHILL  
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES

## EQUIPMENT LIST

Colander  
Utility knife  
Vegetable peeler  
Grater  
Large stockpot  
Large nonstick skillet  
2 large bowls  
Small bowl or small jar  
Tongs  
Plastic wrap  
Paper towels  
Slotted spoon  
Wooden spoon  
Kitchen spoon  
2 plates  
Shallow dish  
Wire whisk

- 1 large head iceberg lettuce, rinsed and separated into 12 large leaves
- 12 green onions (including tops)

## PORK FILLING (3 CUPS)

- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped (½ cup)
- 1 large clove garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons peeled, grated fresh ginger, or 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 1 8-ounce can sliced water chestnuts, drained and chopped
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce

## GINGER-SESAME DRESSING (½ CUP)

- ¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 teaspoons peanut oil or sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- 1 teaspoon peeled, grated fresh ginger, or ½ teaspoon ground ginger

1 Bring a large stockpot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Fill a large bowl with ice water.

2 Drop 1 of the lettuce leaves into the boiling water and blanch for 5 seconds, or until wilted. Using tongs, remove the leaf from the boiling water and plunge it into ice water immediately to stop the cooking. Repeat with the remaining lettuce leaves.

3 Cut the green tops from onions. (Wrap white parts in plastic wrap and reserve for another use.) Drop the onion tops into the boiling water and blanch for 10 seconds, or until wilted. Using a slotted spoon, remove onions from the boiling water and plunge them immediately into the ice water to stop the cooking.

4 To make the Pork Filling: In a large nonstick skillet over moderately high heat, sauté the ground pork, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, for 10 minutes, or until no pink color remains and the meat is cooked through. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the pork to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

5 Add the yellow onion, garlic, and ginger to the skillet and sauté for 2 minutes, or until the onion is translucent. Remove the skillet from the heat and set aside.

6 Squeeze the excess moisture from the spinach. In a large bowl, combine the spinach, pork, onion mixture, water chestnuts, and soy sauce and mix until well blended.

7 Drain the lettuce leaves and onion tops and pat dry with paper towels. Place 1 lettuce leaf on a plate and spoon ¼ cup of the filling into the center of the leaf. Lift the edges of the lettuce leaf and gather them towards the center. Tie with an onion top to resemble a pouch. Repeat with the remaining leaves. Arrange filled lettuce pouches closely, but not touching, in a shallow dish.

8 To make the Ginger-Sesame Dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, honey, oil, sesame seeds, and ginger, or place the ingredients in small jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake to blend.

9 Pour the dressing over the filled lettuce pouches. Cover the dish with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator, basting occasionally, for 3 hours, or overnight. Serve chilled or at room temperature.