

Recipes included at this site do not appear in
A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

May 2020

YOUR SCHEDULE –

HOW ADVANCED PREP AND *MISE EN PLACE* CAN HELP:

**Blackberry – Cream Dessert in the Style of a Finnish
“Parson’s” Dessert**

“Fish” Chowder in Minutes

Poached Eggs on Toast with Tomato and Red Wine Sauce

**Spiralized Vegetable Salad with Sautéed Soybean and
Caesar Dressing**

Vegetarian Reuben *Panini*

Convenience food delivery services advertise that they will be your *sous* chef. All you have to commit are your dollars and thirty minutes. Are you your own *sous* chef? I certainly am but I use advanced preparation and *mise en place* to hurry my meal preparation time along. Creating meals that use the best possible ingredients without the handling of that food by another pair of hands along the way and the least number of convenience items as possible can be done within our own very unique and demanding daily timelines. For many, many years I have started my day waking up slowly while peeling and chopping vegetables and making sauces, desserts, salads, and salad dressings according to the menu I set up the evening before. The goal each day is to minimize the final steps using advanced preparation and *mise en place*, when applicable, while employing planned leftovers, and items I have canned or frozen in anticipation of future meals. When we first became vegetarians, friends warned that vegetarian meals required so much more preparation. They were convinced that we would have to give up the vegetarian lifestyle. Forty-six years later we are still cooking and eating the way we planned and advanced preparation techniques have enabled good meals despite our busy life.

The first step of gathering the ingredients you will need for a particular recipe is essential. If you are missing an ingredient, you will know that you need a substitute before you suddenly face panic in the middle of preparation. *Mise en place* is very simple extension of that. If all ingredients are measured out and placed in small dishes in the order they are to be added, your preparation moves along quickly and smoothly. You have seen television chefs with all their little dishes do it; it works!!



Each recipe I have shared this month outlines a plan for execution with advanced preparation and final preparation defined. With simple analysis you can apply this plan to most recipes to a greater or lesser degree and make your meal preparation fit your schedule. The blackberry-cream dessert and the Reuben *panini* are probably the simplest of these and a good place to get the feel of this helpful technique. It can be a stir-fry but it doesn't have to be a stir-fry every night and you really don't have to resort to convenience foods or take-out or food delivery services. No meal is really too complicated if it is broken down into easily executed segments. Hang up a sign, if it gives you courage . . .

BLACKBERRY – CREAM DESSERT IN THE STYLE OF A FINNISH “PARSON’S” DESSERT

TPT - pre-prep = 13 minutes
final prep = 4 minutes

Years ago I encountered a Finnish dessert traditionally known as “the parson’s dessert.” The ingredients—Maria biscuits, heavy cream, and jam—could quickly become a light dessert to offer the visiting minister. We often need a dessert and we want a bit more than just fruit so we take fresh or canned fruit and make our own variation on the interesting Finnish emergency dish. The version I have shared here is kind-of a blackberry “shortcake.” Try pineapple, strawberries, raspberries, canned mandarin orange sections, canned apricot halves, stewed or home canned apples, sliced bananas, or sliced, fresh peaches.

Per serving:

5 Maria biscuits*

1/4 cup fresh blackberries—well-rinsed and drained
1/2 teaspoon sugar

1/2 cup whipped and sweetened heavy cream



ADVANCED PREP;

Assemble 5 Maria biscuits for each serving.

Measure out enough blackberries for each serving. Put into a small bowl. Sprinkle with sugar. Cover and allow fruit to macerate at room temperature until required.

Whip cream, sufficient for each serving. Refrigerate until required.



FINAL PREP:

2 tablespoons light cream or half and half

In the center of a soup plate, arrange three Maria biscuits. Pour the light cream over the biscuits.

Spoon blackberries over.

Spoon sweetened whipped cream over.

Place the remaining two Maria biscuits on top.

Serve at once.

Yields 1 serving

Note: *Maria biscuits are available in the United States under the Goya label. British digestives or any vanilla cookie can be substituted.

1 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.1 g.; FAT = 11.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 35.8 g.;
CALORIES = 253; CALORIES FROM FAT = 41%

“FISH” CHOWDER IN MINUTES

TPT - pre-prep = 19 minutes;
final prep = 10 minutes

While visiting my mother in Arizona, I found that someone had given her cookbooks that contained recipes that required only three or four ingredients. It was a good idea at the time since she had lost interest in cooking but the recipes were, on the whole, not interesting enough to entice her. She said I'm just too tired and it's too hot in the afternoon to cook. We cooked some foods that she liked and froze them for future meals, and I taught her mise en place so that she could use her morning energy to prepare her evening meal. When you find yourself with late morning or late afternoon activities, you can be tempted to stop for a fast restaurant meal or give in to just a can of soup. A little planning earlier in the day makes this chowder an easy choice on a busy day. I stack all the dishes that result from the morning's work on top of each other in the refrigerator with saucers between them; they are in place and ready when I am.

1 medium potato—peeled and chopped into 1/2-inch cubes
2 quarts boiling water

4 frozen vegetarian “fish” filets

1 cup small baby spinach leaves—well-rinsed

1/2 cup *petite-diced*, canned tomatoes
1/2 cup SEA BROTH* or water, if necessary
1/2 cup light cream or half and half

1 can (14.5 ounces) *organic, ready-to-eat* tomato bisque soup

ADVANCED PREP:

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, combine potato cubes and *boiling* water. Parboil for 7-minutes. Drain and turn into a small dish. Refrigerate.

Using a sharp knife, trim breading from *frozen* filets. Chop into 3/4-inch cubes. Turn into a small dish. Refrigerate.

Put well-rinsed spinach leaves into a small dish. Refrigerate.

Measure out tomatoes and sea broth or water and cream into a small dish. Refrigerate.

FINAL PREP:

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, combine canned soup, sea broth or water, and cream. Stir to combine. Add tomatoes. Stir to integrate. Add the parboiled, refrigerated potato cubes, soy meat “fish” cubes, and spinach leaves. Cook, stirring frequently, until spinach leaves have wilted and soup is heated through.

Serve into heated soup bowls or soup plates, if preferred.

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *Sea broth was included in *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul* on p. 411 of volume II but, if you do not have any on hand, water will suffice.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 8.1 g.; FAT = 9.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 25.7 g.;
CALORIES = 222; CALORIES FROM FAT = 40%



POACHED EGGS ON TOAST WITH TOMATO AND RED WINE SAUCE

TPT - pre-prep = 15 minutes
final prep = 31 minutes

This entrée can be prepped early in the day—bread toasted, sauce ingredients assembled and ready to go, egg poacher set up. In the time it takes to poach the eggs, cook a side vegetable, and set the table, you can have a very tasty dish ready to serve. We also make the salad early in the morning and refrigerate it in the salad spinner. If you are looking for a rather chic, yet homey, first course for a formal dinner, this is a superb choice.

TOMATO AND RED WINE SAUCE:

1 1/2 teaspoons butter
1 large shallot—thinly sliced

1/2 cup *petite-diced*, canned tomatoes—crushed
2 tablespoons tomato juice drained from the tomatoes
2 tablespoons red wine—*A premium Chianti, a Burgundy, or a Pinot Noir would be our choice.*
1 bay leaf—preferably fresh from the herb garden
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme—finely crushed
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano—finely crushed
Pinch salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 thin slices Italian bread—lightly toasted

ADVANCED PREP:

In a saucepan, place sliced shallots and butter. Cover and set aside.

Measure out tomato juice. Crush chopped tomatoes.

In a small bowl, combine crushed tomatoes, tomato juice, red wine, bay leaf, crushed, dried thyme, crushed, dried oregano, salt, and black pepper. Stir to combine. Cover and set aside.

Lightly toast bread. Set aside covered with waxed paper.

Set up egg poacher.

FINAL PREP:

2 eggs

Set the saucepan over *MEDIUM* heat, melt butter. Sauté shallot slices for several minutes. *Reduce heat to LOW.*

Add seasoned tomato-wine mixture. Stir frequently for about 10 minutes or until thickened to your liking. Remove and discard bay leaf. Add more tomato juice, if necessary.

Meanwhile, place a slice of toast on each heated dinner plate.

Poach eggs. Place an egg on each toast slice. Spoon sauce over each serving.



Serve at once.

Yields 2 individual servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled or tripled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 10.7 g.; FAT = 9.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 16.9 g.;
CALORIES = 231; CALORIES FROM FAT = 35%



SPIRALIZED VEGETABLE SALAD WITH SAUTÉED SOYMEAT AND CAESAR DRESSING

TPT - pre-prep = 1 hour and 6 minutes;

1 hour = salad dressing flavor development period;

final prep = 22 minutes

The ingredients for this main-course salad can be set up early in the morning or even the night before making the final prep a relatively simple process. Using this convenient prep schedule, this may become one of your favorite summer meals. In addition, the spiralized vegetables add an element of fun to a meal especially on a hot summer day when appetites are flagging.

CAESAR SALAD DRESSING:

2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 teaspoon vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon Bragg's Liquid Aminos
2 tablespoons grated pecorino Romano cheese
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1/2 small garlic clove—very finely chopped

1 small zucchini squash
1 small yellow summer squash—peeled
1/2 fat carrot—peeled

1/4 cup slivered onion



ADVANCED PREP:

In a cruet, combine red wine vinegar, lemon juice, *vegetarian* Worcestershire sauce, liquid aminos, grated cheese, olive oil, and black pepper. Tightly cork and shake vigorously.

Add *very finely* chopped garlic. Again shake vigorously. Allow flavors to meld for at least 1 hour.

Using a vegetable spiralizer, cut zucchini into spirals about the same thickness as spaghetti. Cut into lengths equivalent to half the length of a strand of spaghetti. Turn into a mixing bowl. Refrigerate until required.

Sliver onion. Place in a small dish and cover until required.

Slice frozen soymeat strips, cover, and refrigerate until required.

FINAL PREP:

1 ounce rice noodles (cellophane noodles)

2 quarts *boiling* water

2 quarts *boiling* water

1 teaspoon butter

4 ounces *frozen* soymeat analogue strips—sliced

Grated *organic* lemon zest, to taste



In a kettle, cook rice noodles according to package directions. Drain well. Using scissors, cut into lengths half the length of a strand of spaghetti.

Turn spiralized vegetables into a large strainer. Standing over the sink, pour the remaining 2 quartfuls *boiling* water over vegetables. Allow to drain well. Turn back into mixing bowl.

Add slivered onions, drained rice noodles, and Caesar salad dressing. Toss well. Turn onto a platter or into a salad bowl. Refrigerate briefly.

In a skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, melt butter. Sauté soymeat slices until browned. Remove salad from refrigerator. Scatter soymeat slices over vegetables.

Grate lemon zest over.

Serve at once.

Yields 4 servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 13.2 g.; FAT = 9.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 10.7 g.;
CALORIES = 189; CALORIES FROM FAT = 43%

VEGETARIAN REUBEN *PANINI*

TPT - pre-prep = 8 minutes;
final prep = 16 minutes

Enjoyment of food preparation and enjoyment of your meal are, no doubt, your goals as they are mine. If you have a panini press, you know the enjoyment of making grilled sandwiches—simple to do and simple to clean up; a whole lot different cleanup than was my mother's old waffle/sandwich iron. The panini press makes a vegetarian Reuben sandwich a really super choice with a cup of soup. Using advanced preparation, these sandwiches will take only 16 minutes of final preparation; time enough to heat up the soup. This is a very easy pre-prep that I often use when I know that I will not be returning home in time to get dinner on the table at our usual meal time.

RUSSIAN DRESSING:

1/4 cup *calorie-reduced or light* mayonnaise
1 tablespoon commercially-available chili sauce

4 slices soft, light Jewish rye bread
2 teaspoons *softened* butter
1/2 cup sweet and sour red cabbage
1 1/2 ounces Swiss cheese—sliced

ADVANCED PREP:

In a small dish, combine mayonnaise and chili sauce. Stir well to blend. Cover and refrigerate.

Wrap bread slices with plastic wrap. Set on counter.

Measure out butter, dividing the 2 teaspoonfuls into 4 small mounds. Cover and set on counter.

Measure out red cabbage into a small dish. Cover and set on counter.

Wrap cheese with plastic wrap and refrigerate with Russian dressing.

Set up *panini* press.

FINAL PREP:

Remove Russian dressing and cheese from the refrigerator.

Spread each of the two slices of bread with 1/2 teaspoonful butter. Place, *battered side down*, on cold ***panini* press**.

Spread each of the slices with prepared Russian dressing. Divide red cabbage between bread slices. Spread it across the Russian dressing, keeping it slightly away from the edges of the bread slices. Arrange half of the cheese slices over the red cabbage on each sandwich base.

Butter one side of the remaining two bread slices and place the slices, *battered side up*, on top of the cheese. Close lid on *panini* press. Heat to 350 degrees F. Allow sandwiches to grill until heated through, until cheese is melted, and until bread is well-marked, browned, and crisp.

Using a spatula, remove sandwiches to a bread board. Slice in half.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 servings

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 12.2 g.; FAT = 22.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 49.7 g.;
CALORIES = 427; CALORIES FROM FAT = 47%



Planning for holidays may be less intimidating with these techniques as tools.

You can apply this talent to a summer holiday menu next month.

Drop by; I've got some ideas that may preserve your cool,

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

Copyright © 2019