



Delight those on your gift list with treats like salad dressing mix, holiday muffins or creamy pesto sauce.

Unusual Food Gifts Will Delight Recipients

Food gifts are fun to make and give during the holiday season. They are economical and a nice way to say "Happy Holidays" to friends, neighbors and teachers, as well as hosts and hostesses.

The following three recipes for gift giving were created in the test kitchens of the American Dairy Association. The recipes, featuring popular dairy products, have contemporary appeal and holiday flair.

A homemade Basic Salad Dressing Mix, made with dairy sour cream and buttermilk, is a versatile and tasty recipe worth sharing with friends. Add chunks of Blue cheese to the basic mix and it becomes Blue Cheese Dressing. Or accent the basic recipe with tomato paste, grated Parmesan cheese and Italian herbs for a Creamy Italian Dressing. Either is delicious over salad greens and can be served as a dip with raw vegetables.

Rich Holiday Muffins, flavored with dairy eggnog, butter, candied cherries, nuts and currants, are a perfect treat for a holiday brunch, lunch or tea. The muffins can be baked in individual foil cups and presented in a colorful box, a wicker basket, wooden sleigh or a beribboned plastic bag. Note on the greeting card that the muffins will keep at room temperature up to a week or may be frozen for a month before using.

Your pasta-loving friends will rave about Creamy Pesto Sauce, prepared with cream cheese, Parmesan cheese and the traditional blend of parsley, basil, garlic and nuts. The sauce may be made in a food processor or blender. You'll want to pack it in a jar for refrigerator storage and provide directions for using. Decorate the gift package with pasta or provide some spaghetti or fettucini along with the sauce.

Happy holiday food gifting.

BASIC SALAD DRESSING MIX
3 cups dairy sour cream
1½ cups buttermilk
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon dry mustard
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon paprika

Combine all ingredients; mix well. Store, covered, in refrigerator up to two weeks. Makes about 1 quart. Use as a base for either of the following salad dressings:

Blue Cheese Dressing: (Yield: approximately 1¼ cups) — To 1 cup basic mix add ¼ cup (1 ounce) crumbled blue cheese, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce and 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder. Use over salad greens or as a dip for raw vegetables.

Creamy Italian Dressing (Yield: approximately 1¼ cups) — To 1 cup basic mix add 2 tablespoons tomato paste, 4 teaspoons grated Parmesan cheese and ¼ teaspoon Italian herbs. Use over salad greens or as a dip for raw vegetables.

RICH HOLIDAY MUFFINS

¼ cup butter
½ cup sugar
2 eggs
2¼ cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup dairy eggnog
½ cup chopped candied cherries
½ cup chopped pecans
½ cup currants

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs. Combine flour, baking powder and salt. Add dry ingredients alternately to creamed mixture with eggnog; begin and end with dry ingredients. Mix well after each addition. Stir in cherries, nuts and currants. Fill paper cup-lined muffin cups ¾ full. Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until wooden pick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pan 5 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely on wire rack. Store at room temperature in airtight container. Muffins will keep at room temperature up to 1 week and frozen up to 1 month. Makes 18 to 20 muffins.

CREAMY PESTO SAUCE

2 cups fresh parsley
6 tablespoons dried basil
¼ cup pine nuts (pignolias)
8 whole blanched almonds
2 cloves garlic
2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, broken into small pieces
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
½ teaspoon salt
Pasta

Place parsley, basil, nuts and garlic in work bowl of food processor. (Mixture can also be made in blender, using "chopping" speed. Do half a recipe at a time.) Process until coarsely chopped. Add cream cheese, parmesan cheese and salt. Process until well combined. For gift giving, divide mixture in half. To prepare each half, include the following directions with your gift: Cook 12 ounces of pasta. Drain pasta, reserving 6 tablespoons of water in which pasta was cooked. Add to softened pesto sauce; mix well. Toss hot pasta with pesto sauce. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings. Keep Creamy Pesto Sauce refrigerated up to 2 weeks.

National Congress Delegates

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planteria, dried flowers, clothing, food and nutrition, macrame, needlepoint, leadership, dairy, and careers.

Deborah Sue Ott

Deborah Sue Ott, New Alexandria, modeled her winning sewing project in the National Fashion Revue held in conjunction with National 4-H Congress.

The daughter of Robert and Sara Ott, Deborah was named one of ten state Fashion Revue finalists and became the state winner after submitting a national 4-H report form. A 4-H member for nine years, she modeled a turquoise suit with a fuchsia carnisele.

Deborah is a senior at Greenburg Salem Senior High School.

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