



MICROWAVE MINUTES

By JOYCE BATTCHER

Several weeks ago I had a delicious meat and potatoes dinner at a friend's. As she sat down to eat she said, "But I didn't make it in my microwave. I didn't know if I could do all of this in it."

My friend can and so can you. Follow my friend's recipes (which I converted to microwave) and my time guide. You'll be able to put a good old-fashioned dinner for four on the table in no time at all.

A menu of Meatballs in Dill Sauce, Mashed Potatoes, and Cauliflower with Chives is ready in about 30 minutes. To cut meal preparation time even more, you could make the meatballs and potatoes ahead and reheat them. The dessert, Rhubarb Custard Pie, is best when made ahead and served cold. A fruit salad to add color and crispness could also be prepared ahead.

To make this meal, start by cooking the potatoes. While they cook, get meatballs and cauliflower ready for cooking. When potatoes are done, remove them from the microwave and start cooking the meatballs. Mash potatoes; then cover them with foil or a glass lid to keep warm. When meatballs are done, remove them from the microwave and cover tightly. Cook the cauliflower.

Rhubarb Custard Pie
 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
 3 tablespoons butter or margarine

3 1/2 cups sliced rhubarb, cut 1/4-inch thick
 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 cups granulated sugar
 1/4 cup flour
 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 2 tablespoons half-and-half
 3 eggs
 1 microwaved 9-inch pastry crust

Combine flours, salt and cinnamon. With fork or pastry blender, cut in butter until crumbly. Set aside for topping.

Combine rhubarb, sugar, flour and nutmeg. Add half-and-half and eggs; mix well. Pour into microwaved crust; sprinkle evenly with topping. Microwave (High) 13 to 15 minutes, rotating pie as necessary for even cooking, until rhubarb is tender and knife inserted near center comes out clean. Chill before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Each serving — 1/4 pie: 533 calories, 5g protein, 15g fat, 98g carbohydrate, 216mg sodium, 109mg cholesterol.

Mashed Potatoes
 4 medium potatoes, peeled and cut in eighths
 1/2 cup water
 1/2 to 1/2 cup milk
 2 to 3 tablespoons butter
 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)

Put potatoes and water in microwave-safe 2-quart casserole. Cover with lid or plastic wrap. Microwave (High) 8 to 10 minutes or until potatoes are almost tender, stirring once during cooking. Let

stand, covered, about 10 minutes or until potatoes are fork tender. Do not drain. Mash potatoes and stir in milk, butter and seasonings; mix well. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

To make ahead: Prepare as above. Cover tightly and refrigerate until serving time. To reheat: microwave (High), tightly covered, 4 to 6 minutes, stirring once or twice, or until hot.

Each serving: 205 calories, 5g protein, 6g fat, 34g carbohydrate, 87mg sodium, 19mg cholesterol.

Meatballs in Dill Sauce
 1 lb. lean ground beef
 1/2 cup oat bran or 1/2 cup quick or old-fashioned oatmeal (uncooked)
 1/4 cup milk
 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
 1 teaspoon instant low-sodium beef bouillon granules
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1/2 cup light sour cream
 1 teaspoon dill weed
 1 can (10 1/2 oz.) condensed lower-salt cream of celery soup*

Combine ground beef, oatmeal, milk, onions, instant bouillon granules and pepper; mix well. Shape into 12 to 15 meatballs; place in a microwave-safe 9x11-inch dish. Cover with waxed paper. Microwave (High) 3 to 4 minutes. Turn meatballs over and rearrange, so least-cooked ones are to outside edges of dish. Re-cover and continue microwaving (High) 2 to 3 minutes or until meatballs are no longer pink in centers. If desired, drain fat. Move meatballs to side of dish; stir soup, sour cream and dill weed into meat juices until well combined. Re-cover and microwave (High) 1 to 3 minutes, stirring after each 1 minute, or until hot. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

To make ahead: Prepare as above, except do not heat meatballs in sauce. Cover tightly and refrigerate until serving time. To reheat: microwave (High), tightly covered, 4 to 6 minutes, stirring gently after 2 minutes, then after

each minute. Be sure to stir at times indicated and be careful not to overheat or sauce will curdle. (For more even heating, transfer meatballs and sauce to a round casserole before heating.)

*Remaining soup may be frozen in a tightly covered freezer container.

Each serving — 1/5th of recipe: 297 calories, 20g protein, 19g fat, 13g carbohydrate, 385mg sodium, 68mg cholesterol.

Cauliflower with Chives
 1/2 medium head cauliflower
 3 tablespoons water
 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Freshly ground black pepper
 2 tablespoons chopped chives

Trim cauliflower and cut in serving-size pieces (there should be 2 to 3 cups). Place cauliflower and water in microwave-safe 1-quart casserole or serving dish. Cover with plastic wrap. Microwave (High) 5 to 7 minutes, stirring once, or until barely tender.

Sprinkle with lemon juice, pepper and chives in order given. Re-cover and let stand 3 to 5 minutes before serving. Makes 4 servings.

Each serving: 20 calories, 2g protein, 0 fat, 3g carbohydrate, 8mg sodium, 0 cholesterol.

Questions for Joyce?

Do you have a question about microwave cooking? Send it to Microwave Minutes, % Extra Newspaper Features, P.O. Box 6118, Rochester, MN 55903. Please include a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope.

Recipes in this column are tested in 600- and 650-watt microwave ovens. With an oven of different wattage output, timings may need slight adjustment.

Joyce Battcher is an independent home economist microwave specialist. She is author of "Microwave Family Favorites" and editor of "A Batch of Ideas" newsletter.

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Lancaster Society 1

The Lancaster Society of Farm Women #1 met June 10 at the home of Della Bollinger and Amy Brubaker was co-hostess.

Twenty members and one guest answered roll call by "naming a favorite food we serve to guests."

Peggy Kline and Chuck, a ventriloquist, provided the entertainment at the Mother and Daughter Banquet held May 5 at the Brunerville Fire Hall.

Irene Balmer reported the Sunshine Committee visited Barbara Moore, Mary Clark and Mary Kreider.

Margaret Bucher thanked members for the successful bake sale

held May 13 at Lincoln Mall.

Margaret must know by the September 2 meeting who is going on the Bethlehem bus trip December 13. The deadline to pay is November 11.

The society picnic is June 26 at Akron Park at 6:30. Bring a covered dish and your own place setting. Chicken barbecue will be provided.

The August 1 board meeting will be at the Hoffman Building at Quarryville at 12:00.

The Farm Women awards Janene Lyerly the Home Economics Award and Justin Reynolds, the Agriculture Award.

Green Valley Society 26

The Green Valley Farm Women Group #26 held their June 13 meeting at the home of Reba Wise. Door prizes were won by Betty Bertolette and Luna Kohler. There were 16 members present.

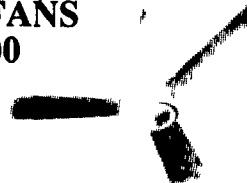
Members are going to Lake Tobias on July 1 and taking a ferry ride at Millersburg.

The next meeting will be held at the home of Mabel Miller on July 11 at 12:30 p.m.

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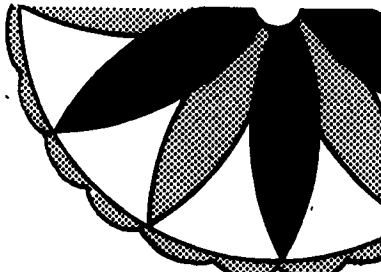
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