



## MICROWAVE MINUTES

By JOYCE BATTCHER

Some recipes just shout out, "Spring is here!" Two of my favorite springtime recipes are for fruit salad and quiche.

Fruit salad dressings are a breeze to make in your microwave. They're cooked in minutes with little stirring and no messy pan to clean up. Microwaving is especially an advantage for the egg-based dressing in Old-Fashioned Overnight Fruit Salad (below), which would need to be cooked for a very long time in the top of a double boiler.

Notice that both dressings are cooked in a measure and whisked or stirred at regular intervals. Stirring as directed is important in the cornstarch-based dressing to prevent lumps and in the egg-based dressing to prevent curdling or separating. Be careful not to cook too long. Otherwise the cornstarch-based dressing will become thin and the egg-based dressing will separate and be streaked with specks of cooked egg.

Cheesy Spinach Pie starts with a simple crust that can be made right in the pie plate. Microwave the crust first, then add the filling and microwave on Medium High, which is 70 percent power or about 450 watts. Or, you may microwave it on High power first for five minutes, stir the cooked outside edges to the center and finish cook-

ing on Medium, which is 50 percent power or 325 to 350 watts for 10 to 15 minutes. In either case, rotate the dish at least once during cooking and let the finished pie set until its firm and easy to cut.

### Light Waldorf Salad

1/2 cup water  
1/2 cup white vinegar  
1/2 cup honey  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 1/4 teaspoons dry mustard  
1 teaspoon celery seed  
2 to 3 apples, diced  
2 cups miniature marshmallows  
1/4 to 1/2 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

Stir together water, vinegar, honey, cornstarch, dry mustard and celery seed until smooth in a microwavable 1-quart measure. Microwave (High) 4 to 5 minutes, stirring after each 2 minutes, or until boiling and thickened. Cool. Stir in apples, marshmallows and walnuts. Serve immediately or chill before serving. Makes 8 to 9 servings.

Each serving—1/9th of recipe: 151 calories, 1 gram protein, 21 grams fat, 34 grams carbohydrate, 7 mg sodium, 0 cholesterol.

VARIATION: Prepare dressing, substituting 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon leaves for the celery seed. Cool and stir in 3/4 teaspoon poppy seeds. Before serving, toss with your choice of cut-up fresh fruit.

### Old-Fashioned Overnight Fruit Salad

2 large eggs  
1/2 cup orange juice\*  
1/4 cup lemon juice\*  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 cup whipping cream, whipped  
1 20-ounce can crushed pineapple, drained  
1 11-ounce can mandarin oranges, drained  
4 cups (about 1/2 pound) miniature marshmallows  
2 cups green grapes  
1/2 cup coarsely chopped pecans  
2 to 3 cups sliced bananas, diced  
unpeeled apples, diced  
fresh peaches or other fruit

With a wire whisk, beat eggs until well combined in a microwavable 1-quart measure. Stir in orange juice, lemon juice and sugar. Microwave on Medium (50 percent power, 325-350 watts) 4 minutes, whisking or stirring well after each 2 minutes. Then, continue microwaving (Medium) 2 to 3 minutes, whisking or stirring well after each 1 minute, until mixture is thick. Do not overcook. Chill until cold (about 1 hour).

Whip cream until soft peaks form; fold in chilled mixture. Gently fold in pineapple, mandarin oranges, marshmallows, grapes and pecans. If using fruits which darken when cut surfaces are exposed to air—such as bananas, apples and fresh peaches—fold in right before serving. Makes 10 to 12 servings.

\*For best flavor, use freshly squeezed unstrained juices.

Each serving—1/12th of recipe: 274 calories, 3 g protein, 11 g fat, 45 g carbohydrate, 39 mg sodium, 58 mg cholesterol.

### Cheesy Spinach Pie

1/4 cup margarine or butter  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon dry mustard  
1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)  
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded sharp

reduced fat Cheddar cheese

3 eggs  
1 cup half-and-half  
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour  
1/2 to 1 teaspoon onion powder  
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves  
1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)  
1/4 teaspoon ground pepper  
1 10-ounce package chopped spinach, drained and squeezed dry  
1 4-ounce can sliced mushrooms, drained  
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded sharp reduced fat Cheddar cheese, divided

In microwavable 9-inch regular or deep pie plate, melt margarine by microwaving (High) 30 to 40 seconds. Using a fork, stir in 3/4 cup flour, dry mustard and 1/4 teaspoon salt (if used) until mixture is crumbly. Stir in 1 cup Cheddar cheese, breaking up shreds, until well mixed. With a fork or fingers, pat dough into pie plate, forming edges first and then patting dough evenly into center. Microwave (High) 3 to 5 minutes, rotating pie plate and watching carefully during last part of cooking. Crust is done when it starts to look dry and blistered and feels firm. Set aside while preparing filling.

In a medium bowl or measure, beat eggs until combined. Stir in half and half, 1 tablespoon flour, onion powder, thyme leaves, 1/4 teaspoon salt (if used) and pepper until smooth. Stir in well-drained

spinach, mushrooms and only 1/2 cup of remaining Cheddar cheese. Pour into crust. Cover with microwave paper or waxed paper. Microwave on Medium High (70 percent power, about 450 watts) 13 to 17 minutes, rotating pie plate after 7 minutes. Pie is done when center looks set and a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup Cheddar cheese and cover loosely with microwave paper or plastic wrap. Let stand 5 to 10 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve warm. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Each serving—1/8th of recipe: 258 calories, 14 g protein, 17 g fat, 13 g carbohydrate, 363 mg sodium, 113 mg 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, Minn. 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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## Berks Pageant Planned May 4

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — The Berks County Dairy Princess Coronation pageant is planned for May 4, at 7 p.m. at the Berks County Agricultural Center, R1, Leesport. The contest will feature musical entertainment as well as young ladies who are competing for the honor of promoting dairy products for the county and a chance to represent Berks County at the state pageant.

Hoping to succeed the reigning dairy princess, Suzanne Moyer, is Kelly Gelsinger, Womelsdorf. She is the 17-year-old daughter of James and Agnes Gelsinger. She attends Conrad Weiser High School and is active in FFA, soccer, and the girls chorus. Kelly also participates in her church's children's ministries by perform-

ing with puppets. A previous 4-H member, Kelly is working towards a vocation in the secretarial field.

Six "Little Miss" contestants will charm the audience and the judges as they vie for the junior title. Adding to the enjoyment of the evening, the vibrant five-year-old Joel Bubbenmoyer, Fleetwood, will sing and dance while the judges make their decisions. Joel has appeared on TV and on Al Alberts Showcase with his musical presentations.

Contact Dave or Beth Hartman, R3, Bernville, Pa. 19506 or call (215) 488-7267 for your tickets as soon as possible. Tickets are \$8.75 for adults, \$6.75 for children 6-12, and under 6 are free.

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