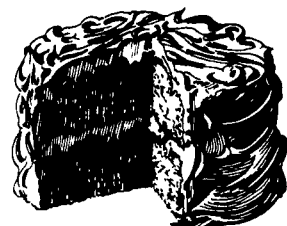


Home On The Range



Make Easter Dinner Special

Organization and planning can help make your Easter dinner a success. Select recipes that can be partially prepared in advance and supplement your "from scratch" menu components with high quality prepared foods.

The dairy association suggests an Easter menu that is flexible and easy.

- Roasted Leg of Lamb or Baked Ham
- Buttery Asparagus Saute
- Wild Rice Pilaf
- Hot Cross Buns with Cream Cheese Frosting
- Lemon Cream Tiramisu

Lamb or ham is a traditional main dish for Easter. The preparation options are many:

- Rub lamb with dried or fresh herbs such as rosemary, thyme, and marjoram before roasting.

- Coat lamb with Dijon-style mustard and buttered bread crumbs before roasting.

- Purchase a pre-cooked ham so all you have to do is heat it through before serving.

- Order the ham baked and sliced from the supermarket, local carry-out or a restaurant and spend a few minutes garnishing the platter with fresh herbs.

- Add a special touch to the ham by brushing with cherry preserves or orange marmalade during the last 10 minutes of baking.

- Purchase a boneless lamb roast or ham — it's easier to carve and serve whether on a buffet or at the dinner table.

The recipes for the menu suggested by the Dairy Association are included in this column, which also includes many wonderful recipes from our readers.

BUTTERY ASPARAGUS SAUTE

1 pound asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces

1 medium red bell pepper, cut into short thin strips

½ cup sliced shallots or chopped onions

3 tablespoons butter

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Freshly ground black pepper

In large skillet over medium heat, cook asparagus, bell pepper, and shallots in butter until asparagus is crisp-tender, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt, nutmeg, and pepper. Serve immediately.

HOT CROSS BUNS WITH CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

4½ to 5 cups all-purpose flour

2 packages active dry yeast

½ cup granulated sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground cardamom

¼ teaspoon cloves

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

1¼ cups milk

½ cup butter

2 eggs, beaten

¼ cup currants or raisins

¼ cup candied orange peel, optional

1 egg yolk mixed with 2 tablespoons water

Frosting:

3-ounces cream cheese, softened

1 cup confectioners' sugar

1 teaspoon milk

Combine 2 cups flour, yeast, granulated sugar, salt, and spices in large mixer bowl. Heat milk and butter to very warm. Add to flour mixture. Beat on medium speed for 1 minute. Add eggs, beat 1 minute.

Stir in currants, orange peel, and enough remaining flour to make dough easy to handle. Turn onto lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes, adding additional flour as needed. Place in buttered bowl, turning to butter top. Cover; let rise in warm place until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour. Punch down dough; turn onto lightly floured surface. Divide dough in half; divide each half into 9 pieces. Form each piece into smooth round ball.

Place balls of dough in two buttered 8-inch square baking pans. Cover; let rise in warm place until doubled in bulk, about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Brush lightly with egg yolk mixture. Bake rolls in preheated 375 degree oven, 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans. Cool on wire rack. For frosting, beat cream cheese and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Add milk as desired for drizzling consistency. Drizzle frosting across top of each bun in the shape of a cross.



Add a special touch to your Easter meal with homemade Hot Cross Buns with Cream Cheese Frosting. These buttery, yeast-raised rolls can be baked weeks ahead and frozen.

JELLY BEAN COOKIES

½ cup butter

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup light brown sugar

1 egg

½ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon vanilla

1¼ cups flour

½ cup rolled oats

1 cup miniature jelly beans

Cream together butter and sugars. Beat in egg, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and vanilla. Stir in flour and oats. Add jelly beans. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Drop batter by rounded spoonfuls about 2 inches apart on lightly greased cookie sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or lightly brown. Makes 3 to 3½ dozen.

Contributor writes that she doubles the recipe at Easter time because the cookies disappear so quickly.

Marjorie Wertman
Blair Co.



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Featured Recipe

Hop to it: You can compete with the Easter Bunny this year when it comes to creating a basketful of good taste. Pistachio Swirl Easter Bread doubles as a delightful treat and a colorful centerpiece.

Rich with homemade goodness, this luscious loaf is wonderfully easy to make. Within frozen bread dough and the most basic of ingredients are treasures of color and taste: orange peel, tangy lemon glaze and plenty of rich, crunchy pistachios.

PISTACHIO SWIRL EASTER BREAD

1 cup natural pistachios, finely chopped in food processor or blender

1 egg

½ cup sugar

¼ cup butter, softened

1½ tablespoons finely chopped orange peel

1 teaspoon vanilla

¼ teaspoon salt

1 loaf frozen bread dough, thawed until soft and puffy

1 egg white, beaten with 1 tablespoon water

Mix pistachios with egg, sugar, butter, orange peel, vanilla and salt; set aside. Roll out dough on floured board to 12x9-inch rectangle (dough will feel elastic and want to pull back). Spread pistachio mixture onto rectangle, leaving ½ -inch border at edges. Roll up dough, starting from long side. Transfer to oiled, 12-inch pizza pan. Carefully shape into ring, then seal ends together, wetting dough with water if necessary. With kitchen shears or knife, snip into or slice dough ring at ¼ to 1-inch intervals, cutting from outside edge towards center but not quite all the way through. Gently pull apart and turn each slice to face up and brush ring with egg wash.

Place in warm place for 30 to 60 minutes to let rise until soft and puffy. Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F.; bake for 17 minutes or until golden, covering loosely with foil if it browns too quickly. Cool; drizzle with glaze of 1 cup powdered sugar mixed with 4 to 5 teaspoons lemon juice. Garnish with extra chopped pistachios.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

April

10- Peanut Butter Recipes

17- Cooking With Eggs

24- Basic Mix Recipes

May

1- High-Calcium Recipes