



## Onions For Your Health

Onions are one of the most common cooking ingredients throughout the world. Texture, color, and zest add intrigue to all types of dishes — from appetizers to condiments to main entrees.

Onions not only provide flavor but also health-promoting phytochemicals as well as nutrients.

Onions may help guard against chronic diseases such as cataracts, cardiovascular, and cancer.

With only 30 calories per serving, onions are sodium, fat, and cholesterol free, and provide dietary fiber, vitamin C, vitamin B6, potassium, and other nutrients.

Enjoy these recipes that are not only good to eat but good for you.

### CARAMELIZED ONIONS

3 pounds yellow onions (6-9)  
Cooking spray, as needed  
1½ tablespoons olive oil  
1 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed  
1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed  
Salt and pepper, to taste

Halve and slice onions. Coat 12-inch skillet with cooking spray. Over medium heat, sauté onions in oil for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until soft and light golden. Stir in thyme, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Serve warm or cover and refrigerate for up to 5 days. Makes 12 servings.

Serving ideas:

- **Wilted Spinach Salad** — Toss crisp fresh spinach leaves with hot caramelized onions, sundried tomatoes, and pine nuts. Drizzle with warmed vinaigrette dressing and toss well.

- **Enchilada Stack With An Attitude** — Layer a corn tortilla with black or pinto beans, diced bell pepper, dabs of salsa, grated sharp cheddar cheese, and a layer of caramelized onions. Repeat layering then top with a third tortilla. Sprinkle with cheese and bake until hot and melted.

- **Smothered Sea Bass** — Poach sea bass or other firm white fish and serve on a bed of caramelized onions with a scattering of steamed baby carrots and fresh dill sprigs over all.

### HEARTY ONION-VEGGIE SANDWICH

6 ounces fat-free cream cheese  
18 slices multi-grain bread  
12 ounces red onion, thinly sliced  
1 cup sliced cucumbers, marinated in French dressing  
12 crisp lettuce leaves  
12 tomato slices

6-ounces thinly sliced cheddar cheese

1½ cups alfalfa sprouts (optional)

Spread cream cheese evenly over six slices bread. Top with half of the onion slices and all the cucumbers. Stack with lettuce leaves, sliced tomato, and a second slice of bread. Lay cheddar over second bread slice, add sprouts, and remaining onions. Top with third slice of bread. Cut sandwich in half and secure with picks. Makes six servings.

### CLASSIC ONION SOUP

8 cups sliced yellow onions  
6 tablespoons butter  
4 teaspoons sugar  
2 quarts reduced-sodium chicken broth  
Salt and pepper to taste  
½ baguette French bread, sliced, toasted  
Grated Romano cheese

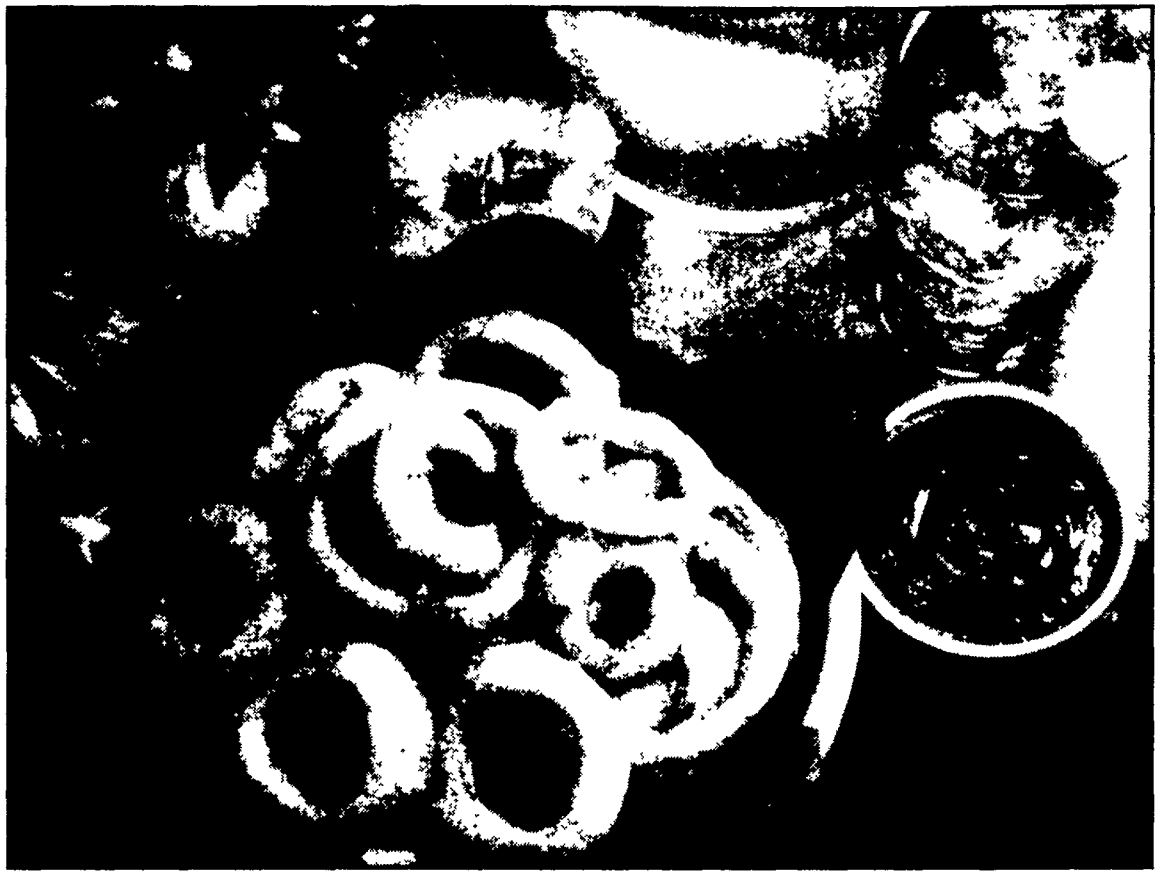
Using large saucepan that holds at least 4 quarts, cook onions over medium heat, stirring often, in melted butter for 12 minutes or until tender and golden brown. Add sugar and cook, stirring, for one minute. Add broth, cover and bring to a boil. Simmer 12 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. To serve, float toast on bowl of soup and sprinkle with cheese. Makes 6 servings.

### CREAMY ONION DIP

2 cups finely chopped onions  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 teaspoon paprika  
1 cup sour cream  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
Sauté onions in oil over medium heat about 3 minutes or until barely tender. Stir in paprika. Add onions to sour cream in a bowl. Add salt and pepper, to taste. Cover and chill. Makes 1½ cups. To serve in onion bowl, cut off top third of large red onion. Trim small edge off root end to make flat support. Peel onion. Leaving outer two layers intact, scoop out onion center making a hollow to hold the dip.

### HERB BAKED ONION BLOOM

1 large onion  
1 tablespoon butter  
1 teaspoon dried thyme or oregano  
½ teaspoon dried rosemary  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
Parsley or paprika, if desired  
Cut about ½-inch off top of onion; peel onion. Cut onion into 12-16 vertical wedges, leaving root base intact. Set bloomed onion on 14x10-inch foil piece. Top onion with butter, thyme or



Health benefits have been associated with onions for many years. Onion rings appeal to people of all ages.

oregano, rosemary, and salt and pepper, to taste.

Wrap foil around seasoned bloom and pinch edges together tightly. Place wrapped onion upright on pan and bake at 425 degrees for 30 minutes or until onion is tender and cooked but "petals" still have body and stand upright. If desired, sprinkle with minced parsley or paprika. Baked wrapped onion may be held in warm location for up to one hour before serving. Makes one serving.

**Beef Bloom:** Top onion bloom with one cube beef bouillon (crushed), 1 tablespoon butter, and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

**Caramelized Mustard Bloom:** Combine 1½ tablespoons prepared mustard with 1½ tablespoons brown sugar, blending until smooth. Spoon over onion bloom. Sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon pepper.

### FRENCH ONION SOUP

2 pounds onions  
5 cans beef broth consommé  
1 can water  
2-3 tablespoons flour  
½ cup butter  
½ pound Swiss cheese slices  
Croutons or toast  
Slice onions into rings. Melt butter and sauté onions until transparent. Mix flour to coat onions. Add broth and water and bring to a boil. Simmer one hour. When ready to serve, place soup in crocks. Cover tops with croutons or toast and then cheese. Place beneath broiler until cheese melts.

Heidi Miller

Pa. Alternate Dairy Princess

### VIDALIA ONION CASSEROLE

½ cup butter  
3-4 Vidalia onions, sliced ¼-inch thick slices  
15 crackers, crushed  
1 can cream of mushroom soup  
½ cup milk  
2 eggs, beaten  
1 cup shredded sharp cheese, or cheese of choice

(Turn to Page B7)

## Featured Recipe

Onions are low in calories yet add abundant flavor to a wide variety of foods. With only 30 calories per serving, onions are sodium, fat, and cholesterol free, and provide dietary fiber, vitamin C, vitamin B6, potassium, and other key nutrients.

Higher intakes of fruits and vegetables have been associated with a variety of health benefits. Research shows that onions may help guard against many chronic diseases. That's probably because onions contain generous amounts of a flavonoid called quercetin. Other sources are tea and apples, but research shows that absorption of quercetin from onions is twice that from tea and more than three times that from apples. Studies have shown that quercetin protects against cataracts, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

In addition, onions contain a variety of other naturally occurring chemicals known as organosulfur compounds that have been linked to lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

For recipes using onions, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the National Onion Association, Department A, 822 7th Street, Suite 510, Greeley, CO 80631.

### BEST EVER ONION RINGS

3 large onions (about 9 to 11 ounces each), peeled and trimmed  
1 cup flour  
1 teaspoon paprika  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon pepper  
1 cup non-alcoholic beer  
Vegetable oil

Cut onions crosswise into ½-inch slices; pull apart into rings. (Refrigerate broken or end pieces for other uses.) Mix flour, paprika, salt and pepper in large bowl. Add beer, stirring with wire whip until foam is gone.

**Baked version:** Toss onion rings with batter and transfer to plate, letting excess drip off as you transfer. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large nonstick skillet (11- or 12-inch) over medium-high heat. Place about half the onion rings in single layer in heated skillet and cook until browned, turning once, about 1½ minutes on each side. Repeat with remaining onions. Transfer to ungreased shallow baking pans or cookie sheets, arranging in single layer. Bake at 425 degrees for 6 minutes or until crisp. Makes 6 servings.

**Deep-fried version:** Heat at least 2-inches oil in deep-fryer for 5 to 10 minutes or according to fryer directions. (If fryer has a temperature adjustment, set it at 375 degrees and heat until light goes out). Drop batter-coated onion rings into oil (about 10 to 20 at a time). Fry 2 to 4 minutes or until crisp. Drain on paper towels before serving. Makes 6 servings.

For additional information about onions, visit the National Onion Association's Website at [www.onions-usa.org](http://www.onions-usa.org).

## Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for 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. Be sure to include your name and address. Recipes should reach our office one week before the publishing date listed below.

Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

May

- 12 — Remember Mama's Cooking
- 19 — Mushrooms, Asparagus, and other spring vegetables
- 26 — Memorial Day Cookout

June

Dairy Recipes From LF's Drawing — Enter Now