

U3A CHRISTMAS RECIPES

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CANAPE SUGGESTIONS:

1. Halve six hard-boiled eggs and mix the yolks with mayonnaise, salt, pepper and a little paprika. Spoon the mixture back on to the whites. Peel off strips of cucumber with a potato peeler and thread on to a toothpick in pleats. Stand the toothpick upright on the egg yolk mixture to look like a Christmas tree.



2. Cube some MOZZARELLA cheese and marinate pieces in olive oil and vinegar, salt and pepper for ½ hour or so. Thread the pieces on toothpicks with a baby tomato, a folded piece of salami and basil leaves.



3. Heat oven to 200C Roll out some puff pastry slightly thinner than it comes out of the packet. Slice into 2cm wide strips and brush the strips with beaten egg-wash. Sprinkle on whatever you fancy e.g. grated cheese, sesame seeds or a spicy herb mixture and press it down carefully. Twist the strips and place them on a buttered baking sheet. Bake for about 12 – 15 minutes until golden.

STUFFED, ROLLED FILLET OF BEEF

Heat oven to 180C. (See potato recipe)



STUFFING: Fry 1 ½ cups chopped mushrooms, ½ diced onion, 1 teaspoon fresh chopped rosemary, salt and pepper in 1 tsp olive oil and 1 tsp butter, till tender. Add minced garlic 1-2 cloves – do not burn garlic – and add 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce. Set aside.

Butterfly a kilo sized fillet of beef and you can even bash it a bit to spread it into a rectangle. Season the outside of the meat with salt and pepper and then turn it over. Spoon the mushroom mixture on the steak in an even layer, next arrange 1 ½ cups fresh baby spinach (can use ordinary spinach, chopped) over the mushroom mixture and then sprinkle over ½ cup seasoned breadcrumbs. Melt ¼ cup butter and drizzle half of this over the breadcrumbs.

Starting at the very bottom of the steak (the wider side), roll it up tightly and carefully and secure the seam with toothpicks to hold it together. Place the rolled steak on an oven pan and brush with the remaining butter.

Bake the steak for about 40 minutes for medium and allow to rest for ten minutes. Cut the steak into 1cm slices and remove the toothpicks. Serve with the Brussel sprouts and leaf potatoes. Make a nice gravy with the pan juices, BISTO and a bit of red wine!

LEAF POTATOES: HEAT OVEN TO 200C

Find a suitable casserole dish or loaf pan that will fit the potatoes snugly, and butter it well.



Melt 2 or 3 tablespoons butter with 1 or 2 crushed garlic cloves and 1 TBSP chopped fresh rosemary, in a large dish and mix in the potato slices, sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange the potato slices neatly, upright in the loaf pan, close together and pour on any leftover butter and ½ cup of water OR CREAM.

Bake the potato dish, covered with tin foil for about half an hour, then remove the foil and bake another half hour. Turn down the oven to 180 for the meat and continue cooking the potatoes until they are soft inside and brown and crispy on top.

BRUSSEL SPROUTS:

Rinse and pat dry 1 Kg (if a large crowd expected) of Brussel sprouts and cut in half if they are large. Toss in some olive oil and salt and pepper and place on a baking sheet (lined with baking paper for easy cleaning) in one layer and bake at 200deg C for about 20 minutes.



Meanwhile, mix together ¼ cup maple syrup (this is very expensive – I use honey); 1 Tablesp balsamic vinegar and stir into the sprouts with 3-4 cloves garlic, minced. Sprinkle on ¾ cup Pecan nuts or walnuts and bake for a further 5 – 10 minutes until the nuts are nicely toasted. Sprinkle over ½ cup cranberries and serve.

EASY MINCE PIES. – BUY A JAR OF CHRISTMAS PIE MINCE AT PICK 'N PAY.

PASTRY: Beat together 125 soft butter and 125m castor sugar, until creamy. Add 1 one egg and beat until incorporated. Add 2 cups flour and 2 tsp baking powder and a pinch of salt, mixing well to a stiff dough.

Roll out the pastry between two sheets of baking paper and cut into shapes to fit a SHALLOW MUFFIN pan, with tops slightly smaller. Fill the bottom pastry with a teaspoon or two of the mince, and cover with the top pastry, pressing the sides down a bit. Cut a little slit in the pastry, brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with castor sugar.

Bake the pastries at 180C for about 15 minutes. Cool and keep in an airtight tin.

STRAWBERRY SANTAS

Buy a punnet of strawberries, or however many you need for your Christmas celebration, and slice the bottom a bit so that it will stand evenly. Cut off the top 1/3 of the strawberry.



Mix together ½ container of cream cheese, with enough cream to soften it to a piping consistency, adding 1 tsp vanilla and 1 Tbsp castor sugar, or to taste.

Pipe a blob of the cream cheese mixture on the bottom two thirds of a strawberry and replace the top third on the cream cheese. Chop up some raisins and use the pieces to give your Santa some eyes in the cream. Place these on a pretty flat plate with some mint leaves for decoration.

