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So, what’s cooking in Kansas?

In *The Kansas Cookbook: Recipes from the Heartland*, published in 1989, we looked back at the early foodways of Kansas. The book focused on recipes based on farm traditions, early settlers’ ethnic heritage, and favorite family recipes. Let’s fast-forward twenty-seven years. Kansans continue to be proud of their rural roots but there is a new twist on the way we cook. The current trend is to eat fresh and local but it is no mere fad. It’s a lifestyle—a lifestyle based on rural traditions with modern appeal.

The “farm-to-table” trend is growing in Kansas, as well as nationally, and there is no place where it is more evident than your local farmers’ market. Kansas is also a source for many of the wholesome foods that we need and desire. If Kansans can’t grow it themselves, they want to purchase it locally, seasonally, and freshly harvested. In more populated areas, farmers’ markets have become colorful family events intertwined with the identity of the community. It’s the place to be on Saturday morning. People are digging deeper to uncover more ways to purchase and share whole foods. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs and “you-pick” farms offer opportunities to get fresh fruits and vegetables at their peak of ripeness. Some farms invite folks to visit and buy organic meats, eggs, cheeses, and other farm-made products right at their source. Some schools are growing their own produce to augment the school lunch program and even sell the surplus to the public. Parents want their kids to know where their food comes from so they are planting vegetable gardens, herb beds, salsa gardens, an asparagus patch, or just a couple of berry bushes in the backyard. The desire to drop seeds into the earth is fueled by the joy of watching the plants spring forth, as if completing the circle to eat what we have sown for ourselves.

When interviewing people around the state, we learned what Kansans cook with the abundance of fresh, seasonal, and local ingredients available to them. What could be more local to Kansas than a simple wheat berry pilaf with black walnuts and sunflower seeds? It reminds the contributor of the wheat crop and the walnut trees on the family farm. A deer hunter sends us her venison chili recipe and another cook, who loves growing strawberries, describes how to make her favorite pie.

To honor Kansans’ love of beef, we grilled steaks and concocted a sauce of mushrooms and locally made bourbon, pressure-cooked a brisket for sloppy joes, and
embellished a salad of fresh and cooked vegetables with thin slices of steak. Chefs, some from small-town cafes and others from award-winning urban restaurants, generously offered their most popular recipes, never failing to mention their passion for sourcing foods from local purveyors or even their own gardens. One small-town establishment shares a zucchini and corn casserole and a “perfected” sweet cornbread recipe, while another eatery provides a deliciously inventive method for slow-roasting pork shoulder for its popular pork shoulder sandwich. And, for something with a little panache, several award-winning restaurants share recipes such as smoked duck empanadas, rainbow trout with a spicy crust, and roast pork tenderloin with Port wine and prunes. A farmer raising poultry tells how to make the best chicken and noodles and a rancher shares her recipe for ground grass-fed beef stuffed and baked in yellow squash. Thanks to the many options that keep cooks in seasonal produce, a bounty of recipes for vegetables such as stuffed acorn squash, Brussels sprouts roasted with bacon and apples, sweet corn with shallot and tarragon, and many recipes using fresh tomatoes found their way into the book. And after all, since Kansas is the “Wheat State,” family and consumer science educators share their expertise on making breads, rolls, and desserts.

Features are peppered throughout the book to showcase the people, places, and perhaps the future of our diverse agricultural state. We think that readers will be pleasantly surprised, as we were, to learn that chestnuts are grown in Kansas and that a nationally renowned poultry farmer is on a mission to save his heritage turkeys and chickens. For more than fifty years, a western Kansas town has been hosting a farm-to-table dinner for fifteen hundred diners with all the ingredients grown by local farmers and prepared by community volunteers. A six-generation wheat-farming family tells us how the modern wheat harvest has changed the traditional harvest meals, and two former Kansas governors share their enthusiasm for turkey hunting. To amuse us, a cheesemaker tells us why she prefers goats to cows, while a brewery, a winery, and a distillery all express their dedication and passion to their crafts.

*The New Kansas Cookbook: Rural Roots, Modern Table* is filled with 220 well-tested recipes from contributors, as well as ourselves, that reflect how Kansans cook today. Thirty-one features are inserted among the recipes to paint a backdrop of our state’s current foodways and its unique individuals. Though Kansas is a state that is large in area and diverse in character, we have discovered again that when it comes to sharing a meal, it still has a neighborly feel.
Acknowledgments

Writing *The New Kansas Cookbook: Rural Roots, Modern Table* has given us the opportunity to collaborate with many Kansans who shared their recipes, comments, and stories with us. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the Kansas cooks, chefs, farmers, ranchers, and family and consumer science educators who submitted recipes or allowed us to interview them for their unique stories. We wish to express our deep appreciation to Marci Penner, who was instrumental in helping us get the word out as we were searching for contributors, and a warm thank-you to our dear friends, Karen Waite, for assisting with recipe testing, and Susan Schott, Mike Briggs, and Ann Hagedorn, who gave us sage advice and encouragement while we were working on the book.

Our sincere thanks to Charles T. Myers, director of the University Press of Kansas, for his enthusiasm and support of this project; to Kim Hogeland, acquisitions editor, for her guidance; and to Kansas artist Louis Copt for the beautiful book cover and illustrations. We extend our gratitude to the staff of the University Press of Kansas for their creativity and advice, and for seeing the book through to publication.
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Starters and Small Plates

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ry not to wince when you hear these words, “Could you please bring an hors d’oeuvre or snack to the party?” It’s not unusual these days for a party invitation to include a small request to help out the host. Think of it as a compliment and, besides, Kansas cooks like to contribute. That’s where this chapter comes in.

Whether it’s a game day, a potluck, or a holiday dinner party, this chapter provides some great recipes to fit any occasion. To heighten team spirit during the playoff game, you’ll find a variety of tasty snacks for your friends to munch on like “Chipotle Meatballs,” “Chile-Apricot-Glazed Chicken Wings,” or “Gella’s Grebble with Sunflower Seed Pesto.”

Dips and spreads are perennial favorites at casual parties. Start with “Toasted Baguette Slices” and select from an array of dips and spreads including these two easy toppings—“Sun-Dried Tomato Spread” and “Eggplant Dip.”

For a special dinner party that calls for offering your guests a small plate serving to begin the meal, try “Smoked Duck Empanadas” or “Goat Cheese-Stuffed Prosciutto Rolls with Salad Greens.” Or combine several small plates for an entire menu with choices like “Warm Shrimp and Bacon with Sherry Brussels Sprouts and Champagne Crema” and “Lamb Chops with Cheese Grits.”
Gella’s Grebble with Sunflower Seed Pesto

In 2003, Ellis County was recognized as the “German Capital of Kansas.” Hays and other cities around the county celebrate their German heritage with festivals, feasts, traditional German music, and a variety of entertainment throughout the year. Gella’s Diner and Lb. Brewing Co. exemplifies some of these traditions by serving award-winning beers and dishes, such as grebble, on their restaurant menu. “Grebble is a local Volga German dish and tended to be baked on Sunday, the traditional baking day. Grebble was created from the excess dough and revered as a special treat,” Chef Manuel Hernandez tells us.

The Sunflower Seed Pesto, made with fresh herbs, spinach, and sunflower seeds, is also a staple on the menu. “I love the versatility of our pesto, and we use it in a number of dishes. Serve it with Gella’s Grebble, toss it with pasta, or serve atop grilled chicken.”
—Chef Manuel Hernandez, Gella’s Diner and Lb. Brewing Co., Hays

12 TO 16 SINGLE SERVINGS

**Grebble:**

- ¾ cup butter
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking powder
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs

**Sunflower Seed Pesto:**

- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, packed
- ¼ cup fresh parsley leaves, lightly packed
- ¼ cup fresh spinach leaves, lightly packed
- ½ cup roasted, salted sunflower seeds
- 2 cups grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 garlic cloves
- ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ¼ teaspoon white pepper
- 2 cups olive oil
- Canola or vegetable oil, for deep-fat frying

**CONTINUED**
Grebble: Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat and allow to cool. In a mixing bowl, sift the flour and baking powder together. Stir in the sugar and salt. Add the eggs and melted butter. Mix with a silicone spatula or a spoon until all ingredients are incorporated. Scrape the dough from the bowl, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate overnight.

Prepare the pesto before frying the grebble. It can be served immediately or kept in the refrigerator for up to six days.

Sunflower Seed Pesto: Place the basil, parsley, spinach, sunflower seeds, grated cheese, garlic, salt, and white pepper in a food processor and blend until ingredients are finely chopped. With the processor running, slowly add the olive oil through the feed tube and blend until smooth. Makes 3½ cups.

To fry the grebble, heat the oil over high heat to 345 degrees in a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan or Dutch oven. Dust the work space with flour. Shape the dough into a loaf and cut into ½-inch slices. Flatten the slices into an oval shape ¼ inch thick and make two slits in the middle of each, cutting all the way through. Fry the grebble in small batches for 2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

Serve the grebble with Gella’s sunflower seed pesto.

Variation: The grebble can be served with warm maple syrup in place of the sunflower seed pesto.
Chipotle Meatballs

These bite-size meatballs make a spicy snack for a tailgate or potluck party. Serve them with a cold beer, preferably from one of the many fine Kansas breweries. —Frank and Jayni

40 TO 45 SINGLE SERVINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil, divided</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup onion, finely chopped</td>
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<tr>
<td>1½ pounds lean ground beef</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 (7-ounce) can chipotle peppers in adobo sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 teaspoon cumin seed, coarsely ground</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 teaspoon salt</td>
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<tr>
<td>½ teaspoon black pepper</td>
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<tr>
<td>1½ cups smooth tomato salsa (not chunky-style), divided</td>
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</table>

Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive or vegetable oil in a small skillet over medium-low heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned and tender. Cool to room temperature.

Place the ground beef in a large bowl. Add the cooked onion. Remove 2 or 3 chipotle peppers from the can of chipotle peppers in adobo sauce. Wear plastic gloves to protect your hands. Cut the peppers open and scrape out the seeds. Finely chop enough of the peppers to equal 2 tablespoons. Add the chopped peppers to the beef along with 1 to 2 tablespoons of the adobo sauce. Add the cumin, salt, and pepper. Combine the ingredients using a fork to avoid compressing the meat too much. Form the meat into 1-inch balls. The recipe makes 40 to 45 meatballs. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Brown the meatballs on all sides in batches. Transfer the browned meatballs to a baking dish. Add more oil to the skillet if necessary and reduce the heat as needed to prevent burning.

Top the browned meatballs with just enough of the salsa to lightly coat them. Place them in the oven and roast for 5 to 10 minutes, until cooked through.

Transfer the meatballs to a decorative platter and serve with the remaining salsa.
Chile-Apricot-Glazed Chicken Wings

On game day, serve this winning platter of sweet and spicy chicken wings. Score one for you! —Frank and Jayni

16 TO 20 SINGLE SERVINGS

2 to 2¼ pounds chicken wings, split at the joints, tips removed
Salt and black pepper, to taste

Chile-Apricot Glaze:
½ cup apricot preserves
1 tablespoon lime juice
2 teaspoons hot red chile powder
1 teaspoon cumin seed, coarsely ground
½ teaspoon garlic granules
½ teaspoon onion granules
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

Cut the chicken wings at the joints and discard the tips, or purchase them precut. Pat the wings dry with paper towels. Season them with salt and black pepper and place them on an oiled rimmed baking sheet. Place the wings in a 425-degree oven and roast for 15 minutes, turn them over, and roast for 10 minutes more. While the wings are cooking, make the glaze.

Chile-Apricot Glaze: Place the apricot preserves and lime juice in a small bowl and whisk in the chile powder, cumin, garlic granules, onion granules, and cayenne pepper, if using.

After the chicken wings have cooked for 25 minutes, heat the chile-apricot glaze in the microwave for a few seconds to warm it. Brush the chicken wings generously with the glaze on both sides using a basting brush. Return the wings to the oven and bake for 5 to 10 minutes more, until they are cooked through and tender.

Transfer the chicken wings from the baking sheet to a warm platter and serve immediately.
Chicken and Sweet Corn Quesadillas

*Quesadillas, typically found on the menu in most Mexican restaurants across Kansas, are flour or corn tortillas filled with a savory mix of cheese, chiles, meat, or vegetables. If you prep all ingredients ahead, you can assemble and brown them quickly on a hot griddle. Quesadillas taste best freshly made, when they are hot and crunchy.—Frank and Jayni*

**12 TO 18 SINGLE SERVINGS**

- **2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, about 6 ounces each**

**Marinade:**
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- ⅛ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

**Filling:**
- 2 ears sweet corn, shucked
- 2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed, coarsely ground
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- Sea salt and black pepper, to taste
- 6 (8-inch) flour tortillas

- **Canola or vegetable oil**
- **Red or green salsa of choice**
- **2 cups pepper jack cheese, shredded**

**Garnishes:**
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled and sliced (optional)
- Sour cream (optional)

Place the chicken breasts on a cutting board. Place your hand on top of one chicken breast and carefully cut it in half, horizontally. Repeat with the remaining breast. Place them in a single layer in a baking dish.

Marinade: Combine the lime juice, garlic, crushed red pepper, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Whisk in the olive oil. Pour the marinade evenly over the chicken and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate up to 1 hour, or let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before cooking.

Prepare a gas or charcoal grill for cooking over medium-high heat. Remove the chicken pieces from the marinade and place on the cooking grate. Cover the grill and cook for 2 to 4 minutes each side. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board, tent with aluminum foil, and let rest 5 to 10 minutes. Cut the chicken into bite-size pieces.
Filling: Cut the corn kernels off the cobs using a sharp knife. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the corn kernels and chopped onion and sauté until the mixture begins to turn golden. Add the jalapeño pepper, garlic, and cumin, and continue cooking until the pepper is soft, 2 to 3 minutes more. Off heat, stir in the cilantro, the grilled chicken, and season with salt and pepper. Warm the mixture briefly over low heat for a minute or two, if needed.

Heat a griddle or large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Brush one side of each flour tortilla generously with canola or vegetable oil. Place one tortilla at a time on the griddle, or in the skillet. Place about 1/3 cup of the chicken and corn filling onto one half of the tortilla. Top with salsa and sprinkle with cheese. Fold the tortilla over to form a half circle. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until lightly browned. Slide a spatula under the open side of the tortilla and carefully flip it over. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes more. Repeat with remaining tortillas and filling.

Open tortillas and add a few slices of avocado and sour cream, if desired. Cut each tortilla in half or thirds, to form triangles. Serve immediately.
The very presence of something tasty offers a warm welcome to your guests. Parking some dips and spreads at the busy intersection where treats and conversation collide will intentionally cause some happy accidents.

Due to heavy traffic, your guests must slow down and use both hands to spread a creamy eggplant dip or load on a dollop of spicy chopped sun-dried tomatoes, olives, capers, and herbs. But to deliver the savory goodness to their mouths, these drivers will need a vehicle, and that’s where the toasted baguette slices come in. Also known as a croute or crostini, baguette slices—golden, crunchy, rubbed with oil and sometimes garlic—make the perfect carrier for dips, spreads, or other toppings.

Following is a recipe to make a basket of toasted baguette slices that will put some savory crunch under any dip or spread. Choose one or more of the four delicious toppings that follow.

**Toasted Baguette Slices**

**MAKES ABOUT 40 SINGLE SERVINGS**

- 1 baguette
- Olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, peeled (optional)
- Sea salt

Slice the baguette into \( \frac{3}{8} \)-inch slices. Brush both sides of each slice with olive oil and place them on a baking sheet. Bake in a 325-degree oven for 10 minutes, turn and bake for 8 to 10 minutes more, or until light gold. Rub a peeled garlic clove over one side of each baguette slice, if desired. Sprinkle them lightly with sea salt. Transfer the slices to a baking rack to cool. Store in an airtight container if not using within an hour or so.
Sun-Dried Tomato Spread

The intense sweet-tart flavor of sun-dried tomatoes, blended with rosemary, garlic, Parmesan cheese, walnuts, and olive oil, makes a spread that will pack a lot of punch at your next party.—Frank and Jayni

MAKES 1½ CUPS OF SPREAD

1 cup (lightly packed) sun-dried tomatoes in olive oil, drained
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
2 small to medium garlic cloves, chopped
½ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated
1 cup English walnuts
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
½ cup sun-dried tomato oil or extra-virgin olive oil

Toasted baguette slices

Place the sun-dried tomatoes, rosemary, garlic, cheese, walnuts, and crushed red pepper in a food processor and pulse to a fine mince. Add the oil and blend for a few seconds to combine. Scrape the spread into a small decorative bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

Bring the spread to room temperature about 30 minutes before serving. Drizzle with extra olive oil and serve with toasted baguette slices.

Olive and Sun-Dried Tomato Spread

A dab of this tasty concoction on a toasted baguette slice, with a glass of wine or spirits in hand, signals that the party has begun.—Frank and Jayni

MAKES 1¼ CUPS OF SPREAD

½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted
¼ cup pimiento-stuffed Spanish olives
½ cup (lightly packed) sun-dried tomatoes in olive oil, drained
2 small to medium garlic cloves, chopped
¼ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated
1 tablespoon capers, rinsed and drained
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil (or half olive oil, half sun-dried tomato oil)

Baguette slices

Place all ingredients for the spread in a food processor and pulse to a fine mince. Scrape the spread into a small decorative bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

Bring the spread to room temperature about 30 minutes before serving. Serve with toasted baguette slices.
Eggplant Dip

_The Pendletons grow eggplant and other vegetables to sell at the local farmers’ market and at their country market, located on their farm in rural Douglas County._

_“This is an eggplant dish that our family loves. I really like the fact that, in the summer months, most of the ingredients are available locally.”_—Karen Pendleton, Pendleton’s Country Market, Lawrence

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15 TO 20 SINGLE SERVINGS

2 medium eggplants
Juice of 1 lemon

1/2 cup olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
1 hot pepper, diced

1 cup pitted canned black olives, chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cup water

8 ounces plain yogurt
Pinch of sugar, or to taste
Lemon juice, to taste
Salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped

Toasted baguette slices

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Peel the eggplants, cut them into small cubes, and place in a large bowl. Add the lemon juice and toss to coat.

Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large skillet, sauté pan, or Dutch oven. Add the eggplant, onion, garlic, bell pepper, and hot pepper. Cover and cook the mixture over medium heat. Stir occasionally until the vegetables are cooked throughout.

Stir in the olives, tomato paste, and 1 cup of water. Bring the mixture to a boil and cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove the skillet from the heat and cool completely.

Transfer the cooled eggplant mixture to a food processor or blender and purée until smooth. Pour the dip into a large bowl and stir in the yogurt. Add the sugar and lemon juice, and season with salt and pepper. Add the parsley. Cover and chill the dip for at least 1 hour before serving.

Pour the dip into a decorative bowl surrounded by toasted baguette slices.

Variation: Serve the eggplant dip with a tray of fresh sliced vegetables for dipping.
Goat Cheese Spread with Olives

This light and easy-to-make goat cheese spread travels well to a party. We offer it to our dinner guests with a glass of white wine or Champagne upon arrival. Make the spread a day ahead to save time.—Frank and Jayni

MAKES 1 CUP OF SPREAD

8 ounces fresh goat cheese
Zest of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 large garlic clove, pressed or minced
1 tablespoon fresh lemon thyme, rosemary, or dill, finely chopped
Sea salt, to taste

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
Fresh herb sprigs, or 1 tablespoon finely chopped herb of choice, for garnish
½ cup mixed gourmet olives
Toasted baguette slices

Place the goat cheese in a small bowl and break it up with a fork. Add the lemon zest and juice and blend until smooth. Mix in the garlic and chopped herb of choice. Season the spread with sea salt. Cover and refrigerate until 30 minutes before serving.

When ready to serve, mound the goat cheese spread on a decorative plate and drizzle with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Garnish with a few herb sprigs, or sprinkle 1 tablespoon of chopped herb over the goat cheese spread. Surround the spread with olives and serve with toasted baguette slices.
Southeast Asian-Style Frog Legs

Mike Hayden, former Kansas governor and secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism, grew up in Atwood catching frogs in the nearby ponds and lakes.

“Back then, I served the legs battered and fried, but when I served in Vietnam during the war in 1969 through 1970 as an infantry officer, I saw for the first time the use of lemongrass and peanut oil for cooking frog legs. This recipe is as close as I have come to replicating the Vietnamese version.”
—Mike Hayden, Lawrence

12 SINGLE SERVINGS

6 pairs frog legs

Soy-Lemongrass Marinade:
1 stalk lemongrass
1/2 cup low-sodium soy sauce
1/4 cup seasoned rice vinegar
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
2 tablespoons peanut oil

1/4 cup peanut oil, for frying
1 or 2 mangoes, peeled and diced
2 kiwifruit, peeled and sliced
4 lime wedges
1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves, snipped

Pat the frog legs dry with paper towels. Split the pairs of legs in half through the pelvic bone. Set aside.

Soy-Lemongrass Marinade: Cut off the tough green top and the root end of the lemongrass stalk and discard. Remove the tough outer leaves and finely chop the stalk. Place the chopped lemongrass in a small bowl. Add the soy sauce, seasoned rice vinegar, and red pepper flakes. Whisk in 2 tablespoons of peanut oil.

Place the frog legs in a plastic storage bag. Pour the marinade over them and seal the bag or place the frog legs in a baking dish and cover with the marinade. Refrigerate the legs for 2 to 3 hours and occasionally turn the bag over, or turn the legs in the baking dish.

To cook the frog legs, heat 1/4 cup of peanut oil over medium-high heat in a nonstick skillet or sauté pan. Remove the legs from the marinade and drain them briefly on paper towels. When the oil is hot, add the legs in two batches and sear until golden and crisp, about 3 to 4 minutes each side. Reduce the heat as needed to prevent burning.

To serve, arrange frog legs on a platter and garnish with diced mango, sliced kiwi, and lime wedges. Sprinkle with cilantro. Serve warm.
Curried Egg Salad with Mango Chutney and Pita Chips

“We live in rural Douglas County where we keep a flock of seventeen laying hens and a small, productive garden. Every summer the hens go into overdrive, producing dozens of eggs. Among other things, the garden yields a fine crop of shallots. I’m always looking for ways to serve both, and this recipe fills the bill. I make this curried egg salad to take to potluck dinners, or when we have several guests at home. I serve it with mango chutney, or a plum sauce I make every summer when the Italian plums are in season.”—Shirley Domer, Lawrence

30 SINGLE SERVINGS

1 dozen eggs

Curry Dressing:
1 cup mayonnaise, plus more to moisten if needed
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
1 teaspoon cider vinegar
1/2 to 1 teaspoon salt, to taste

1/4 cup shallot, minced, or 1/2 cup green onion, thinly sliced
1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced

Mango chutney, homemade or purchased
Toasted pita chips, crackers, or tortilla chips

Put the eggs in a 2-quart saucepan, cover with water by at least 1 inch, and bring to a boil over high heat. As soon as the water comes to a boil, remove the pan from the heat, cover and let stand for 13 minutes. Pour off the hot water and cover the eggs with cold water. Allow the eggs to cool while preparing the dressing.

Curry Dressing: In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, curry powder, turmeric, prepared mustard, cider vinegar, and salt. Stir to combine.

When the eggs are cool, peel and coarsely chop them, and place them in a large bowl. Add the shallot or green onion, and red bell pepper. Mix gently to combine. Mix in the dressing. Add more mayonnaise to moisten, if needed.

Serve the egg salad immediately, or cover and chill until ready to serve. Serve with a small bowl of mango chutney and toasted pita chips, crackers, or tortilla chips.

Option: To serve as a salad, place lettuce leaves on six to eight salad plates and top with some of the egg salad. Garnish with mango chutney and toasted pita chips, crackers, or tortilla chips.
Winter Tomato Soup

A small serving of this tasty tomato soup is a warm way to welcome your guests. Serve in stemless cocktail glasses or small bowls as a first course for a dinner party. On winter nights, we like to meet our guests upon arrival with mini servings in espresso cups.—Frank and Jayni

MAKES 18 TO 24 SMALL SERVINGS

3 tablespoons butter
1 1/2 cups onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth, divided
4 ounces red cherry tomatoes, cut in half

3 tablespoons crème fraîche, slightly thinned with milk to a pouring consistency
Freshly ground black pepper

Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the chopped onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, crushed red pepper, and salt, and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 1 minute more. Stir in 1 cup of the chicken broth. Pour the mixture into a blender, add the cherry tomatoes, and blend until smooth. Return the soup to a clean saucepan and add the remaining 3 cups of broth. Simmer over medium-low heat for 5 minutes. Taste and add more salt, if needed.

To serve, ladle the soup into stemless cocktail glasses, small bowls, or espresso cups. Top each with a drizzle of crème fraîche and a bit of freshly ground black pepper.
Vanilla Bean Buffalo Sweat Maple Bread

Tallgrass Brewing Company in Manhattan encourages its fans to explore the many flavors and unique characteristics of the beers, not just by drinking them but also by incorporating them into recipes. This recipe for the Tallgrass Brewing Company’s maple bread calls for its Vanilla Bean Buffalo Sweat Stout, a variation of its Buffalo Sweat Oatmeal Cream Stout.

While the maple bread bakes, the folks at Tallgrass suggest you pour yourself a beer, relax, and take a deep breath.—Tallgrass Brewing Company, Manhattan

12 SERVINGS

1¾ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt

6 tablespoons butter, softened
¾ cup dark brown sugar
2 large eggs
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
½ cup sour cream
½ cup Tallgrass Vanilla Bean Buffalo Sweat Stout Beer, or other stout

¼ cup maple syrup
½ cup walnuts or pecans, chopped

3 tablespoons powdered sugar

Combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt in a bowl and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter and brown sugar with a hand mixer on high speed until well blended. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat well. Blend in the vanilla extract and sour cream. Add the beer, maple syrup, and chopped nuts and mix well. Beating on low speed, gradually add the flour mixture, mixing just until combined.

Spray a 9 × 5 × 3-inch loaf pan with baking spray. Pour the batter evenly into the loaf pan. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 45 to 50 minutes, until an inserted toothpick comes out with moist crumbs. Cool the bread for 15 minutes before removing it from the pan. Place the bread on a cake rack to cool completely.

Just before serving, pour the powdered sugar into a sifter or fine wire-mesh strainer. Sift the powdered sugar over the top of the bread, until evenly covered. Slice into 12 servings.
Smoked Duck Empanadas

Chef Carl Thorne-Thomsen is the chef-owner of Story, an award-winning restaurant in Prairie Village. He is committed to sourcing the best ingredients and letting their flavors shine in his creative American cuisine at Story. He believes that quality of ingredients and sound basic cooking technique are most important for a cook to produce a successful dish. In 2014, Chef Thorne-Thomsen was named Food & Wine magazine’s “The People’s Best New Chef.” Story is a recipient of Wine Spectator magazine’s “Best of Award of Excellence.”

Chef Thorne-Thomsen’s “Smoked Duck Empanadas” make an exciting starter to a special dinner and are sure to impress your guests. To save time, prepare the smoked duck in advance.—Chef Carl Thorne-Thomsen, Story, Prairie Village

8 OR 9 SMALL PLATE SERVINGS

1 pound duck leg or duck breast meat
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and black pepper, to taste
1/2 small yellow onion, minced
1/2 carrot, peeled and shredded
1 garlic clove, minced
1 1/2 teaspoons tomato paste
1 cup duck or chicken stock
1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme, chopped
3 to 4 tablespoons apple wood smoking chips

Empanada Dough:
8 ounces all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 ounces rendered duck fat or canola oil
2 ounces water

Canola oil, for deep frying

Guacamole or sauce of choice

Remove any bones and fat from the duck meat. Finely dice the meat with a sharp knife, or grind in a meat grinder.

Heat a large sauté pan or a rondeau over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil and brown the duck meat, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper. Add the onion, carrot, garlic, and tomato paste. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the duck or chicken stock, lemon juice, and fresh thyme, and season with additional salt and pepper, if desired. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

To smoke the duck meat, place a piece of aluminum foil in the bottom of a cast iron or stainless steel Dutch oven, or other large heavy-bottomed pot with a lid. Place 3 to 4 tablespoons of apple wood...
wood smoking chips (small pieces work best) on the foil. Cover the pot and heat over high heat until the wood smolders, about 5 to 10 minutes.

Transfer the cooked duck meat to one of the following: a stainless steel vegetable steamer that will fit into the pot, a shallow tinfoil pan, or a piece of heavy-duty foil formed into a shallow container. Place it in the pot on top of the smoking wood chips. Cover the pot with foil to help seal in the smoke and replace the lid. Turn off the heat and smoke the meat for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the smoked meat from the pot and cool completely before making the empanadas. Note: To avoid smoke in the kitchen, turn on a kitchen exhaust fan while smoking, or smoke the meat outdoors on the side burner of a gas grill.

Empanada Dough: Place the flour and salt in a bowl. Stir in the rendered duck fat or canola oil until the mixture appears sandy or pebbly. Add the water, a little at a time, stirring until the dough forms a ball and can be handled. Shape the dough into a thick disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and chill for 1 hour. When ready to make the empanadas, allow the dough to come to room temperature before rolling it out, about 30 minutes.

Divide the dough into three or four pieces. Roll each piece into a thin sheet on a lightly floured surface. Using a 3-inch ring cutter, cut circles out of the dough. Place 1 teaspoon of the smoked duck meat on each circle and fold into a half-moon. Seal with the tines of a fork. If the dough does not stick together, dip your index finger in water and lightly moisten the edges of the dough. The recipe makes 24 to 28 empanadas.

Pour the canola oil to a depth of 2 inches in a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot. Heat the oil over high heat to 350 degrees. Fry the empanadas, a few at a time, until they are light brown in color. Remove the empanadas from the pot with a slotted spoon and drain them on paper towels.

To serve the empanadas as a small plate course for a dinner party, arrange three empanadas on each plate with a spoonful of guacamole or a sauce of your choice.

Option: For a larger crowd, serve the empanadas as a party appetizer on a decorative serving plate accompanied by a bowl of guacamole or sauce of choice.
Goat Cheese–Stuffed Prosciutto Rolls with Salad Greens

Rolling thin slices of prosciutto around a goat cheese filling and nestling them among salad greens makes an elegant small plate starter. As an alternative, the prosciutto rolls and salad greens can be arranged as a divider between meats and cheeses on an appetizer tray.—Frank and Jayni

6 SMALL PLATE SERVINGS

4 ounces fresh goat cheese, chilled
1/4 cup crème fraîche, chilled
2 teaspoons lemon zest
1 to 2 teaspoons fresh rosemary, minced

4 ounces prosciutto, sliced paper thin

Extra-virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper

Salad Greens:
5 ounces mixed salad greens
12 cherry tomatoes, halved
12 oil-cured black olives, pitted
Red wine vinegar
Olive oil
Salt and black pepper, to taste

Combine the goat cheese with the crème fraîche in a small bowl, blending with a fork until smooth. Stir in the lemon zest and minced rosemary. Spoon the cheese mixture into a small plastic storage bag and chill in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

Cut the prosciutto into strips about 3 inches wide and 3 to 4 inches long. Snip the tip off one bottom corner of the storage bag containing the goat cheese mixture. Squeeze some of the mixture across one end of each strip of prosciutto and roll up firmly.

Pour 2 or 3 tablespoons of olive oil onto a small, shallow serving tray that is just large enough to hold the rolls. Grind some black pepper over the oil. Arrange the prosciutto rolls, seam side down, on the tray. Drizzle the tops of the rolls generously with more olive oil and grind more black pepper over the tops. Cover and refrigerate the prosciutto rolls for at least 3 hours before serving. Remove them from the refrigerator about 15 minutes before serving.

Salad: Place the salad greens in a salad bowl. Add the tomatoes and olives. Drizzle the salad greens with olive oil, sprinkle with the red wine vinegar, and toss gently to coat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and toss again. Taste and adjust seasonings, if needed.

Arrange small piles of the salad on six small plates. Place two prosciutto rolls on each plate.
The Wonders of Goat Cheese

More than three decades ago, when goat cheese began showing up on restaurant menus and in specialty food stores, Americans fell in love. We have the cheese makers in France to thank for developing the many varieties, styles, and textures of tart and creamy goat’s milk cheese. And, now that a few Kansas farmers are raising goats and making cheese, it is becoming easier to find and taste some local varieties.

Kathy Landers, owner of Landeria Farm in Olathe, raises goats and makes artisanal goat cheeses. Her family had cows and made cow’s milk cheeses when she was growing up. She bought her first goat and started making cheese in 1972. “Goats are easier to manage than cows because of their small size. Unlike cows, it doesn’t hurt when they step on your toes, they can’t slap you across the face with their tails, and they poop cute little pellets instead of pies,” Kathy says jokingly. The eighty goats at Landeria Farm were all born on the farm and have names like Lilac, Honey, Molasses, and Mandy. They are very tame, make good pets, and even come when they are called.

Kathy makes three types of handmade cheeses. They include hard cheese such as Swiss, jack-cheddar, and Gouda, twelve varieties of fresh chèvre, and three bloomy rind cheeses. Kathy enjoys educating people about cheese and teaching cheese making classes. She sells her cheeses at several farmers’ markets and some large supermarkets near Olathe.

Goat cheese is popular with almost everyone. It is relatively inexpensive and its versatility is amazing. If you are searching for an easy starter or small plate for your next party, the key is goat cheese!

With very little effort, goat cheese can be used to make a variety of impressive appetizers in minutes. Blend fresh, creamy goat cheese with lemon juice and herbs and it becomes a spread for toasted baguette slices or crackers. Enrich it with crème fraîche and it turns into a filling for prosciutto rolls. Or serve a combo platter of aged hard, soft, and bloomy rind goat cheeses “au natural” and simply savor its flavors and textures.