

Recipes and Reviews of the May 2026 Cookbooks

The group thoroughly enjoyed both these cookbooks. There was quite an array of food made by the group. Everything tasted delicious and we even had suggestions to make the dishes have a bit more flavor. We also tried 2 new cooking products. One was Turkish Pistachio Cream (\$14.95) and Wood Stove Kitchen's Hot Honey Sprinkles (\$9.99) Both of these products received good reviews and the group would try them at home.



We made the following recipes from the Food Network Cookbook:

- Almond Rings
- Prize Winning Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Iced Cucumber Soup

From the Picnic Cookbook we made:

- Crostini with Spinach, Pine Nuts and Aged Goat Cheese
- Really Onion Dip

All the recipes are featured on the next page. Please feel free to join us on our next meeting July 14th at 10:30am

Almond Rings

An elegant little cookie that is as comfortable on the tea table as in the picnic basket.

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ sticks) butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon almond extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ground almonds

1. In a large bowl, place the butter, sugar, egg yolk, and almond extract and mix well with a wooden spoon. Add the flour and salt. Mix thoroughly until the mixture is well blended.

2. Chill the dough for 1 hour.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F.

4. Break off pieces of the dough the size of a walnut and roll into long rolls like thick pencils. Form the dough into rings and dip in the egg white. Sprinkle the almonds on top and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes, or until lightly browned. Remove from the baking sheet and cool on a wire rack. Pack in a tightly covered container.

Makes 16 rings

Prize-Winning Chocolate Chip Cookies

These rich, moist, double chocolate chip cookies, from 101 Perfect Chocolate Chip Cookies (Storey Books, 2000), won the grand prize in a national search for the perfect chocolate chip cookie conducted by an inn in Williamstown, Massachusetts. A cookie-lover's dream!

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup unsweetened cocoa
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line baking sheet with foil (not necessary if using nonstick pans).

2. Combine the flour and baking soda in a medium-sized bowl and set aside.

3. In the large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter at high speed. Add the vanilla and sugars and beat until fluffy. Beat in the egg. At low speed, beat in the cocoa, then the milk.

4. With a wooden spoon, stir in the flour mixture and mix until just blended. Add the chocolate chips and nuts and stir to combine.

5. Drop the dough by rounded teaspoonfuls onto the baking sheets. Bake for 12 to 13 minutes, or until set. Remove the cookies from the oven and cool on wire racks for 2 minutes before removing them from the baking sheet. Cool cookies completely on wire racks and pack them in a brown bag to take to the picnic.

Makes 3 dozen



Iced Cucumber Soup

You'll know what "cool as a cucumber" means when you serve this refreshing soup on the hottest day of summer. It is simple to make and divine to eat.

- 5 cucumbers, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch chunks
- 13 fresh mint leaves
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ½ teaspoon salt

1. Place the cucumbers and 5 of the mint leaves in a blender or food processor and whirl to a fine purée. Pour the purée into a 2-quart pitcher. Add the buttermilk, chicken stock, lime juice, and salt and mix well.

2. Chill the soup for at least 1 hour, until it is icy cold, then pour into thermos bottles. Put the 8 remaining mint leaves in a small plastic bag and garnish each serving with a mint leaf at the picnic.

Serves 8

crostini with spinach, pine nuts & aged goat cheese

6 servings

- 18 ½-inch-thick baguette slices
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled, 1 left whole and 1 minced
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- 8 ounces fresh spinach, preferably small leaves
- Kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest
- 3 ounces aged goat cheese

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Brush both sides of the bread slices with some of the olive oil and place on a baking sheet. Bake until golden, about 7 minutes, turning once about halfway through. While the toasts are hot, rub both sides with the whole garlic clove, placing them back on the baking sheet as you work. Leave the oven on.

2. Toss the pine nuts in a dry skillet over medium heat until their bellies get golden, about 3 minutes. Set aside in a bowl.

3. Add the remaining olive oil, the minced garlic, and the red pepper flakes to the same skillet and cook until fragrant, stirring frequently, about 1 minute. Add the spinach in batches, seasoning with salt as you go, and pushing it to the sides of the skillet as it wilts before adding the next handful. When all the spinach is cooked, remove the pan from the heat and stir in the lemon zest and pine nuts. Drain the mixture in a colander and chop it very roughly.

4. Put about a tablespoon of the spinach mixture on each toast, crumble some goat cheese over the spinach, and bake just until cheese starts to melt, 3 to 5 minutes. Serve warm.



really onion dip

4 cups

- 3 medium onions, 2 unpeeled, 1 peeled
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 scallions (white and green parts), minced
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Hot pepper sauce
- Potato chips, for serving

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Rub unpeeled onions with a bit of the olive oil; roast until soft, about 45 minutes. Cool and peel.

2. Finely dice the peeled raw onion. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat; add remaining oil and heat until quite hot. Add diced onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until edges begin to brown, about 5 minutes. Turn to medium-low and cook until onion is golden brown, about 18 minutes. Scrape onion, oil, and juices into a sieve over a bowl. Drain onions and spread on a paper towel-lined plate. Cool the strained oil.

3. Puree roasted onions in a food processor. Add mayonnaise, sour cream, vinegar, and salt; pulse until smooth. With the motor running, drizzle in ¼ cup of the flavored reserved oil. Transfer to a serving bowl. Stir in scallions, pepper, and hot sauce to taste. Refrigerate at least 3 hours. Scatter the fried onions over the top just before serving with potato chips.