



Collected Recipes by Gigia Kolouch 2006

Lala Dea's Risotto Milanese

2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 large onion, minced VERY finely
10 mushrooms, chopped VERY finely
2 cups arborio rice
Pinch saffron
4-5 cups chicken broth
1 cup white wine
1/2 -1 cup parmesan cheese
salt and pepper to taste

Saute onion, and mushrooms in olive oil and butter. When soft, add rice and saute for 3-4 minutes. Add the saffron, 1/2 cup wine and 1 cup broth and let simmer with the lid off stirring frequently. As the liquid is absorbed, add more, a cup at a time until the rice is cooked, about 20 minutes. Add the rest of the wine last. Before serving, add the parmesan cheese and let cook 5 minutes stirring constantly. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve AT ONCE with parmesan cheese.
Risotto waits for no man (or woman)!

Dolmades (stuffed grape leaves)

1 jar grape leaves

for the filling:

1 1/2 cups long grain rice
1/4 cup chopped parsley
3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon allspice
4 green onions, minced
1/3 cup pine nuts, chopped
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

for the steaming sauce:

1/2 cup olive oil
1/3 cup lemon juice
2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
3-4 cloves crushed garlic
1/4 teaspoon saffron
1 cup water

Drain the grape leaves and rinse them off. Bring 10 cups water to a boil. Pour in rice in a steady stream. Stir and bring to a boil again. Boil rapidly for 7 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water.

In a bowl, mix together rice, spices, mint, parsley, green onions, pine nuts, salt and pepper. Begin stuffing the leaves: lay a leaf in front of you with the shiny side down and its stem end nearest you. Put a heaping teaspoon of the stuffing in a mound not too far from the stem. Fold the stem end of the leaf over the stuffing and hold it down. Next, fold the two ends of the leaf to the left and right of the stuffing over it as well. Tightly roll the leaf away from you. Lay this roll neatly in the pot, seam side down. As you do each leaf, put it in the pot forming tightly fitting rows. When the bottom of the pot is covered with one layer, do a second, and if necessary a third layer.

Put the olive oil, lemon juice, sugar 1/2 teaspoon salt, garlic and saffron in a bowl. Beat to mix. Add 1 cup water and mix again. Pour this mixture over the dolma. Bring to a boil and cover the pot, turn heat to low and simmer for 45 min. to 1 hour. Every 10 minutes or so, lift the cover and baste the upper leaves with liquid. If all the liquid evaporates, add more water. When done, there should be no liquid left. Let cool before serving.

Donna's Stuffed Mushrooms

20 mushrooms
1/4 cup minced parsley
3 TB butter
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup parmesan cheese
2 eggs, lightly beaten

Wash mushrooms, do not soak in water or they will absorb too much liquid. Remove mushroom stems and set aside. Preheat oven to 350. Lay out mushroom caps on baking sheets. Chop up mushroom stems along with parsley and garlic. Saute stems in butter with the garlic and parsley until cooked. Remove from heat and add cheese and eggs. Stuff mushrooms with mixture and bake on baking sheets for 15 minutes or until filling is firm to the touch and mushrooms are cooked.

Eggplant Caponata

1 eggplant, peeled and cut into 1/2" thick slices
Olive oil
1/3 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
1/2 red onion, cut into 1/2" slices
2 teaspoons dried oregano
1 red pepper
1 tablespoon capers, rinsed and drained
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 clove garlic, minced
3 anchovy filets, minced
1/2 cup Italian parsley, chopped
pinch salt
Fresh ground black pepper to taste
1 baguette

Rub eggplant with olive oil and grill for 5-10 minutes or until lightly charred, but cooked through. Cool and dice into 1/4" pieces. Reserve.

Rub red onion slices with olive oil and grill for 4-5 minutes. Cool and dice into 1/4" pieces. Reserve.

Char the skin of the red pepper, place in a paper or plastic bag, seal tightly and let cool. Peel, seed and dice into 1/2" pieces. Reserve.

In a mixing bowl add 1 tablespoon of olive oil, diced red pepper, diced eggplant, diced red onion, capers, olives, lemon juice, anchovies, garlic, parsley, and black pepper. Combine gently.

Slice baguette and toast in the oven at 350°F or grill it on each side. Serve the caponata heaped onto a piece of bread.

Purple Potato Salad

6 purple potatoes, steamed, peeled and cut into wedges
4 roma tomatoes, cut into wedges
1/2 lb string beans, steamed until tender
1/3 cup niçoise olives
1/2 yellow pepper, sliced
1/4 cup fresh, chopped Italian parsley
1/2 red onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
2 TB balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

Toss all ingredients together. Let sit for 1 hour before serving.

Raddichio and Fennel and Orange Salad

1 fennel bulb
1 orange
1/4 cup walnuts or pinenuts, roasted
1 head radicchio
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
salt
freshly ground black pepper

Split fennel bulb in half and remove core. Cut off stems. Slice thinly. Cut off the orange peel, including white part. Chop the orange into chunks. Tear the radicchio into pieces. Toss all of the s together and serve.

Marinated Feta Cheese

1/2 pound feta cheese
2 tablespoons fresh basil chopped
1 tablespoon fresh oregano chopped
2 cloves garlic minced
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

Crumble the feta cheese. Toss with the herbs and garlic. Place in a glass jar and pour olive oil over the mixture. Allow to sit overnight in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Salmon Spread

1/2 cup sour cream or creme fraiche
1/2 cup cream cheese
juice of 1/2 lemon
1/4 cup lox
2-3 TB chopped green onions
salt to taste

Mix in a food processor until smooth. You may like more lemon or salt.

Sesame Broccoli Salad

3 heads broccoli
1 red bell pepper
1 bunch green onions
1 tablespoon fresh ginger
2 tablespoons sesame oil
2 tablespoons canola oil
2 tablespoons black sesame seeds
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 tablespoons honey
1/4 cup rice wine vinegar

Cut the broccoli florettes into long pieces. Blanch in boiling water for 1 1/2 minutes, then dip in ice water to cool. Drain and place in a bowl. Chop the onions and ginger. Toast the sesame seeds in a dry skillet. Cut the pepper into thin strips. Toss all ingredients together and chill before serving.

Corn Black Bean Salad

2 dried ancho peppers, toasted
1/2 medium jicama
1 can black beans, rinsed
1 red pepper
1/2 red onion, peeled
1 1-oz. package frozen corn
2 oranges
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon oregano
1/2 cup pumpkin seeds, roasted chopped
2 limes, juiced
1/3 cup olive oil
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
salt

Toast the anchos lightly in a dry skillet on both sides. Remove the stems and seeds. Soak the chiles in warm water for 5-10 minutes and remove. Slice the chiles into thin strips. Peel the jicama. Cut into 2" matchsticks. Cut the red pepper into thin strips. Dice the onion into small 1/4" dice. Cut and peel the pith off the oranges and cut them into sections. Chop the cilantro. Mix all ingredients together, including the corn and chiles and refrigerate 1-2 hours before serving.

Note: If you would like to use dried beans, substitute 1/2 cup dried beans for the canned. Bring the beans to a boil in 4 cups water. Let sit for one hour, then drain. Boil the beans in 5 cups of water with the spices for 1 hour, or until tender. Drain beans and use as above.

Keftedes-Lamb Meatballs

2 thick slices stale bread
1/3 cup milk
1 lb. ground beef
1 lb. ground lamb
2 eggs
1/4 tsp allspice
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 cup parsley, minced
2 TB mint, minced
salt and pepper
1/4 cup pinenuts, chopped
2 shallots, minced
oil

Soak the bread in the milk and squeeze out the excess. Mix all the ingredients together thoroughly until well incorporated. Wet your hands with water and roll the meat paste into balls the size of large marbles. Fry them in oil until they are browned and drain on paper towels.

When the sauce is hot, drop them in and warm them before serving.

Tomato Sauce

1 yellow onion
3 cloves garlic
3 TB olive oil
1 cup red wine
1 28 oz. can whole tomatoes, chopped or pureed
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
salt and pepper to taste

Dice the onion and garlic. Saute them in olive oil. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook for 1 hour, until the flavors come together. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Cioppino

For the sauce: (make ahead and refrigerate or freeze)

2 large cans plum tomatoes, crushed
3-4 stalks of celery
1 red bell pepper
1 large onion
2-3 carrots
2 zucchini
6 cloves garlic
olive oil
1 handful each fresh Italian parsley and fresh basil
1 TB fennel seeds
2 tsp oregano
1 tsp each thyme and rosemary
1 bay leaf
3 cups white wine
2-4 cups chicken broth or fish stock
salt and pepper

Mince very fine or chop in food processor all vegetables: celery, onion, carrots, zucchini and garlic. Sauté the vegetables in olive oil until soft, about 15 minutes. Add ground tomatoes, wine and enough stock to make thick sauce. Cook over night or at least 6 hours. Adjust seasoning. Sauce should be fairly thin, so add more liquid if necessary. Sauce keeps well in freezer.

For the stew:

1 lb mussels in shell
1/2 lb calamari
1 1/2 lb firm white fish like halibut
1 lb clams in shell
1/2 lb medium shrimp
4-5 crab legs

Heat the sauce to a low simmer. First add mussels and calamari. Wait 5 minutes, then add the fish, clams and shrimp. When the fish is cooked add the crab legs and let warm 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat and serve in a large bowl with huge amounts of French bread and butter.

Minestrone Soup

This makes a ton of soup

1 cup red wine

1 lg can plum tomatoes

1 cup dried white navy beans

1/2 cup dried kidney beans

1 cup dried chick peas

1 TB dried basil

2 tsp dried oregano

1 tsp dried rosemary

1 tsp dried thyme

1 cup barley

1/4 lb. Pancetta, bacon or salt pork

6 cloves garlic, minced

2 onions

1 bunch Swiss chard or 1/2 cabbage

4 carrots

4 zucchini

2 red bell peppers

6 stalks celery

1/2 lb Italian string beans

1 small bunch parsley, minced

1 1/2 cups macaroni shells

Parmesan cheese

Mix all of the dried beans together and put them in a large pot with plenty of cold water. Bring the water to a boil, turn off the heat and then let them soak until plump, about 1 hour. Drain out the water (reduces farts), then put them back in the pot along with the basil, oregano, rosemary, and thyme. Add at least 8 cups of water and simmer the beans (they need to be really bubbling). After 45 minutes, add the barley and 2 more cups of water. Simmer again, for about 1 hour, until they are tender. Add more water if necessary.

Meanwhile cut up the canned tomatoes into chunks. Cut up all of the vegetables into bite sized pieces. Brown the pancetta or pork fat in 3 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until they are soft. Add the rest of the vegetables along with 4 cups of water, tomatoes and the red wine. Simmer them until they are tender. When the beans are cooked, add them to the vegetables, including all of the cooking water.

If you want macaroni, cook it separately and add it to the pot at the last minute along with the chopped parsley. Serve with Parmesan cheese.

Noni's Pasta al Pesto

3 bunches fresh Basil
1 bunch fresh Italian parsley (if you can't find enough basil)
Olive oil
2-3 cloves garlic
Salt to taste
1/4 cup pine nuts
Parmesan cheese
1/2 lb string beans
3 red potatoes

Use about 1/2 basil and 1/2 parsley. If it is summer and you have plenty of basil, use all basil. In the bottom of the blender, put the garlic and olive oil. Gradually add the herb leaves, blending until you have a bright green smooth paste. Once you have a small amount blended, it is easier to add more leaves. If you want to keep the basil brighter, you can add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice. You need about 1/2 cup of pesto for four people. *Do not put cheese or pine nuts in the pesto as it will be too heavy.

Cut the potatoes into chunks and boil until tender. Drain them and put into a bowl. Start the water for the noodles. While noodles are boiling, steam string beans for 3-5 minutes, until just cooked. In a frying pan, roast pine nuts (without oil). When they are slightly brown, add pesto and warm gently. Use a little of the pasta water to thin out the pesto. Toss all beans, noodles, potatoes, and pesto together with Parmesan cheese and serve.

Real Eggplant Parmesan

1 eggplant
1 lb fresh mozzarella
Freshly grated parmesan cheese
Fresh tomato sauce (see below)

For the fresh tomato sauce
3 lbs fresh roma tomatoes
2 TB extra virgin olive oil
4 cloves garlic, pressed
1/4 sliced fresh basil

Blanch and peel the tomatoes. Chop into small pieces. Heat the olive oil in a heavy skillet or pot. Add the garlic, stir and then add the tomatoes. Simmer the tomatoes uncovered for 20 minutes. Add the basil and simmer until sauce is thickened and no water remains.

Preheat oven to 350. Peel the eggplant and slice into 1/4 inch slices. Lightly salt and place on paper towels. Slice the mozzarella into thin pieces. When the eggplant has sweated (after 15 minutes), rinse off and pat slices dry. Brush the slices lightly with olive oil and bake in a 350 oven for 10-15 minutes, until tender.

Assemble the casserole. Remove the eggplant from the oven. Place a few spoonfuls of tomato sauce on the bottom of a baking pan. Place a layer of eggplant over it with more tomato sauce on top. Then put on a layer of cheese, then more eggplant, and so on until you have used up all of the eggplant. You should end with a layer of tomato sauce and cheese. Sprinkle parmesan cheese on top. Bake in the oven for 45 minutes, until the eggplant is soft and the cheese is melted.

Gigia's Slow Red Sauce

1/4 cup olive oil
1 lb. Sirloin steak
1 lb. Pork loin
1 large can tomato paste

1/4 lb. Pancetta, prosciutto or Italian sausage
5-6 stalks of celery
1 large onion
2-3 carrots
2 zucchini
6 cloves garlic

1 handful fresh Italian parsley
1 TB each fennel seeds and dried basil
2 tsp oregano
1 tsp each thyme and rosemary
1 bay leaf
1/2 bottle red wine
2 large cans plum tomatoes, crushed
2-4 cups water or chicken broth
salt and pepper

Cut the pork and steak into 1/2" inch cubes. Mince very fine or chop in food processor all vegetables and the pancetta.

Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in an large frying pan. Saute the pork and beef until it is browned. Add 1/4 cup of the tomato paste and stir, coating the meat. Saute the cubes for a few more minutes on medium high heat, until the tomato paste caramelizes and turns a dark mahogany brown. Add 1 cup of red wine and deglaze the pan.

Meanwhile sauté the pancetta in 2 tablespoons of olive oil until it is soft. Add all of the vegetables and sauté them until they are cooked. Stir in the meat and wine as well as the canned tomatoes, the rest of the tomato paste, broth and all of the herbs. There should be enough liquid to cover all of the ingredients. Add 2 teaspoons of salt. Simmer on low heat until the meat is tender, about 4-5 hours. If needed, add more wine or broth. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Donna's Panforte

1/4 lb blanched, whole almonds
1/4 lb toasted whole hazelnuts
1/3 cup cocoa
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp allspice
1/2 cup flour
3/4 cup candied orange peel
3/4 cup candied citron peel
3/4 cup candied lemon peel
3/4 cup honey
3/4 cup white sugar

Line a 8" round cake pan with greased parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 300F.

Mix together the almonds, hazelnuts, cocoa, cinnamon, allspice, flour and citrus peels. Put aside.

Boil the honey and sugar on medium until the syrup forms a soft ball when dropped in cold water. Remove from heat and add the nut and citrus mixture. Stir thoroughly.

Pour the batter into the pan and bake in the oven for 30 minutes. Let cool and sprinkle the top with powdered sugar and cinnamon. You should make the panforte at least 2 weeks before serving. It will keep several months wrapped in plastic in a cool, dark cupboard.

Lala Teen's Candied Walnuts

1 3/4 cups walnut halves
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup boiling water
1/8 tsp cream of tartar
1 TB butter
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp nutmeg
pinch of salt
1/2 tsp vanilla

Boil the brown sugar, white sugar, water, cream of tartar, butter, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt until it reaches the soft ball stage. Remove from heat and add the nuts and vanilla. Stir thoroughly. Spread on a baking pan and break apart when cool. Store in an airtight container in a cool place.

Noni's Spiced Walnuts

2 cups walnut halves
1 cup sugar
1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. allspice
1 tsp. ginger

Mix together and boil until syrup spins a thread.
Quickly stir in the walnuts. When cool, separate the nuts.

Nono's Biscotti

5 eggs
2 cups sugar
1 tsp anise extract
2 tsp anise seeds, crushed
3 TB whiskey or marsala wine
1/2 tsp salt
1 cube melted butter
5 cups flour
3/4 tsp baking powder
1 1/2 cups chopped almonds

Mix ingredients together and allow batter to set for 1/2 hour. Butter 2 cookie sheets and take some batter and make a roll 1/2" in diameter, as long as the cookie sheet. Make more rolls until all of the batter is used up. Place all of the rolls on the cookie sheets at least 3" apart.

Bake the cookies for 10-12 minutes at 350F. Remove them from the oven and slice them diagonally into 1/2" bars. Let cool and turn the cookies on their sides. They should look like half moons. Toast them for another 10-12 minutes at 400F, until they are lightly browned. Let cool and dust with powdered sugar, if desired.

These cookies will keep in an airtight container for one month.

Nono's Apple Pie

(as interpreted by Gigia)

for the crust:

2 cups unbleached flour
1/2 tsp salt
3/4 sticks unsalted butter
3/4 stick margarine or lard
1/2 cup ice water

Make the dough for the crust first. Put the butter, margarine and salt into a bowl and cut into small pieces. Add the flour and, using two paring knives or a pastry cutter, blend the butter and flour until you have a crumbly consistency. Add the water slowly and blend with a fork until the dough is clumpy and barely sticks together. **DO NOT TOUCH THE PIE CRUST WITH YOUR HANDS! DO NOT KNEAD THE PIE CRUST!** Press into a ball and chill in the freezer for an hour or in the refrigerator for several hours.

Divide the dough in half. Roll out one half and place in a pie plate. Fill with apples. Fill over the top of the pie plate because the fruit will cook down. Slice 2 TB butter and place around the top of the fruit. Roll out the other half of the dough and place on top. Trim the crusts and crimp the edges together. Make a hole in the middle of the pie. Brush the crust with a mixture of milk and a little sugar. Bake in a preheated 350 oven for 45 min - 1 hour.

Apple filling (mix together the following ingredients)

6-8 cups of peeled, sliced apples (gravenstein, granny smith or golden delicious)

Gravensteins are the best!!! We need some gravensteins here!

2-3 TB flour
1 TB lemon juice
1/3-1/2 cup of brown sugar or other sweetener
1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp cloves
1/2 tsp allspice

Zweibak Cake

For the cake:

2 large cups zweibak toast or Swedish toasts, crushed
1 1/2 cup sugar
3 cups chopped walnuts
2 tsp baking powder
2 tsp vanilla
4 eggs, well beaten
4-5 TB water

For topping:

1/2 cup brandy
2 cups apricot jam
1 pt whipping cream
1 tsp vanilla
2 TB powdered sugar

Mix the ingredients in the order given. Bake in a 10" cake pan lined with buttered parchment paper. Bake at 300F for 20-25 minutes.

Mix brandy and apricot jam and warm it in a small pot. Spread the sauce over cake and let it sit overnight. Just before serving, whip the cream, then add vanilla and powdered sugar. Spread whipped cream over cake and serve in small slices.

Molasses Gingerbread Cookies

5 cups sifted all-purpose flour
2 1/2 cups whole wheat pastry flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter
1 1/2 cup dark-brown sugar, packed
5 teaspoons ground ginger
4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cloves
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon finely ground black pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
3 large eggs
1 1/2 cups unsulfured organic molasses (almost blackstrap)

In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.

In an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Mix in spices and salt, then eggs and molasses. Add flour mixture; combine on low speed.

Heat oven to 350°. Spoon onto cookie sheets. Bake until crisp but not darkened, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cookies cool on wire racks, and then decorate as desired.

Gigia's Oatmeal Cookies

1 1/2 cups butter
2 cups natural brown sugar, like Billington's
1 cup evaporated cane juice
2 eggs
1/2 cup water
2 tsp vanilla
6 cups thick rolled oats
2 cups whole wheat flour
1/2 cup wheat germ
1/2 cup ground nuts (flax seed, pumpkin seed, sesame seeds)
1 1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp baking soda
1 12 oz. bag of chocolate chips or 1 cup of raisins
1 1/2 cups chopped almonds

Preheat oven to 350. Beat together butter and sugars until it is fluffy and the sugar is dissolved. Slowly mix in the eggs, water and vanilla. Add the whole wheat flour, wheat germ and ground nuts and blend thoroughly. Slowly add the oatmeal, and then the chocolate chips and almonds. Bake a cookie or two as a test. If they spread out too much, add a bit of flour.

Drop by teaspoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet. Bake 10-15 minutes. Makes about 9 dozen cookies. You can really eat a lot of these and not feel sick.

Basic Gingerbread Cookies

6 cups sifted all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
1 cup dark-brown sugar, packed
4 teaspoons ground ginger
4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cloves
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon finely ground black pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
2 large eggs
1 cup unsulfured molasses

In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.

In an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Mix in spices and salt, then eggs and molasses. Add flour mixture; combine on low speed. Divide dough in thirds; wrap in plastic. Chill for at least 1 hour.

Heat oven to 350°. On a floured work surface, roll dough 1/8 inch thick. Cut into desired shapes. Transfer to ungreased baking sheets; refrigerate until firm, 15 minutes. Bake until crisp but not darkened, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cookies cool on wire racks, and then decorate as desired.

Nono's Parker House Rolls

Makes 50-55 rolls

6 oz. sugar or 3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons

1 1/4 oz. or 7 teaspoons salt

7 oz, or 1 cup lard

2 cups warm milk

2 cups warm water

3 lbs, 4 oz. flour or 14 3/4 cups

3 oz. cake yeast or 1 oz. dry yeast or 4 packages yeast

1 stick melted butter

Mix together the milk and water in a medium sized bowl. Sprinkle the yeast over the liquid and let it dissolve.

Cream together the sugar, salt and lard until it is light and fluffy. Gradually add the flour and yeast mixtures, alternating between the two, until you have a soft, smooth dough. Knead the dough for 5 to 10 minutes, until it has no lumps, is elastic and smooth to the touch.

Butter the inside of a large bowl and butter the ball of dough as well. Let the dough rise in the bowl, covered with a damp towel until it doubles in size. This will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. When you poke it with your fingers, the hole should not fill in.

Cut the dough into quarters. Working one quarter at a time, roll it out into a long cigar about 2" in diameter. Cut it into pieces that are about 2 oz each, or roughly the size of a ping pong ball. Take each piece and fold it in on itself until you have a ball. Roll the balls on the counter until they are smooth. Do all of the dough the same way, you should have about 55 balls of dough.

Place them on 2 buttered baking sheets so that they are just touching. Let them rise in a warm place, about 20-30 minutes until they are soft.

To shape a roll, take one ball with both hands and pull gently, slapping it lightly on the counter, so that the middle is slightly thinner than the ends. Brush the top with butter and fold the strip in half, so that the butter is in the inside. Place on a baking sheet. Do all the rolls the same way, placing them on the sheet so that they are almost touching. Brush them with butter.

Preheat the oven 350°F. Let the rolls rise for 15-20 minutes, or until almost doubled in size. Bake them for 15 minutes, or until a light golden color. Serve hot. Brush them with butter when they are still warm.

Baklava-The Best Ever, and I'm Not Kidding

For the filling:

2/3 cups walnuts
2/3 cup pistachios
1 1/3 cup almonds
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground cardamom
1/4 cup sugar

2 sticks melted butter
Filo pastry
whole cloves

For the syrup:

2 cups sugar
1 1/2 cups water
1 cinnamon stick
5 whole cardamom pods
1/2 cup honey
2 tablespoons orange water

Coarsely chop nuts by hand. Mix with sugar and spices in a bowl and put aside. Preheat oven to 350. Place filo sheets on counter with a slightly damp cloth over them. If necessary, cut them in half in order to fit in the pan. Butter a 9x12 baking pan. Lay the first sheet of filo pastry in the cake pan and then brush with butter. Place another one on top and continue for about 14 sheets. Then take half of the nut mixture and sprinkle evenly in the pan. Add 4 more sheets with butter in between each one. Then add the rest of the nut mixture and top with another 14 sheets. Using a sharp knife, cut the baklava into squares about 2 1/2 inches across. Then cut each square diagonally so that you have triangles. Place a whole clove in the middle of each triangle. Bake in the oven for 1/2 hour and then raise the temperature to 400F until the baklava is light brown and flaky.

Combine all of the ingredients for the syrup and boil for 8 to 10 minutes, until it has thick threads. After baklava has cooled, pour the hot syrup over the pastry (strain out the cardamom pods and cinnamon stick) and let cool before serving. You may have to go over the cuts you made earlier with a sharp knife.

Danish

Melissa Rapp and Vincent Giovannoni

4 oz. butter softened
1pt. whole eggs
8 oz. sugar
1 tablespoon ground nutmeg
1 tablespoon vanilla
1qt. cold water
4 oz. fresh compressed yeast
1 1/2 oz. salt
4 1/2 lbs. bread flour

for the layers:

2 lbs. butter
2 lbs. margarine
Extra flour

Mix together the butter, eggs, sugar, nutmeg and vanilla in a large mixer with the paddle attachment. Blend together for 2 minutes, until the eggs are thickened. In a second bowl, dissolve the yeast in the water by stirring with a fork. In a third bowl, mix together the flour and salt.

After the eggs are thickened, begin to add the other ingredients: first add 1/3 of the flour mixture, and mix the dough with the paddle for a few minutes until it is incorporated. Then, Add 1/3 of the yeast mixture and mix the dough again until it is incorporated. Keep alternating between the flour and the yeast mixtures until everything is well mixed. The dough should be heavy and quite sticky.

Mix together the butter and margarine until they are softened and spreadable. Generously Flour a flat surface or counter and empty the dough onto it. Now you will begin to fold the dough multiple times so that you will eventually have almost 300 layers of dough with the butter mixture between each one.

Roll the dough out into a large rectangle, about 24" wide and 36" long. Spread butter mixture over the dough. Fold 1/3 of the dough to the right and then fold the left side 1/3 over the top, forming a long rectangle (like a letter that is folded in 3's). Turn the package 90°.

Roll out the dough until you get back a rectangle about 20" by 30". If the dough is still soft, you can make another fold. This time fold the long end into the middle and then fold the other side into the middle, leaving a 1/2" gap. Then fold it in half, making a four fold. Rotate it 90° again. Let the dough rest for 30-45 minutes, until it is soft.

Make one more 3 fold and let the dough rest for another 30-45 minutes. Make one last four fold and then the dough will be ready for shaping. Cut it into 5 pieces, one piece will

be for each type of Danish. While you are making each type, leave the remaining pieces resting under a damp towel. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Note: You can work on making the toppings during the resting time of the dough turns.

Cinnamon Sugar

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup cinnamon

Crumb Topping

1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup sugar
1 1/2 cups flour
1/2 cup butter
2 teaspoons vanilla

Cheese Filling

1 cup cream cheese
1 cup cottage cheese or ricotta cheese
6 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 eggs
1/2 teaspoon salt

Bear Claw Filling

2 tubes almond paste
6 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla
5 leftover pastries (croissants, muffins, cinnamon rolls), dried out

Glaze

2 lbs powdered sugar
1 tablespoon vanilla
water, to desired consistency

Have available:

1 lb melted butter
2 cups whole milk
Flour
2 cups raisins soaked in rum
2 cups chopped walnuts or pecans
3 cups sliced almonds

1. *Cinnamon twists*

Roll the dough out into a rectangle about 12" x 24" and 3/8 inch thick. Spread with melted butter and sprinkle liberally with cinnamon sugar. Fold up the bottom third of the dough and fold the top third down over the top, like folding a letter. Using the side of your hand, seal the dough at the bottom along the entire log.

Cut the dough into 1/2" strips. Each strip should weigh approximately 3 ounces. To make a twist, hold one end of the dough and turn over the strip twice. Twist each piece in the same way.

Put them close to each other on board. Then take both hands and push down on ends with the side of your hand so stay sealed. Push the ends towards each other. Place them on a baking sheet so that they are just touching. Brush with milk and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Proof the twists at about 80°F until they are double, about 20-30 minutes.

Bake them at 350°F for 15-20 minutes until lightly browned. Brush them with the glaze as soon as they come out of the oven. If you plan on freezing them, bake them a shorter time so that they can be reheated without burning.

2. *Cinnamon rolls*

Roll the dough out into a rectangle about 12" x 24" and 3/8 inch thick. Spread with melted butter and sprinkle liberally with cinnamon sugar. If desired, sprinkle with raisins and chopped nuts.

Begin to roll up the dough, starting at the top. Pull on the dough and roll down, to make a tight log. Use the flat of your hand to seal the dough. Cut the rolls into 1" pieces. Place them in a sheet pan, just touching. Proof the rolls at about 80°F until they are double, about 20-30 minutes.

Bake them at 350°F for 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Brush them with the glaze as soon as they come out of the oven. If you plan on freezing them, bake them a shorter time so that they can be reheated without burning.

3. *Butterhorns*

Roll the dough out into a rectangle about 12" x 24" and 3/8 inch thick. Spread with melted butter and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon sugar. Take top and fold down 1/4 (into the middle of the dough), Take bottom and fold up 1/4, leaving a 1/2" gap in the middle. Brush off the flour. Brush with butter, more cinnamon sugar, and then fold the dough in half. Seal together with bottom of hand. Cut into 1/2" strips. Pull on each slice to shape it into a rectangle. Brush the top of each butterhorn with milk and dip in the crumb topping.

Place them on a baking sheet, just touching. Pat the top of them to get the crumb topping to stick. Proof the butterhorns at about 80°F until they are double, about 20-30 minutes.

Bake them at 350°F for 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned. Brush them with the glaze as soon as they come out of the oven. If you plan on freezing them, bake them a shorter time so that they can be reheated without burning.

4. *Cheese and fruit*

Roll the dough out into a rectangle about 18" x 18" and 3/8 inch thick. Spread with milk and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon sugar. Fold up the bottom third of the dough and fold the top third down over the top, like folding a letter. Using the side of your hand,

seal the dough at the bottom along the entire log. This log should be taller than the others, about 6".

Cut the dough into 1/2" strips. Slap them with your hands on the counter to stretch out. Twist in opposite directions. Make a long twisty snake. There are three shapes you can make: coil them into a circle, coil the ends towards each other, making rams horns, or coil them in opposite directions, making an "S."

Put the cheese filling in a pastry bag. Pipe a circle of cheese in the middle of each Danish, leaving a hole in the middle for the jelly or jam. Place a spoonful of jam in the middle of each. Proof the cheese danish at about 80°F until they are double, about 20-30 minutes.

Bake them at 350°F for 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned. Brush them with the glaze as soon as they come out of the oven. If you plan on freezing them, bake them a shorter time so that they can be reheated without burning.

5. *Bear claw*

Roll the dough into a rectangle 8 inches tall. Put the bear claw filling in a pastry bag. Brush milk on bottom half of the dough. Pipe filling in bottom half of the dough, near the center. Fold in half and seal with hand. Take back of a chefs knife, hold with thumb and index finger and tap dough down the log in the center of dough. Cut the bear claws into pieces 4" long. Brush with milk and dip into sliced almonds.

Place the bear claws on a baking sheet so that they are almost touching. Proof the bear claws at about 80°F until they are double, about 20-30 minutes.

Bake them at 350°F for 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned. Brush them with the glaze as soon as they come out of the oven. If you plan on freezing them, bake them a shorter time so that they can be reheated without burning.