

Bring Back the Family Meal



"Lucinda is mad . . . about family, about great food, about making sure that the men in her life are never mad hungry for long."

MARTHA STEWART

"This is the food of love!"

EMERIL LAGASSE

**FEEDING
MEN
& BOYS**



Lucinda Scala Quinn

Excerpted from MAD HUNGRY: FEEDING MEN & Boys by Lucinda
Scala Quinn (Artisan Books). Copyright © 2009. Photographs by
Mikkel Vang



BREAKFAST CEREAL HOT

creamy spiced oatmeal

serves 4

My experience feeding boys has taught me that oatmeal is the most efficient breakfast for long-term morning energy. After all these years, I've convinced the boys, too, one of whom started asking for it when any sort of school test loomed. But oatmeal can be boring and tasteless if not prepared properly. Try using milk, steeped with spices, and the best-quality oats. Vary the "sweet spices"—such as cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, ginger, allspice, coriander, and star anise—to taste or according to what's in your cupboard. Top with maple syrup or honey, sliced bananas, and maybe some chopped toasted almonds. Save time on busy weekday mornings by making a large pot of oatmeal on Sunday night, then cooling and storing it in the refrigerator in a large covered container. Reheat the needed quantity in a saucepan or microwavable bowl, stirring in a little water or milk to loosen up the cereal.

- 1 cup milk (soy, almond, or rice milk can be substituted)
- ½ cup water
- 1 whole cinnamon stick
- 3 whole cloves
- 4 allspice berries (optional)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup rolled oats, preferably organic
- ½ cup pure maple syrup or honey
- 2 ripe bananas (optional)
- ½ cup toasted almonds (optional)

- 1 In a medium saucepan, heat the milk and water with the spices and bay leaf over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low and steep for 2 minutes. Add the oats and cook, stirring occasionally, until the oats are tender, between 5 and 15 minutes.
- 2 Remove from the heat and cover for a minute. Discard the bay leaf and whole spices. Portion into bowls and drizzle with maple syrup, then top with the bananas and almonds, if desired. Serve immediately. ★



Oats A half-cup serving of heart-healthy, whole-grain oats contains seven B vitamins; many minerals, including iron and calcium; cholesterol-lowering water-soluble fiber; and 6 grams of protein. Many types of oats are available. Look for oats with texture and body. ● Steel-cut oats are oat groats cut into two or three pieces but not rolled before drying, requiring a long cook time to become tender. ● Thick, old-fashioned rolled oats, which will cook a little more quickly than steel-cut, are oat groats steamed and flattened with huge rollers, then dried. ● Don't buy the mushy instant variety consisting of cut oat groats, precooked and dried before rolling, which contain the least nutrition of the three types and are often sold presweetened and artificially flavored. ● Regardless of the package instructions, ask yourself if you like your oatmeal thick or thin, chewy or soft, sweet or savory, then experiment with the liquid to grain ratio, cooking time, and flavoring until you have your favorite consistency. This recipe results in a thick and creamy dish.

old-fashioned pancakes

makes 2 cups batter; 16 4-inch pancakes

This is the most basic recipe for a slightly thick pancake. It's just as easy to make a quick homemade batter as it is to open a box mix, which needs ingredients added to it anyway. And using organic ingredients seems to give the pancakes a cleaner and truer flavor. Get the kids involved in the preparation when they're young. It may turn out to be their only cooking skill, but it's one worth having. Also known as hotcakes, griddle cakes, and flapjacks, pancakes are a very economical way to feed an army of ravenous boys. A couple of strips of bacon, a few sausage links, and a fried egg on top is the best home-style rendition of the classic diner offering. Cook up the whole recipe of batter, even if not all the pancakes are needed for breakfast. Serve the leftovers for snacks or dinner, with peanut butter, honey, or jam spread on top. Or, cook a lumberjack special for dinner!

I always use unbleached all-purpose flour; it's available in most grocery stores and markets.

1½ cups all-purpose flour
 1 tablespoon sugar
 1 teaspoon coarse salt
 2¾ teaspoons baking powder
 1 large egg, lightly beaten
 1¾ cups milk
 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted,
 plus more for serving
 Vegetable oil, for the griddle
 Pure maple syrup, warmed, for serving

Pancakes Add-ins

● Mash a ripe banana and mix it into the batter. ● Fold in ¾ cup of berries. Blueberries are especially good with banana batter. ● Sauté thinly peeled, cored, and sliced apples in a little butter with a dash of cinnamon. Spoon onto the uncooked side of the pancakes before flipping. ● Replace half of the all-purpose flour with whole-wheat, buckwheat, or rye flour. ● Toast pecans or walnuts, chop, and fold them into the batter. Slice fruit on top of the pancake before flipping.

- 1 Place a heat-proof platter into a warm oven (at 200°F).
- 2 In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture. Add in the egg, milk, and 2 tablespoons of the butter. Whisk from the center, slowly incorporating the flour. Rest the batter for 10 minutes.
- 3 Heat a large well-seasoned cast-iron skillet or favorite griddle over medium-high heat. Swirl the remaining tablespoon of butter in the skillet (or use oil to coat the griddle) and immediately pour in ¼ cup of batter for each pancake. When bubbles rise to the surface, flip the pancakes, slightly reduce the heat, and cook until the bottoms are golden and the centers are cooked, about 1 minute. (Rarely does the first pancake work because it takes a bit of time to get in the groove with the heat, fat, and batter.)
- 4 As the pancakes come out of the skillet, place them on the warm platter in the oven until ready to serve. Serve a stack of 3 pancakes, topped with more butter and the maple syrup. *

italian fries

serves 6 (if you are very lucky)

My oldest brother, Jim, is proof positive that if you cook well for a boy, he'll want to cook for himself. Presently this six-foot-five father of three strapping teenage boys effortlessly turns out delicious meals day in and day out for his own family. His sons are athletes who eat a ton—but their meals are always fresh and prepared with love. When our extended families gather to prepare a meal, their father is always at the forefront, planning and executing. My parents taught all three of my brothers to cook and eat well, but Jim has perfected my mom's specialty—a twist on oven fries originated by our Italian relatives. Everyone goes crazy for them, and there are never enough!

6 or 7 Idaho potatoes, peeled and sliced into
⅓-inch-thick French fry-style strips (see
Potato Prep), soaked in cold salted water

4 tablespoons (¼ cup) extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon dried Italian herbs or
some combo of dried oregano, thyme,
marjoram, and basil

2 cups freshly grated Romano cheese

¾ cup fresh parsley leaves, finely chopped

4 tablespoons (½ stick) salted butter,
cut into 6 cubes

Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- 2 Drain the potatoes and pat dry with paper towels. Spread 1 tablespoon of the olive oil on each of 2 rimmed baking sheets and spread out the potatoes. Overlapping is fine.
- 3 Sprinkle the dried herbs evenly over the potatoes. Liberally spread the cheese and parsley on top. Drizzle the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil over the cheese. Scatter the cubed butter around the pans.
- 4 Bake until the potatoes are golden brown, rotating the pans after 30 minutes, for 45 to 50 minutes total. Use a spatula to lift off the potatoes with all the crusty cheese adhered to them. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot. ★

Potato Prep For a French-fry cut, peel the potatoes and slice lengthwise into ⅓-inch-thick slices. Stack the slices on top of one another, a few at a time, and slice lengthwise into ⅓-inch-thick strips. Peeled and sliced potatoes can turn brown pretty quickly. To avoid this, try floating the peeled, cut pieces in cold, salted water. When you're ready to cook, drain them and pat dry.



busy-day chocolate cake

makes 1 8-inch square cake

This recipe dates back to the 1960s and features minimal cleanup—the ingredients get blended in the very pan that goes into the oven. It was the first cake I ever attempted to bake, and I frequently ate and enjoyed it as a child. I'd recommend it to novice bakers and to anyone pressed for time. I suggest using safflower oil, though the recipe specifically calls for Wesson oil. (Perhaps this originated in a Wesson oil cooking pamphlet.) Cool and frost with your favorite icing (my aunt Gina always used the buttercream recipe on the back of the box of confectioners' sugar). Also, this cake is vegan, too—no eggs, butter, or milk!

1½ cups all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar
3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon coarse salt
6 tablespoons safflower oil or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 tablespoon white vinegar
1 cup cold water

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- 2 In an 8-inch square cake pan, whisk together the flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda, and salt. Make a well in the center of the mixture.
- 3 Into the well, add the oil, vanilla, vinegar, and cold water. Whisk until well combined. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until a cake tester or toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool completely in the pan on a wire rack before frosting. *

tessy's banana bread

makes 1 loaf

When a boy smells banana bread baking, he'll hover until it comes out of the oven and he can get a slice. This is a simple go-to recipe for after-school snacks, bake sales, and school birthdays and for breakfast, too. It travels well, without falling apart, and it stays moist for several days. The topping gives it added flavor and crunch.

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| <p>1 cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour</p> <p>½ cup granulated sugar</p> <p>¾ teaspoon baking powder</p> <p>½ teaspoon baking soda</p> <p>Coarse salt</p> <p>4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted, plus 1 tablespoon cold butter, cut into small pieces</p> <p>⅓ cup buttermilk, mild, or a combination of plain yogurt and milk</p> <p>1 large egg, lightly beaten</p> <p>1 ripe banana, mashed (about ½ cup)</p> <p>1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TOPPING</p> <p>1 tablespoon brown sugar</p> <p>¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon</p> <p>Pinch of nutmeg</p> | <p>1 Preheat the oven to 300°F. Butter a 4½ x 8½-inch loaf pan.</p> <p>2 In a large bowl, whisk together the 1 cup flour, the sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and ½ teaspoon salt.</p> <p>3 Stir in the melted butter and the buttermilk. Add the egg and beat for 1 minute. Add the banana and vanilla. Stir until well combined. Spread the mixture evenly into the prepared pan.</p> <p>4 Make a topping by mashing together the tablespoon of cold butter with the tablespoon of flour, the brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and a pinch of salt. Distribute the topping evenly over the batter. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until a cake tester or toothpick stuck in the center comes out clean. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Cut and serve from the pan. ★</p> |
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Buttermilk If you can't find buttermilk in the store, or if you want to make your own alternative, mix 1 cup whole milk with 2 teaspoons lemon juice, white vinegar, or cream of tartar. Stir and let stand. Stir again and let stand for 15 more minutes before using.

Fresh leftover buttermilk makes a refreshing, healthful drink on its own. It's also good:

- To use instead of milk in pancake or waffle batter
- To tenderize and flavor poultry (see Quick Fried Chicken, page 116)
- To mix with a vegetable juice (such as tomato) for a quick cold soup topped with chopped scallion and dill

Bananas Old bananas have to be practically dissolving into the bowl *not* to be perfect for banana bread. Peel, mash, and freeze them if you don't have time to bake right away. If you have a surplus of just-ripe bananas, however, peel, chunk, and freeze them to use in smoothies.



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**MAD
HUNGRY**



FAMILY!

Lucinda Scala Quinn

Author of MAD HUNGRY: FEEDING MEN & BOYS

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broccoli francese

serves 4 to 6

I don't love the trick of hiding vegetables in treats, like cupcakes made with puréed spinach. I prefer to inculcate the veggie-averse (of all ages!) by spotlighting a vegetable's flavor alongside other delicious bedfellows. In this case, the cheesy eggs surround and infuse the green florets with a golden savor. Just about everyone will like the broccoli here—and then be emboldened to eat it another time sautéed in oil and garlic and then even (deep breath!) simply steamed.

1 head broccoli, separated into small florets,
stem peeled and thinly sliced into coins

6 large eggs

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese,
plus more for serving

Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 lemon, cut into wedges, for serving

- 1 Bring $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of water to a boil in a 3-quart saucepan. Add the broccoli, cover, and steam until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs, cheese, a pinch of salt, and a couple grinds of pepper.

- 2 Heat a medium nonstick or well-seasoned cast-iron skillet over high heat. Swirl in the oil. When it shimmers, scatter the cooked broccoli over the bottom of the skillet. Pour the egg mixture over the broccoli and swirl the skillet to cover the bottom of the pan. Cook until golden on the bottom, about 3 minutes. Flip and cook until the eggs are set, 3 to 4 minutes more. (It should flip easily, but if you prefer, place a plate slightly larger than the skillet on top of the pan and turn the "pancake" over onto it, cooked side up. Then slide it back into the pan.)
- 3 Slide the cooked eggs onto a cutting board and cut into bite size-pieces for snacking or appetizers, or into wedges to serve as a side dish. Sprinkle with a dusting of cheese and serve with lemon wedges. This can be eaten warm or at room temperature.

ALSO GREAT WITH:

Asparagus or spinach—cook both just until tender, drain, and proceed as directed in step 2.



DUNKABLE

giofrankie's double chocolate chip cookies

makes about 60 cookies

Add this drop cookie (a specialty of a beloved baking colleague) to my other two favorites—Oatmeal Chocolate Chip (from *Mad Hungry: Feeding Men & Boys*), Banana Chocolate Chip (from *Mad Hungry Cravings*)—and you have a trio of simple, go-to chocolate chip cookies to satisfy anyone. Once cooled, these cookies make excellent ice cream sandwiches. Place a scoop of vanilla ice cream between two of them, press together, wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze.

2¼ cups all-purpose flour,
plus more for dusting
1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1¼ cups (2½ sticks) unsalted butter,
at room temperature
1¼ cups granulated sugar
¾ cup packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs
1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
12 ounces chocolate chips

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone pads. Whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl.
- 2 In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or using a hand mixer, cream together the butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add the eggs and vanilla extract and beat well, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. On low speed, add the flour mixture, mixing until just combined. Fold in the chocolate chips.
- 3 Form 1¼-inch balls of dough and arrange them on the lined baking sheets. Bake, rotating the baking sheets and switching the racks halfway through, until the cookies darken around the edges, about 11 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheets for 5 to 10 minutes before transferring to wire racks to cool completely.



hamjam cheddar puffs

makes 18 pieces

When I'm putting together a multigenerational breakfast or brunch, I know the kids will eat a lot of these. A lot! Of course, these savory-sweet treats are an any-meal, anytime choice. The full flavors of the mustard and sharp Cheddar cheese set off the sweet berry jam in a deliciously savory way.

- 1 sheet puff pastry, thawed according to package instructions
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 3 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 to 5 ounces ham, cut into 18 matchsticks (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide by 3 inches long)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup favorite jam (I like apricot)
- 1 large egg

- 1 Preheat the oven to 425°F with the rack in the center position. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, foil, or a silicone baking pad.
- 2 Roll out the puff pastry to a 12-inch square. Brush the mustard over the entire surface of the pastry and sprinkle with the cheese and pepper. Cut the dough into thirds and then into thirds again to make 9 squares. Cut each square in half diagonally to make 18 triangles.
- 3 Place a piece of ham on the lower third of each triangle, add a small spoonful of jam, and roll up. Place each bundle seam side down on the lined baking sheet. Whisk together the egg and 1 teaspoon water in a small bowl. Brush each bundle with egg wash and bake until golden brown, 16 to 18 minutes. Serve immediately.



shepherd's pie

serves 6

In his autobiography, Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards tells of cooking two things at home: bangers and mash (sausage and mashed potatoes), and shepherd's pie. Here, I have co-opted his idea of doubling up on the onions by adding a bonus layer of chopped, raw onions between the cooked onion–meat mixture and the potatoes. Save on dishes by sautéing the meat mixture in the same oven-safe, deep skillet you will bake the pie in. Alternatively, sauté the meat in a skillet and assemble the pie in a separate casserole dish.

5 medium potatoes, such as Idaho or russet,
peeled and roughly chopped into 2-inch pieces

Coarse salt

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter

2 carrots, chopped

1 celery stalk, chopped

1 large onion, finely chopped

2 pounds ground lamb or beef, or a combo

Freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup Worcestershire sauce

¾ cup chicken or beef broth

2 teaspoons cornstarch

½ cup milk, plus more if needed

1 cup frozen peas, thawed and drained

- 1 Place the potatoes in a large pot and add enough cold water to cover by 2 inches. Add a generous amount of coarse salt. Bring to a boil and cook until tender enough to mash, 15 to 20 minutes.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- 3 Meanwhile, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter in a 10-inch oven-safe skillet (preferably cast-iron) over medium-high heat. Add the carrots, celery, and half the onion and sauté until softened, about 4 minutes.

Add the meat and 2 teaspoons salt and cook over high heat, pressing and stirring to break up the meat, until the moisture has evaporated and the meat is browning in fat, about 15 minutes. (The skillet will seem overly full but the mixture will cook down.) When the meat is browned, stir in the Worcestershire sauce and cook for 1 minute.

- 4 Whisk together the broth and cornstarch in a small bowl and add to the meat mixture. Simmer for an additional minute to thicken.
- 5 Drain the potatoes, setting aside ½ cup of the cooking water. Return the potatoes to the pot. Add the reserved cooking water, milk, and 4 tablespoons of the butter and season with pepper. Mash until smooth. Add more milk if needed to achieve a smooth, spreadable texture.
- 6 Spread the meat mixture around in the bottom of the pan it was cooked in or transfer to a 2-quart casserole dish. Evenly distribute the peas and remaining onion over the meat. Dollop and spread the mashed potatoes over the vegetables. Dot the top of the potatoes with the remaining 2 tablespoons butter.
- 7 Bake until heated through, the potatoes are golden on top, and the filling is bubbling, about 30 minutes.

