PDF | Essential Pépin: More Than 700 All-Time Favorites from My Life in Food

by Jacques Pépin
For the first time ever, the legendary chef collects and updates the best recipes from his six-decade career. With a searchable DVD demonstrating every technique a cook will ever need.

In his more than sixty years as a chef, Jacques Pépin has earned a reputation as a champion of simplicity. His recipes are classics. They find the shortest, surest route to flavor, avoiding complicated techniques.

Now, in a book that celebrates his life in food, the world’s most famous cooking teacher winnows his favorite recipes from the thousands he has created, streamlining them even further. They include Onion Soup Lyonnaise-Style, which Jacques enjoyed as a young chef while bar-crawling in Paris; Linguine with Clam Sauce and Vegetables, a frequent dinner chez Jacques; Grilled Chicken with Tarragon Butter, which he makes indoors in winter and outdoors in summer; Five-Peppercorn Steak, his spin on a bistro classic; Mémé’s Apple Tart, which his mother made every day in her Lyon restaurant; and Warm Chocolate Fondue Soufflé, part cake, part pudding, part soufflé, and pure bliss.

*Essential Pépin* spans the many styles of Jacques’s cooking: homey country French, haute cuisine, fast food Jacques-style, and fresh contemporary American dishes. Many of the recipes are globally inspired, from Mexico, across Europe, or the Far East.

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Amazon.com Review

Fall into CookingFeatured Recipe from Jacques Pepin’s Essential Pepin

When the weather gets cooler in the fall, I make soup. I generally cook up a big batch and freeze some for whenever I need it. This one, with sausage, potatoes, and cabbage, is hearty and good for cold weather. It’s terrific served with thick slices of country bread, and if you have a salad as well, you’ve got a complete dinner.

Sausage, Potato, and Cabbage Soup

Serves 8

Ingredients

8 ounces mild Italian sausage meat
2 small onions, cut into 1-inch-thick slices (1½ cups)
6 scallions, trimmed (leaving some green) and cut into ½-inch pieces (1¼ cups)
6 cups water
1 pound potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch-thick slices
8 ounces savoy cabbage, cut into 1½-inch pieces (4 cups)
1¾ teaspoons salt
Crusty French bread

Break the sausage meat into 1-inch pieces and place it in a saucepan over high heat. Sauté, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon to keep the meat from sticking, for 10 minutes, or until the sausage is well browned.

Add the onions and scallions and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the water, potatoes, cabbage, and salt and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and cook for 45 minutes.

Serve the soup in bowls with chunks of crusty French bread.

Baker’s Wife Potatoes

This classic potato gratin is made in France in many places, as is the famous dauphinois gratin, which is made with cream, milk, and garlic. The dauphinois has many more calories than this one, which is flavorful and ideal with any type of roast, from a roast chicken to a leg of lamb.

The potatoes are sliced but not washed, which would cause them to lose the starch that binds the dish. A good chicken stock and a little white wine are added for acidity, and the gratin is flavored with thyme and bay leaves. It can be prepared ahead and even frozen.

Serves 8
Ingredients

- 2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes
- 1 tablespoon peanut oil
- 4 cups thinly sliced onions (about 14 ounces)
- 6 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced (3 tablespoons)
- 3 cups homemade chicken stock (page 612) or low-salt canned chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 fresh thyme sprigs

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Peel the potatoes and cut them into 1/8-inch-thick slices.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan. When it is hot, add the onions and sauté them for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients, including the potatoes, mixing gently, and bring to a boil. Transfer the mixture to an 8-cup gratin dish.

Bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour, until most of the moisture is absorbed and the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork. Serve.

Chicken Legs with Wine and Yams

*I love both yams and sweet potatoes and use them in different ways, sometimes in soup, sometimes simply split in half and roasted in the oven. You can use either sweet potatoes or yams in this casserole, which also includes mushrooms, chicken, and wine. This is a great dish for company. It can be prepared ahead and reheated—which makes it even better.*

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 whole chicken legs (about 3 pounds total), skin removed, drumsticks and thighs separated
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 4 large shallots (about 6 ounces), sliced (about 1½ cups)
- 8 medium mushrooms (about 5 ounces), cleaned and halved
- 4 small yams or sweet potatoes (about 1 pound), peeled and halved lengthwise
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 8 large garlic cloves, crushed and chopped (2 tablespoons)
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Heat the oil in a large skillet. Add the chicken pieces in batches and sauté over medium-high heat until browned on all sides, about 10 minutes.

Add the onion and cook for 1 minute. Add the shallots, mushrooms, yams or sweet potatoes, wine, garlic, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, cover, reduce the heat, and boil very gently for 20 minutes.
Garnish with the parsley and serve.

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