Welcome to the Pacific

Got a great shot of mainland Japan, Okinawa, Korea or Guam? If so, submit it and maybe it’ll end up on the front page of Welcome to the Pacific.

Photo deadline: Jan. 15

Facebook.com/StripesPacific
stripesokinawa.com

SUBMIT A PHOTO FOR THE COVER OF

Recipes from military families worldwide
PAGES 8-16

Board games rule at Kappa Castle

Photo courtesy of Kappa Castle
Much like in the States, the holiday season in Japan is usually the most cheerful and busiest time of year — under normal conditions, of course. We have parties, also known as bonenkai, which are informal year-end celebrations with coworkers and friends. And there are gifts, New Year’s greeting cards, winter illuminations, Christmas markets and more. This time of the year is hectic, but it is also one full of joy.

This year, this joyous season is another unfortunate victim of the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be no late-night parties with our coworkers or gathering with friends and family for many of us. Many of the holiday events my family and I look forward to are either drastically scaled back or canceled altogether.

Our schedules and plans have had to change completely. We won’t be visiting relatives in the New Year as officials encourage people to stay home in Japan. My family and I won’t be attending Christmas Mass as we usually do, nor will we be heading to the big market like Ameyoko in Ueno to pick up fresh seafood for our New Year’s Osechi foods. This holiday season will be like no other we have experienced.
but it also doesn’t mean we can’t look for joy in what we do have.

Winter illuminations around the country are still shining brightly, keeping some normalcy while allowing for social distancing. From Yokohama to Nagasaki and up to Misawa, there are plenty of places where you can still go out and enjoy a bit of holiday cheer safely.

And though we cannot spend time together this year, technology continues to connect us, allowing us to celebrate together but apart. My wife recently celebrated my mother-in-law’s 101st birthday in an online celebration, including my wife’s sister living in Guam and the other sister who lives in the States. Even if it was via computer, their long conversation and the meals they prepared to have while on the call made it feel like they were all in the same room.

This year also means that one of my favorite parts of the season, bonenkai parties, are also going online. Even if online parties aren’t as fun as the ones we’d have in person, we have been working from home since April, so it will be nice to see my coworkers again, even if it is on a screen. But I will definitely miss tying my necktie around my forehead, a custom to signify how much fun we’re having.

Another change will be how many nengajo cards I will be sending. Like the holiday cards you send in the States, we send nengajo New Year’s greeting cards in Japan. I usually send about 100 cards, and they always are a good reminder of just how blessed I am. I will be writing more this year because it is important now more than ever to convey my love and thoughts to my loved ones.

We have indeed had to change how we celebrate many things this year, and unfortunately, the changes have continued to Christmas and New Year’s festivities. Despite all of this, I’m looking forward to what 2021 has in store. My wife, daughter, and I will be ringing in the New Year with lucky toshikoshi soba, catching up with relatives via video call, and being thankful to have each other no matter what the future has in store. Happy holidays and Happy New Year to you and your family!
I am the kind person who feels an urge to add the word “video” or “digital” whenever I hear the word “game.” To me, board games seem too prototypical to be interesting. In an age where computer graphics can do it all, what’s the point of doing it the old way, with a dice, miniatures and maps?

For an Okinawan who spent a substantial portion of his childhood playing the first generation of Nintendo games like Donkey Kong and Mario Bros. (before they earned the title “Super”), I always wondered why people would settle on playing Monopoly or The Game of Life with family and friends.

That was the question I had in my mind recently when I knocked on the door of Kappa Castle Game & Hobby, a board game shop near Mihama American Village. Hearing of its growing popularity among Americans, I had to see what the fuss was all about.

It was on an early Friday afternoon, still an hour before its opening hour and Ryan Stumpff, the owner of the shop, welcomed me with a smile.

Taking one step inside, I was a little surprised. To me, the shop looked more like a section of Barnes & Noble than a place for gaming. There were shelves placed along the walls, but the space in the middle of the room was empty. Ryan told me that area was reserved for tables and chairs that would be set up when people came to play games.

On the shelves, I could see fancy packages in various colors and designs lined up, with familiar faces like goblins, dragons and knights casting a challenging eye on me. While some had an artistic look, others looked like comical pop art. Many dice and miniatures were also on display. What I didn’t see was Monopoly or the Game of Life.

“We are an import game shop and play space,” Stumpff said, pointing out popular games like Quacks and Drop It. “We have many import games from America to sell, as well as about 200 games to play.”

With soothing music playing in the background, the quiet environment drew a sharp contrast to the noisy arcades or bars I frequent for different kinds of fun. Before I could digest the meaning of the setting, Ryan introduced me to some games.

The first game we played was Tsuro, which, according to the shop owner, is one of the most popular. The rules are simple: each player draws three tiles from a facedown stack and places one of them on a square board, before drawing another. Each tile has various lines drawn on it which indicate paths. Each tile needs to be positioned in a way to connect its lines to those on others. With each turn of placing a tile, players move their markers along the path. A player will lose if his or her marker falls off the paths by touching an outer edge of the board.

At first, I played without seeing the point of the game. However, as more and more paths came to be connected and the closer the distance between my marker and Ryan’s became, I found myself absorbed in the game without even noticing. It didn’t take me long to realize that markers are destined to touch an edge sooner or later. I thought hard on each turn to keep my marker away from the edge.

However, Ryan often came up with a hand that created a path that not only moved his marker to an advantageous position but also caused me trouble. It took the...
By the time I left Kappa Castle, board games and board game playing had become clear to me. Fitch, who described himself as a regular player of board games, learned about Kappa Castle through word of mouth. He’s happy he did. “There is a bigger selection than I was expecting. A lot more miniatures than I was expecting. A lot more different board games, paint supplies,” Fitch said. “I’ve been on Okinawa since April … it’s always a good to find a place that sells stuff you enjoy.”

There’s also a regular customer who knows the shop since before the shop moved to its new location. “We used to go to his old shop when he was down here near Camp Kinser,” said David Made- ro-Craven from Camp Shields. “He (Ryan) moved up here, much closer, I like them out here now. We come here, browse games, we play D&D, so we browse his miniatures, dices, stuff like that all the time.”

He described the fun of playing boardgame by saying, “I can’t say one thing in particular that draws me to the games. Their ability to strategically beat your friends, that’s something.” Made-ro-Craven said, “Or work together with someone else and just spending time with people and playing.”

By the time I left Kappa Castle, board games started to make sense to me. Although the multi-dimensional fun remains hard to explain, it was no longer a mystery.

Photos by Shoji Kudaka

Kappa Castle Game & Hobby Shop

GPS COORDINATES: N 26.310195, E 127.762175
HOURS: 2 p.m. – 8 p.m. (Thu – Sun)
* Closed Mon.-Wed.
FACEBOOK: https://www.facebook.com/KappaCastleGame/
TWITTER: https://twitter.com/kappacastlegame
INSTAGRAM: https://www.instagram.com/kappacastlegame/

* In addition to game sales, the shop offers a game library for customers to play.
* Customers need to wear a mask in the store. A hand sanitizer is available at the front door.
* No outside drink or snacks allowed at the shop.
* Curbside pickup & virtual shopping available.
* Contact at 090-7816-7282 or via the social media for more info.
* Please follow your command’s directions when visiting off-post businesses.

Q & A with gaming geek

A store where people come in and play games … really?

Yes. Board Game-style cafes are becoming more and more popular in Japan. We’ve paired it with a traditional shop where customers can freely shop and go or stay and play from our library of over 200 games. We will suggest and teach games to anybody of any experience level. We also offer snack and non-alcoholic drink options so people can play as long as they like.

What’s your store’s biggest drawing point?

For some people, it’s having a space to meet new friends and learn new games. For others, it’s the fact that we import games for sale in our shop and try to get new items within the week of their release.

You’re celebrating your 2nd anniversary and you’ve had some success. Why do you think that is?

I think it’s from the positive word of mouth. We try to deliver a good experience teaching games, or making sure people are walking away with a product they know they will enjoy.

You said about 70 percent of your customers are from the military community. What draws them to your store?

We’ve become more centrally located after our move to Chatan (about a 5-minute walk from American Village). Positive word of mouth has also been huge. We try to offer products that do not exist anywhere else on island. I also feel like our shop is offering a healthy alternative when it comes to liberty.

You are more than just games, please tell us the other aspects of your business?

Other than selling/playng games, we can 3D print miniature figures for customers’ favorite games and also paint them. We also import rare exotic dice made from stones, fossils and wood, and have even been trying our hand at producing our own line of dice sets.

What are your future business plans?

Right now, our goal is to continue working to get even more companies to work with us to import their product, attend and host more events to support our hobby, and look to increase our staffing to keep the shop open longer throughout the week.
Okayama’s

Historical Sights, Flavors, and Hot Springs

Written by: Charlie Pang

It’s no coincidence that Okayama is a dedicated stop along the Tokaido bullet train line that speeds westward across Japan. Too often overlooked as the inconspicuous middle child situated halfway between Osaka and Hiroshima, the city of Okayama is renowned for its peaches, old-style sushi, mountain hot springs, and moon-viewing gardens.

If the pulse of Okayama lies in the lively neighborhood of high streets and shopping arcades that surround the central train station, its historical core is indisputably Korakuen Garden. The famous Edo-period garden was commissioned as a peaceful daimyo resort by Lord Ikeda Tsunamasa and completed in 1700. Since 1884, it’s been open to the general public. Today, the garden buzzes with locals, tourists, and birdwatchers, strolling across and around the park.

Korakuen Garden is popularly known as one of Japan’s Three Great Gardens since it first appeared in a photo book for foreigners in 1904. Korakuen survived significant damage from a 1934 flood and 1945 war bombings and has been faithfully preserved over the years thanks to detailed plans and illustrations documented by the original Ikeda clan.

Meandering through the garden—which also includes the remains of an equestrian ground and an archery range—it’s easy to imagine a feudal lord’s leisure activities during more peaceful times. Every spring, Korakuen hosts tea picking and rice planting festivals. Every autumn, traditional Noh theater performances are held at the reconstructed open-air stage in honor of Lord Ikeda’s affinity with the 14th-century art form.

Korakuen’s various flora highlight the seasons, while the evergreen cypress grove is visited all year round by many wild birds. In another corner, endangered red-crowned cranes live inside a dedicated aviary. As Japanese symbols of luck and longevity, cranes roam free at Korakuen from the Edo period until they faced after World War II. In 1956, they were reintroduced to the garden. A few times a year, these majestic birds are released on scheduled morning struts within the garden grounds and during a ceremonial flight on New Year’s Day.

Visitors can also walk along shaded paths outside the garden, especially around its south gate, before crossing the pedestrian Tsukimi Bridge to Okayama Castle. Like many black and white teishaku (castle towers) in the region, its architectural style is characteristic of the late 16th century Azuchi-Momoyama period. The distinctive black weatherboards that protect its outer walls give it the nickname of Ujo, or “Black Crow” castle, in contrast to the neighboring Himeji’s “White Egret” castle.

Okayama Castle was founded by Lord Ukita Hideie in 1597 and eventually expanded to include a salt warehouse, 35 turrets, and 21 gates. In 1869, the main buildings became the property of the Meiji government and had been preserved as national property until an air raid on June 23, 1945, burnt most of the castle complex. The only surviving building in the central area was the 16th Tsukimi Yagura (Moon-viewing Turret) just inside the northwest walls.

Above: View of Korakuen Garden from Yuishinzan Hill | Photo: Charlie Pang
Southeast of the city center, past Saikaiji, from the sheltered harbor of Hoden, a small boat will take you to the nearby island of Inujima. Just 10 minutes away from the mainland, Inujima is one of the contemporary art-infused islands of the Seto Inland Sea. While it may be smaller than Naoshima and Teshima, Inujima’s striking reappraisal of its industrial history alone is worth the journey. You will immediately see the giant eroding chimneys of its early 20th-century copper refinery jutting up above the horizon as you approach the east side of the island.

Since 2008, the old refinery ruins have been converted into the Inujima Seirensha Art Museum: an art site that stores heat in its chimneys, leverages natural light with angles and mirrors, recycles human waste as fertilizer, and preserves the exposed Karami brick walls of its original structure.

Just west of Okayama station, near the Hekancho shopping arcade, the Japanese sushi restaurant Fukuzushi specializes in sawara (Spanish mackerel). According to the chef, sawara is the defining element of Barazushi: a luxurious style of sushi made in homes around Bizen, Saikaiji, and Okayama from the early Meiji period to the 1930s. A scattering of raw fish and other ingredients laid on top of it and mixed into rice is the Barazushi signature. Unlike chirashizushi, which features popular fish such as salmon and tuna, Barazushi’s ingredients are much more varied and subtle—with no soy sauce in sight.

Chef Kubota makes Bizen Barazushi the old-fashioned way as a “faithful reproduction” of the historical dish, using only fresh, natural, and regionally sourced ingredients. It’s a luxurious juxtaposition of tastes and textures presented in the giant clay bowl: vinegary sawara (Spanish mackerel) and mameakari (Japanese sardine), lemony kohai (small sea bream), salty anago (saltwater eel), wrinkled mogai (alge shellfish), crispy lotus root, chewy gobo, crunchy green beans, juicy gourd, spicy pink ginger, soft ginkgo nut, succulent shiitake mushrooms, tender taro stems, and one whole chestnut.

Vinegar is a fundamental flavor in the dish, and the chef advises to begin eating anywhere you like and to chew slowly to give each ingredient time to permeate your palate. Finish your meal by nibbling on a delicate fern leaf, which will leave tangy-sweet flavors on your tongue.
**Thai chicken coconut soup**

*By Karen Laedlein*

This classic Thai chicken soup gets its rich flavor from quintessential Thai ingredients: coconut milk, lemongrass, ginger, turmeric, lime juice, chili, and cilantro. (30 minutes)

**Ingredients:**
- 1 can (14 oz.) coconut milk (low fat works well)
- 2-3 cups water
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 4-5 Tbsp. oyster sauce
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 2-3 tsp. ground ginger or 6 quarter-size slices fresh ginger
- 4 stalks fresh lemongrass, halved

**Instructions:**

1. In a medium saucepan, combine coconut milk, water, turmeric, chili powder, ginger, and lemongrass and bring to boil over high heat.
2. Add chicken, mushrooms, lime juice, oyster/fish sauce. Reduce heat and simmer until chicken is firm and opaque, 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Discard lemongrass. Garnish servings with basil, cilantro, and/or avocado.
4. Reduce heat and simmer until chicken is firm and opaque, 5 to 10 minutes.

A crispy fresh salad is awesome at any time of the year!

**Chicken Caesar Salad**

*By Darlene Coffman*

A crispy fresh salad is awesome at any time of the year!

**Ingredients:**
- 4 boneless/skinless chicken breasts
- 1 cup Dale’s Liquid Steak Seasoning
- 1 small sweet onion (~ 1/2 cup finely diced)
- 3 tablespoons minced garlic
- 1/2 cup EVOO
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 head romaine lettuce
- 2 cups freshly shredded parmesan cheese
- 1 cup Caesar croutons
- Your favorite Caesar dressing

**YOU WILL NEED:** 1 Gallon Ziploc Bag, a large mixing bowl and individual serving bowls.

1. If possible prepare the chicken the day prior. Place them in a Ziploc bag with the Dales seasoning, If possible prepare the chicken the day prior. Place them in a Ziploc bag with the Dales seasoning.

Stars and Stripes recently asked folks from around the world for recipes. Here’s a sample of the many that we are going out to eat isn’t necessarily on the plate, maybe cooking up some of these delicious dishes is the best way to serve up some family fun.

**Greek tiropitakia:**

*Feta cheese triangles recipe*

By Karen Laedlein

(Makes 2 dozen)

**Ingredients:**
- 4-1/2 oz. Feta cheese, crumbled
- 4-1/2 oz. Cottage cheese, small curd
- 2-3 eggs, beaten
- Fresh parsley, minced
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 stick margarine, melted
- Filo sheets (thawed but protected from drying out) (1 section)

**Instructions:**

1. In a bowl, crumble the cheeses, add eggs, and parsley until the consistency of creamed eggs.
2. Melt the butter and margarine.
3. Cut the filo in 3” wide long strips.
4. Brush the melted butter onto one long strip of the filo, fold in half lengthwise. Butter again.
5. Add 1 1/2 tsp* of cheese mix to a corner of the long strip and fold up (flag style) to form a triangle. Repeat.
6. Freeze on waxed sheet then store in a Ziplock bag. (Freeze up to 4 weeks)
7. Cook at 400° until golden.

*Don’t skimp or there will be leftovers.

**Squash pull-apart dinner rolls**

*By Karen Laedlein*

Ingredients:
- 2 1/4 teaspoons dry yeast
- 1 1/2 cups warm milk
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted, plus more for pan
- 2 teaspoons poppy or sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup vegetable shortening or butter
- 1 1/4 cup diced or sliced mushrooms
- 1 1/2 cups grated cheddar cheese
- 1 1/2 cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 4 boneless/skinless chicken breasts
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup EVOO
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 small sweet onion
- 1 head romaine lettuce
- 1 cup Dale’s Liquid Steak Seasoning
- 1/2 cup oyster/fish sauce
- 4-5 Tbsp. oyster sauce
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 4-5 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. poppy or sesame seeds
- 1 small sweet onion

Preheat oven to 375°.

1. In a large bowl, combine warm milk with yeast, sugar, and salt. Let stand 5 minutes, then add egg and beat well to combine.
2. Add squash and shortening; mash with a fork until shortening is in small pieces. Add 1 1/2 cups (3C) flour and mix well with a wooden spoon. Gradually mix in more flour by the cupful until dough collects in a cupful until dough collects around spoon and pulls away from sides of bowl (you may not need all the flour).
3. Transfer to a lightly floured surface and knead 2 minutes. Put dough in a greased bowl (you may not need all the flour).
4. Cover with a tea towel. Let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
5. Punch dough down, turn out onto a lightly floured work surface, and knead until smooth and supple, about 7 minutes. Cut into 4 balls (8); cut each half into 6 pieces.
6. Roll each piece into a sphere and arrange 4 to 5 cups all-purpose flour
7. Brush balls with melted butter and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise 30 minutes.
8. Preheat oven to 375°.

1. Grease a large baking sheet. Punch dough down, turn out onto a lightly floured work surface, and knead until smooth and supple, about 7 minutes. Cut into 4 balls (8); cut each half into 6 pieces. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Roll each piece into a sphere and arrange on baking sheet so they barely touch.
3. Brush balls with melted butter and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise 30 minutes.
4. Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Let cool, then place on a wire rack.

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- 1 small sweet onion
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**Instructions:**

1. In a medium saucepan, combine coconut milk, water, turmeric, chili powder, ginger, and lemongrass and bring to boil over high heat.
2. Add chicken, mushrooms, lime juice, oyster/fish sauce. Reduce heat and simmer until chicken is firm and opaque, 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Discard lemongrass. Garnish servings with basil, cilantro, and/or avocado.
Chicken Caesar Salad

is the best way to serve up some family fun.

going out to eat isn’t necessarily on the plate, maybe cooking up some of these delicious dishes recipes. Here’s a sample of the many that were sent in from around the world. In a time when

Recipes from worldwide

By Karen Laedlein

for topping the Caesar salad.

If possible prepare the chicken the day prior to when you want to serve the dish. Smash cooked, slice into nice cubes and warm chicken. Add favorite Caesar dressing to taste. Enjoy!!

1) Mix the chicken breasts with a meat tenderizer to make them

2) Cook the chicken breasts on the grill or stovetop. If cooking on stovetop, add the marinade in the skillet with the chicken. Once cooked, slice into nice cubes for topping the Caesar salad.

3) Tear the romaine lettuce into bite-size pieces into the large mixing bowl. Add the shredded parmesan cheese and croutons. It’s ready to serve into individual bowls and top with warm chicken. Add favorite Caesar dressing to taste. Enjoy!!

Salsa, pico de gallo, and guacamole

Ready to make an easy 3-in-1 Mexican dip? This recipe is great for snacks, BBQ, tortilla chips & dip, tacos, nachos, quesadillas, and so much more!

Ingredients:

- 2 avocados
- 2 limes (juice the limes)
- 4 medium tomatoes
- 1 Cilantro bunch
- 5-6 Garlic cloves or 2 tbsp garlic powder
- 4 Jalapenos
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions:

1) Dice the onion, tomatoes, garlic, jalapenos, and cilantro (use some of the stems for added flavor burst). Combine in a container with salt and lime juice. Cover and set aside as flavors marry and create more juices.

2) Mash up the 2 avocados in a separate container. Add 1/2 cup of the pico de gallo into the avocado and juices for a smooth texture. Add more salt and garlic powder to taste.

3) For the salsa, a blender or puree can be used. Take 2 cups of the pico de gallo, place in blender and pulse until you get a desired consistency for salsa dip.

4) Place everything in its own section on a serving platter and enjoy!

Cheesy Chicken & Potato Casserole

As a mom of three, Army wife, and entrepreneur, I am always on the go. From cheerleading practice to speech therapy and military ceremonies, my family doesn’t have much downtime. Preparing a delicious meal that my picky eaters will enjoy is no easy feat. Baking a Cheesy Chicken and Potato Casserole is always a win, win. It’s easy to make, and everyone loves it.

Ingredients:

(Serves 4 people)

- 1 lb. Boneless Chicken Breast
- 4 Potatoes
- 1 Tsp. Black Pepper
- 1 Tbsp. Garlic Powder

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Oil baking pan. Clean or peel potatoes. Cut potatoes and chicken into cubed sized pieces, place in baking dish. In a separate bowl, mix all seasonings and olive oil. Pour mixture over chicken and potatoes. Mix well. Bake uncovered for 55 minutes. Remove from oven. Cover top of casserole with shredded cheese and green onions. Return to oven for 5 additional minutes. Remove, serve, and enjoy!

I love to let the military community to submit their favorite recipes. Here on from around the world. In a time when maybe cooking up some of these delicious dishes recipes.

1 Tbsp. Salt

2 Tbsp. Olive Oil

*Green Onions and Shredded Cheese (Optional Garnish)

Puerto Rican Sancocho

Sancocho is a one-pot stew with chunks of tender beef (meat of your choice or no meat at all) and root vegetables. It is typically served with a side of white rice and a piece of ripe avocado.

COOK TIME: 1 hour 40 minutes (includes 20 minutes of prep time)

SERVINGS: approximately 8 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 large cassava (yuca)
- 1 cup of pumpkin (calabaza)
- 2 yams (nabos)
- 2 husks of corn (maiz)
- 2 Taros (yautia)
- 4 medium potatoes (papas)
- 3 large carrots (zanahorias)

MEAT

You can choose between cubed beef, pork, chicken breasts, sausages, chorizo or any kind of meat that can be cut in small pieces. Use approximately 2-3 pounds of meat.

Instructions:

1) Peel all the vegetables and cut them into 1-2 inches chunks.

2) Add the seasonings to a large bottom soup pot over medium-high heat. Cook for 2 minutes and stir it.

3) Add in vegetables and meat.

4) Add water to cover everything in the pot.

5) Cover the pot and wait until soup reaches a boil, then lower heat to medium-low and allow to cook for 1 hour, or until vegetables are fork-tender.

6) Serve with your favorite side dish. ¡Buen provecho!

For more recipes on Page 10
**Homemade Cinnamon Rolls**

**By Najwa Fieger**

**Ingredients:**

**DOUGH**
- 2½ tsp active yeast
- 1 cup warm milk
- 1 tsp cup sugar
- 1/3 cup of unsalted butter
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 4 cups flour

**CENTER ROLL**
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3 tbsp cinnamon powder
- 1/3 cup melted butter

**ICING**
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 oz of cream cheese
- Pinch of salt

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cut bread into slices and arrange on a foil-lined pan.
3. Slices can touch, about an inch thick works well.
4. Spread melted butter over tops and let soak in.
5. Sprinkle lightly with Lawry’s Seasoned Salt.
6. Top each piece using shredded mozzarella and/or Kraft Italian blend shredded cheese.
7. Sprinkle with minced onion.
8. Top with shredded parmesan.
9. Bake under broiler, about 2-3 inches away until cheese starts to barely brown on the edges.
10. Keep a close eye, it cooks fast!
11. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
12. To make the icing, combine powdered sugar, heavy cream, vanilla, cream cheese and a pinch of salt.
13. Drizzle the icing on the cinnamon rolls once they are done.

**Oreo Blueberry Cheesecake Cupcakes**

**By Najwa Fieger**

**Ingredients:**

**CUPCAKE INGREDIENTS**
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup water
- 3 eggs
- Vanilla instant pudding
- Yellowcake mix
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3 tablespoons bacon grease
- 1 stick butter

**BLUEBERRY SYRUP**
- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp lemon juice

**EXTRAS YOU MIGHT LIKE:**
- Canned creamed corn, jalapenos, sweet kernel corn
- Crushed Oreos and use for garnish.

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 365.
2. Place one side half of Oreo on the bottom of each cupcake tin.
3. Line cupcake pan.
4. For cupcake batter: blend yellowcake mix, instant pudding pack, 3 eggs, cup of water, and vegetable oil on low speed, then high speed for about two minutes.
5. Fold in most of the blueberry syrup, saving some for the icing.
6. Remove cream from about half the inside edge of the skillet and place a few pats on top. Enjoy!!

**Ms. DD’s Sweet Southern Cornbread**

**By Darlene Coffman**

**YOU WILL NEED:**
- 1 - 9 inch cast iron skillet and a large mixing bowl.

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put bacon grease in cast iron skillet and place in oven to heat. In a large mixing bowl, mix together the Corn Muffin Mix, sugar, eggs, and milk. Blend well. Batter will appear slightly wetter and lumpy. Add any desired extras here.
2. Remove skillet from oven when bacon grease is completely melted and slightly smoking. Place skillet on stovetop. Poor batter mix into skillet. It should sizzle. Place back in oven and bake till knife inserted into the middle comes out clean (approx 20 minutes). It should appear like a cake with golden brown top and caramel brown edges.
3. Use the stick of butter to outline the inside edge of the skillet and place a few pats on top. Enjoy!!

**Homemade Cinnamon Rolls**

**By Najwa Fieger**

**Ingredients:**

**DOUGH**
- 2½ tsp active yeast
- 1 cup warm milk
- 1 tsp cup sugar
- 1/3 cup of unsalted butter
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 4 cups flour

**CENTER ROLL**
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3 tbsp cinnamon powder
- 1/3 cup melted butter

**ICING**
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 oz of cream cheese
- Pinch of salt

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cut bread into slices and arrange on a foil-lined pan.
3. Slices can touch, about an inch thick works well.
4. Spread melted butter over tops and let soak in.
5. Sprinkle lightly with Lawry’s Seasoned Salt.
6. Evenly distribute sugar/cinnamon mixture over the buttered dough.
7. Roll out the dough. A good measurement is to stretch it out thin to about 16” long and 12” wide.
8. Brush the melted butter on the dough.
9. To make the icing, combine powdered sugar, heavy cream, vanilla, cream cheese and a pinch of salt.
10. Drizzle the icing on the cinnamon rolls once they are done.

**Homemade Cinnamon Rolls**

**By Najwa Fieger**

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- 2½ tsp active yeast
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- 3 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 oz of cream cheese
- Pinch of salt

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cut bread into slices and arrange on a foil-lined pan.
3. Slices can touch, about an inch thick works well.
4. Spread melted butter over tops and let soak in.
5. Sprinkle lightly with Lawry’s Seasoned Salt.
6. Top each piece using shredded mozzarella and/or Kraft Italian blend shredded cheese.
7. Sprinkle with minced onion.
8. Top with shredded parmesan.
9. Bake under broiler, about 2-3 inches away until cheese starts to barely brown on the edges.
10. Keep a close eye, it cooks fast!
11. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
12. To make the icing, combine powdered sugar, heavy cream, vanilla, cream cheese and a pinch of salt.
13. Drizzle the icing on the cinnamon rolls once they are done.

**Oreo Blueberry Cheesecake Cupcakes**

**By Najwa Fieger**

**Ingredients:**

**CUPCAKE INGREDIENTS**
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup water
- 3 eggs
- Vanilla instant pudding
- Yellowcake mix
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3 tablespoons bacon grease
- 1 stick butter

**BLUEBERRY SYRUP**
- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp lemon juice

**EXTRAS YOU MIGHT LIKE:**
- Canned creamed corn, jalapenos, sweet kernel corn
- Crushed Oreos and use for garnish.

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 365.
2. Place one side half of Oreo on the bottom of each cupcake tin.
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3. Use the stick of butter to outline the inside edge of the skillet and place a few pats on top. Enjoy!!
Tuscan Tomato Soup
By Anna and Tom Bagiackas

What we love about this recipe is that it is first, delicious. Secondly, it is easy to make and adaptable with items often found in our pantry. Lastly, it is very adaptable. Easy to cut the recipe in half for one and perfect for a light lunch, or make the full recipe and serve for dinner alongside some crusty bread.

START TO FINISH: 40 MINUTES
SERVINGS: 4

Ingredients:
- 1 sprig fresh basil plus 2 tablespoons chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon table salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- Grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions:
1) Combine oil, garlic and pepper flakes in large saucepan and cook over medium heat until garlic is lightly browned, about 4 minutes.
2) Stir in tomatoes, bread, broth, basil sprig, salt and pepper and bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium, cover and simmer vigorously until bread has softened completely and soup has thickened slightly, about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3) Off heat, discard basil sprig. Whisk soup until bread has fully broken down and soup has thickened further, about 1 minute. Sprinkle with Parmesan and chopped basil, drizzle with extra oil and serve.

(This recipe was adapted from Cook’s Country magazine.)

Zucchini apple bread with crumble topping
By Rosie Ortiz-Torres

Ingredients:
- 4 eggs
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp lime zest
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- grated large apple
- 1 grated zucchini
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup unsalted melted butter (2 sticks)

CRUMBLE TOPPING
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup unsalted melted butter (2 sticks)

Instructions:
Preheat oven to 350, combine zucchini apple ingredients in a large bowl. Spray 2 standard loaf baking containers with non-stick grease and pour the mixture. Add crumble topping on top and bake for 45 minutes in the oven. Adjust heat and baking time depending on oven settings and loaf containers (foil, glass, etc.).

S’mores French Toast
By Najwa Fieger

Need a fun spin on french toast? Look no further than this special recipe of S’mores French Toast!

Ingredients:
- 6 slices of bread (I used French Toast Wonder bread)
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tsp cinnamon (or sprinkle per slice)
- Nutella
- Marshmallow Fluff
- Optional toppings: syrup/bananas/strawberries

Instructions:
1) Whisk eggs.
2) Add in vanilla or cinnamon.
3) Dip the slices of bread in the egg mixture.
4) If the mixture runs out of cinnamon, you can always just sprinkle the bread with cinnamon after dipping in egg.
5) Fry the slices of bread on each side for 2-3 minutes.
6) Spread Nutella on 3 of the slices and marshmallow fluff on the other 3.
7) Sandwich together a Nutella slice with a marshmallow slice.
8) Sprinkle a little powdered sugar on top.
9) Taste great topped with syrup.

Hazelnut and White Chocolate Blondies
By Anna and Tom Bagiackas

After getting completely sucked in watching the Great British Baking Show, these blondies were born. This favorite recipe is inspired from one of the show’s cookbooks and when we needed to make a substitution after missing a key ingredient, these became our own. We have tried the original recipe too but liked ours better! If you cannot find muscovado sugar, you can substitute with light brown sugar.

START TO FINISH: 1 hour
SERVINGS: 8-10

Ingredients:
- 1 cup hazelnuts, chopped
- 1 cup white chocolate chips, or chopped bar
- 2 tablespoons honey

Instructions:
1) Heat oven to 400°F (204°C). Grease a 9-inch square baking pan, then line bottom and sides with parchment paper and grease paper.
2) Whisk the flour, coconut flour, sea salt and baking powder in a large bowl.
3) Melt the butter. Once melted, stir in the granulated and muscovado sugar.
4) Add the beaten eggs, a little at a time, and the vanilla extract, then fold in the flour mixture until fully combined.
5) Gently fold in heaping 1/2 cup of chopped hazelnuts and all of the chocolate chips until evenly distributed, then pour into the prepared pan, giving the pan a gentle shake to disperse the mixture evenly.
6) Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out sticky, but not wet. Remove from the oven, brush with the honey and sprinkle with the reserved chopped hazelnuts while still warm.
7) Let the blondie cool in the pan for 10 minutes and then remove it carefully and transfer to a wire rack to cool completely before slicing into squares.

(This recipe is inspired from “The Big Book of Amazing Cakes” by The Great British Baking Show.)
I have been thinking a lot about end of the year culinary rituals and traditions recently. I keep pondering why when I first experienced Osechi (Japanese New Year’s cooking) as a young bride (literally only married for 2 weeks) in Tokyo all those years ago, it so captivated me to this day? In a way, it was and remains a culinary bridge and celebration of the two cultures that I deeply love: Japan and the United States. I love preparing, enjoying and celebrating Osechi as a special year-end ritual and annual tradition with my daughter. We look forward to it every year, from planning the menus, to shopping together, to cooking and of course to the eating! I really love the tradition of getting all your shopping and most of the cooking done in advance, so that this holiday can be enjoyed with your family in a relaxed and leisurely manner.

Traditionally all the dishes that make up the osechi panoply are precooked and put into special four-tiered lacquerware boxes called jubako by New Year’s Eve. New Year’s festivities run from January 1 to 3. During that time no cooking is done — just more non-perishable food is added to the jubako as family or guests drop by. Instead of rice, mochi, or pounded rice cakes, are eaten. If you are lucky enough to find fresh mochi at the end of the year, by all means try it! Mochi can be an acquired taste, and the real trick is never to overcook it as it will disintegrate.

While my osechi of today is streamlined and much simplified here in the Bay area, it is no less significant and still filled with osechi classics that we love. I bring out the special over-sized ozoni soup bowls, and jubako that I have, and we will pick out new chopsticks to use during our celebration. Every year, I make something new for my daughter to try and enjoy. Here are two of my favorite osechi recipes to try this season. They are both fun, easy to make and very delicious.

Toshikoshi Soba

In Japanese culture, soba (buckwheat) noodles have always been seen as a “happiness” food, served on special occasions. It is also tradition, when moving into a new house to greet your new neighbors with hikoshi soba (moving soba). This involves a play on words, as soba also means “close” or “near” — like neighbors.

Another soba custom is Toshikoshi Soba (year’s-passing soba), as it’s supposed to be the last food to touch your lips on New Year’s Eve. The tradition is so established nationwide that often reservations are needed even for buying the freshly made soba to cook up at home. One year I attempted to make my own and found working with fresh buckwheat flour proved extremely hard. The finished product did, however, earn nods of approval from my Japanese family, despite the fact that without the special chef’s knife used by soba cutters, the noodles were a trifle thick.

Tokyo-style Toshikoshi Soba

Serves 4

Ingredients
- 6 ¾ cups water
- A 3-inch by 3-inch piece of kombu kelp wiped with a damp cloth and lightly slashed to release the flavor
- 2 oz. katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes)
- 4 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon mirin (sweet sake)
- 1 teaspoon salt or to taste
- 1 lb. dried or 1 ¼ lbs. fresh soba noodles
- 4 dried or fresh shiitake mushrooms stemmed (reconstitute dried ones by soaking in warm water with a dash of sugar for 30 minutes — reserve 2 tablespoons of liquid to add to the broth)
- ½ lb. chicken breast cut into thin slices
- 2 large Negi (Japanese leeks) white part only, cut diagonally into thin slices
- 5 ¼ oz. spinach trimmed, parboiled, and drained
- Shichimi togarashi (Seven-spice pepper) to taste for garnish

Instructions
1. Heat the water with the kelp in a deep saucepan. Just before it boils, remove the kelp and pour in the dried bonito flakes. Boil, stirring, for about three minutes, then strain into a clean saucepan. Add the soy sauce, mirin, salt, and mushroom liquid. Bring to a boil again; taste, adjust seasoning if necessary and cook over medium heat for a few minutes.
2. Five minutes before serving, heat up the chicken and leeks in the broth. In another pan, cook the noodles according to instructions on the package, then drain and rinse to get rid of the starch.
3. To serve, place a mound of noodles in each deep soup bowl. Top with one mushroom and separate mounds of chicken, Japanese leeks, and spinach. Gently ladle on the broth and serve immediately. Pass the seven-spice pepper separately.
Ozoni on January 1st

Zoni is a Japanese regional soup and can even differ house to house. The soup includes pounded toasted rice cakes (mochi), chicken or fish, and vegetables served separately after gorging on the many foods in the jubako. It is usually the only hot dish served and is an integral part of the meal. Matsumae Zoni is a specialty of Hokkaido, and one of my absolute favorites to make for Osechi. It will definitely be on our menu on Jan. 1.

Matsumae Zoni Soup: Salmon & salmon roe rice cake soup

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 4 pieces fresh salmon fillet, 2” by 1”
- 4 tbsps. red salmon roe
- 6 cups kombu dashi* stock (see Notes)
- 4 thick slices peeled daikon radish
- 8 thick slices carrot, peeled
- 4 fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed
- 4 fresh or dried rice cakes (mochi)
- 4 tbsps. soy sauce, or to taste
- 2 tbsps. sake
- 1 tsp salt

Garnish

- A few sprigs of trefoil (mitsuba)
- Grated yuzu peel or Meyer lemon peel

Instructions

1. Make fish stock according to the directions in the Notes section. Flavor stock with soy sauce, sake, and salt. Add daikon radish, carrot, shiitake mushrooms and salmon. Boil until soft (roughly five minutes).

2. Meanwhile, toast rice cakes until they puff up and brown. It takes about six to seven minutes. They should look like oversized marshmallows.

3. In each deep soup bowl, lay one rice cake on the bottom and arrange other ingredients against it. Add stock and top with salmon roe and a few sprigs of trefoil and or yuzu peel. Serve immediately.

Recipe Notes

How to make Kombu Dashi Stock:

Take a 6-inch piece of kelp (kombu), wipe lightly with a damp cloth and put into a pot with 6 cups water. Bring to a boil and remove kelp. Add a generous 3/4 cup of dried bonito shavings (katsuobushi) and boil for one minute. Turn off heat and after 2 minutes, strain.

Holiday talk

During the holiday season in Japan, you will see KFCs filled with young couples on Christmas Day, while on New Year’s Eve, you will hear bells from temples heralding the arrival of the new year. Here are some useful Japanese words and phrases you can use during the holiday season.

“Kurisumasu wa doo sugoshimasu ka?” = How are you planning to spend Christmas day? (“Kurisumasu” = Christmas day, “doo” = how, “sugoshimasu” = spend)

“Kanojo to Kentakkii ni ikimasu.” = I will go to Kentucky Fried Chicken with my girlfriend. (“kanojo” = girlfriend, “kareshi” = boyfriend, “kentakkii” = KFC, “ikimasu” = will go)

“Santakuroosu ga pizza wo haitatsu shiteimasu.” = Santa Claus is delivering a pizza. (“santakuroosu” = Santa Claus, “haitatsu shiteimasu” = delivering)

“Yoi otoishi wo.” = Have a happy new year. (Greetings in the yearend)

“Akemashite omedeto gozaimasu!” = A happy new year! (Greetings)

“Hatsumode wa dokoni ikimasu ka?” = What shrine/temple are you going to visit during the first of the year? (“hatsumode” = first visit to a shrine/temple for the year, “dokoni” = to where, “ikimasu” = will go)

WHEN ON OKINAWA –

You can also say it in “Uchinaaguchi” (island dialect) like this:

“itoshi mukaikimi soori.” = Have a happy new year.

“lisoooguwachi deebiru.” = A happy new year! (greetings on Jan. 1)

- Takahiro Takiguchi, Stripes Okinawa

Pronunciation key: “A” is short (like “ah”); “E” is short (like “get”); “I” is short (like “it”); “O” is long (like “old”); “U” is long (like “tube”); and “AI” is a long “I” (like “hike”). Most words are pronounced with equal emphasis on each syllable, but “OU” is a long “O” with emphasis on that syllable.
Now that we’ve taken care of the happiness portion of the New Year food courses with burdock, it’s time to summon money with kumquats!

In Japan, this tiny citrus fruit is called kinkan and forms part of the Osechi Ryori because the name in kanji is either 金柑 (jin kan) or 金桔 (jin jié), meaning “wealth” and “good luck”, according to the Japan Weather Association.

Besides the prospect of money, kumquats are delicious and delicately sweet! They can be eaten raw or cooked rice wine. The cooking process brings a sweet, citrusy and marmalade-like taste.

Commonly called kinkan-no-kanroni, stewed kumquat is a regular menu item for the New Year’s meal. Try the recipe below, adapted from the Japanese Consumers’ Co-operative Union. With just a few simple steps to follow, this would arguably be one of the easiest Japanese New Year foods that you can make on your own.

The only daunting part of the entire recipe is removing the seeds. However, for 30 pieces of kinkan, I was able to complete this task in 10 minutes by making small slits on the delicate skin and using a toothpick to pry out the seeds with a little patience.

From start to finish, it took me about 90 minutes. Though it is a bit longer than I usually spend on cooking, the end result was totally worth it. The heavenly scent of the kinkan, sugar and mirin will entice you to give it a little taste, but just be careful not to burn yourself.

Another good pointer to know is that this can be cooked in a big batch and stored much like you would marmalade or jelly. Refrigerated in a jar or airtight container, the kinkan will last about six months to a year.

So, add this sweet dish to your New Year’s lineup and see if it brings you good luck and wealth in 2021!

**Try gobou-no-nikumaki for a lucky new year**

In Japan, every New Year we eat a variety of foods which form part of the Osechi Ryori (or New Year’s foods) meant to bring us good luck, health and happiness. Goubou-no-nikumaki, a rolled slice of beef with burdock root at the center, is one of the popular dishes in the Osechi lineup.

Burdock is a reminder of the grain harvest because it’s black and elongated appearance resembles the Japanese crane, which comes flying when a rich harvest is gathered. The rolled dish includes burdock because it is eaten with the hope that happiness will last long like burdock grows.

Depending on where you’re celebrating the New Year, burdock and meat rolls have a different name. On the mainland, it’s called yawataki, after Yawata City in Kyoto Prefecture. On Okinawa, not only is its name different — it’s called Gunboumaki — but, so is its secondary ingredient — pork or beef.

Just recently, I had a chance to try the Okinawan version following a recipe I found in an old cookbook at home. I happened to have carrots on hand, so I modified the recipe to include them. The recipe was simple enough even for a first-timer like me. The only challenge was peeling the skins of the burdock roots, but once the prep work was done, the rest of the cooking went smoothly.

As the rolls simmered in a broth of sugar, cooking sake and mirin sweet cooking rice wine, the delicious scent spread throughout the kitchen. I couldn’t resist giving one a try before they were fully cooked. One bite and the savory juices exploded over my taste buds. The well-seasoned and tender ingredients were delectable — no wonder this is also a popular item for kids’ bento boxes year-round. This is a great option or those eating into Japanese cuisine, plus the veggies and pork or beef are a good source of nutrients.

Cornbread, peas, soba, mochi and beans are also popular ingredients used in New Year’s dishes. But, make sure to include some burdock, carrots and pork or beef for good health and happiness in 2022!
**Stripes Sports Trivia**

**OPTION PLAY:** Back in the day, Tiger Woods was as good as it got. His domination was unrivaled by just about any athlete. And, in 2000, Tiger let out one of his biggest roars with a huge win at The U.S. Open. By how many strokes did Tiger beat his next closest competitor?

A. 8  B. 15  C. 10  D. 12

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**Memories with Stars and Stripes, Pacific**

Share your Memories with Stars and Stripes Pacific!

Your photos/stories will appear on the Stars and Stripes Pacific 70th Anniversary Website, 75.stripes.com.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

Christ's birthday is December 25, but did you know when Buddha's birthday is? In Japan, Buddha's birthday is celebrated April 8. On this day, Buddhist temples placed the statue of baby Buddha in a small chapel beautifully decorated with flowers outside of the temple. The custom is to pour sweet tea over the statue with a ladle to honor the legend which says Buddha was born in Nepal surrounded by perfumed blossoms that had rained down from heaven, and two streams of sparkling water poured from the sky to bathe him.

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**Language Lesson**

Would you please write it down?

**Kaiete itadake masenka?**

---

**SUDOKU**

Edited by Margie E. Burke

**Difficulty: Easy**

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

**HOW TO SOLVE:**

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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**Crossword**

by Margie E. Burke

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<tr>
<td>1 Walking stick</td>
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<td>10 Helps out</td>
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<td>14 Worse than bad</td>
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<td>15 Canyon call</td>
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<td>16 Had no doubt</td>
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<td>17 Blue-eyed fellow</td>
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<td>19 Not being used</td>
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<td>20 Fishing spot</td>
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<td>22 Bone-dry</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 “Stilling the Cat” author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 “Flame” singer</td>
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<td>27 Troop group</td>
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<td>29 Coffin carrier</td>
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<td>32 Cloudless</td>
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<td>33 Ring-tailed animal</td>
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<td>35 Ind. neighbor</td>
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<td>36 Texas siege site</td>
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<td>39 Edit menu choice</td>
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<tr>
<td>40 “Stranger Things” actor</td>
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<td>41 More than fast</td>
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**Answers to Previous Crossword:**

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<th>O K I N A W A</th>
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<td>DECEMBER 24, 2020 − JANUARY 6, 2021</td>
<td>A STARS AND STRIPES COMMUNITY PUBLICATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 YEARS IN THE PACIFIC</td>
<td>STRIPES OKINAWA 15</td>
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http://www.grit-moto.com/
**Schnitzel-Casserole**
By Katharina Bennett

Your taste buds will love this hearty and delicious recipe!

**Ingredients:**
- 4 Pork chops
- 1 red pepper
- 1-2 onions
- 1 can mushrooms
- 1 glass of bell pepper sauce “Hungarian-style”
- 0.2-liter heavy cream
- salt & pepper

**Instructions:**
Season the pork chops with salt and pepper and fry until cooked through. Cut into small pieces and put with the chopped pepper and onions in a casserole dish. Add the mushrooms and the sauce “Hungarian-style.” Mix everything. Lastly, pour the heavy cream over the top (don’t mix anymore) and bake at 200°C for about 45 minutes. Serve with rice and a green salad.

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**Almond Cake recipe**
By Jane H. Davis

I like this recipe because it is fast, easy and requires no special ingredients.

**SERVES:** 16

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup white all-purpose flour
- 1 cup white granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened (do NOT use margarine)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds, more or less according to taste

**Instructions:**
1) Preheat oven to 350 F
2) In a large bowl, stir together sugar and flour. Add butter. The mixture will be crumbly.
3) Mix together the eggs and almond flavoring, stir into sugar, flour and butter mixture.
4) Spread evenly in lightly buttered pie pan. Sprinkle slivered almonds on top.
5) Bake at 350°F for 25-35 minutes until edges are light golden brown.
6) Cut into 16 wedges while still slightly warm.

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**Tom and Anna’s Breakfast Hash**
By Anna and Tom Bagiackas

One of our go-to meals on the weekend is a breakfast hash, using whatever veggies are in our fridge or in season. While hashes are great for brunch, this is also a very easy weeknight dinner and a great way to use up any odds and ends! This is more of a guideline than a recipe so you can mix up what vegetables or meats you include. I highly recommend roasting the potatoes though, the seasoning adds great flavor to the final hash and roasting them in the oven ensures the potatoes are cooked all the way through and crispy. You can chop your vegetables once the potatoes are in the oven, as the remaining steps of the hash won’t take as long as the potatoes.

**START TO FINISH:** 1 hour

**SERVINGS:** 2-4

**Ingredients:**
- 1 recipe for Roasted Breakfast Potatoes
- 8 ounces breakfast sausage, optional
- Salt
- 1 large onion, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1/2 red, orange or yellow bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 cup chopped vegetables, such as zucchini, summer squash, corn or beets
- 3 handfuls of spinach, kale or other leafy green
- 4 eggs, fried or poached
- 1 avocado, diced

**Instructions:**
1) Prepare Roasted Breakfast Potatoes (they will take the longest to cook).
2) Heat 12-inch cast iron skillet and add sausage, breaking up with a wooden spoon and cook until no pink remains. Remove sausage from pan onto a paper towel-lined plate, using a slotted spoon. Wipe out skillet of excess oil.
3) Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in now-empty cast iron skillet. Add onion and a pinch of salt, and stir into oil, paprika, garlic powder, kosher salt and pepper until evenly combined.
4) Once potatoes are finished, add them to skillet with the sausage and mix everything so hash is evenly combined.
5) Pour over cake batter
6) To serve, spoon hash mixture into bowls, top with prepared egg and avocado pieces, and season with salt and pepper.
7) Roasted Breakfast Potatoes

---

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**Lazy Käsekuchen**
By Cindy Goldman

We were a part of the military community for 20+ years. I was a DODDS teacher and my husband worked as a civilian for the Air Force. We were stationed in Guantanamo Cuba, Ramstein Germany and Okinawa Japan. This recipe was inspired by our tour in Germany. We enjoyed Käsekuchen for breakfast, afternoon snack, or as a dessert! My version of Käsekuchen is fast, easy and delicious!

**Ingredients:**

FOR THE CAKE BATTER
- 1 box Duncan Hines butter golden cake mix
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3 eggs
- 7 tablespoons softened butter

FOR THE TOP LAYER
- 2 - 8-ounce packages of softened cream cheese
- 1 1/2 - 2 cups powered sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

**Instructions:**
1) Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick comes out dry.
2) Sprinkle the top with cinnamon sugar mixture while warm.

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By Katharina Bennett

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