

CLIENT EXPERIENCE TEAM COOKBOOK 2019



Wishing you and yours a season of laughter, good food, and memories that will last a lifetime.



This year, we offer a gift that goes beyond the holiday season. Throughout the year, enjoy homemade recipes hand-picked from the kitchens of your Nelnet Account Management Team. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for being our partner. Have a wonderful holiday season, and a very happy new year.

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BUFFALO CHICKEN DIP

PREP TIME: **10 MINUTES** COOK TIME: **20 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients together. Pour the mixture into a non-stick sprayed casserole dish and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Serve with tortilla and/or pita chips, carrots and/or celery.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (12 ounce) cans chicken, drained
- ¹/₂ cup ranch dressing
- 2 cups colby jack cheese
- 1 cup Frank's RedHot Sauce
- 8 ounces cream cheese

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Braden Bomberger, account manager - Lincoln, nebraska

I am 29 years young. I graduated from the University of Nebraska with a degree in applied science. I love the outdoors and my favorite hobbies include hunting and fishing. I am recently engaged to my fiancé Vanessa who I have been with for over six years. I also enjoy traveling and my favorite places to visit include Colorado, South Dakota, Las Vegas, and Mexico.

This is our favorite gameday recipe. Easy to make and people at tailgating parties love it. I love this appetizer because it normally means that football is going on!





BACON WRAPPED JALAPEÑO POPPERS

PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a sheet pan with foil and coat it with cooking spray.

Cut the jalapeños in half lengthwise and use a spoon to scoop out the seeds and ribs.

In a medium bowl mix, together the cream cheese, cheddar cheese, onion powder, salt and pepper.

Fill each jalapeño half with the cream cheese mixture.

Cut the slices of bacon in half crosswise and wrap each pepper half in a slice of bacon, using a toothpick to secure the bacon.

Arrange the peppers on the baking sheet and bake for 20-25 minutes until bacon is crispy and browned. Serve immediately.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Reese Beninghans, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

Aloha, I was born in Hawaii where my father was stationed in the Navy at the time. I moved around a lot growing up before we landed in good old Lincoln, Nebraska. In my free time, I really enjoy golfing and working on projects around the house. My girlfriend Dani and I were blessed with a baby girl on November 14th. We are so excited to be parents! I have been working on my dad jokes. "Why can't you hear a psychiatrist using the bathroom? Because the 'P' is silent."...that's a keeper.

This is my absolute favorite appetizer to bring to get togethers and parties or just make for myself to enjoy at home.











- 12 jalapeño peppers (approx. 3-4 inches long)
- 18 ounces block cream cheese (softened)
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 12 slices bacon (do not use thick cut)
- cooking spray

BAKED BRIE

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

APPETIZER

COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES SERVINGS: 8-10

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Defrost puff pastry (purchase in the pie/desert section of the grocery store) for approximately 15 to 20 minutes by laying it out at room temperature. Once it has defrosted, unfold it.

Then in a saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Sauté the pecans in the butter until golden brown, approx. 5 minutes. Add the cinnamon and stir until pecans are coated well.

Next, place the pecan mixture on top of the brie and sprinkle the brown sugar over the mixture. Lay the puff pastry out on a flat surface. Place the brie in the center of the pastry. Gather up the edges of the pastry, pressing around the brie and gather at the top, so that no air can escape. Fold and pinch the edges together so it doesn't come open. Brush the beaten egg over top and side of brie.

Place brie on a cookie sheet and bake for 20 minutes until pastry is golden brown.

Serve with bread or crackers and fruit like sliced apples and strawberries.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Christine Stevens, account manager - omaha, Nebraska

I grew up in Omaha and attended college here (people remind me that I can leave). I am from a large, crazy family and I am the youngest of nine. I have one son, Evan. He is 16 years old. I also have a lovely golden retriever named Ellie.

This dish is a year-around favorite at parties and just an occasional appetizer at home. It is easy to make, looks pretty and more important it is really yummy.





- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry, pre-packaged
- 1-2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pecans, rough chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 (8/10-ounce) brie (wheeled or cut)
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- Bread, crackers, and fruit such as apples and strawberries for serving

BRUSCHETTA

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

PPETIZER

COOK TIME: 40 MINUTES INACTIVE PREP TIME: 2 HRS

SERVINGS: 10-12

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place enough cloves of garlic for 2 tablespoons in a piece of foil, skins removed. Drizzle some extra virgin olive oil over the top of the garlic and a tablespoon of butter. Wrap the garlic in foil so it resembles a bulb and is air-tight. I like to use two pieces of foil just in case. Place on center rack and bake for 40 minutes. Let it cool for 10 minutes before handling.

NOTE: If you want to use a whole bulb of garlic, cut the top part off so bulbs are exposed (roots side down). You can save the roasted garlic for an olive oil and roasted garlic dipping sauce, add to pastas, pizzas, or any recipe that roasted garlic and olive oil will be good for. It adds an extra umph to mashed potatoes and roasted vegetables!

Cut up the Roma tomatoes into small cubes.

Thinly slice the fresh basil by placing the leaves on top of each other and rolling them.

In a bowl, combine the Roma tomatoes, fresh basil, roasted garlic (if making the roasted garlic, you can use a garlic press or chop the garlic), and balsamic vinegar.

Refrigerate and marinate for two hours.

Add the shredded cheese and virgin olive oil before serving with the crusty bread.

NOTE: The amount of ingredients can be altered for personal taste. For extra sweetness add a teaspoon of brown sugar, or for added kick add some red pepper flakes.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Jim Chambers,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I am originally from South New Jersey, but I escaped the East Coast and moved to the Midwest in 1997. I went to Lancaster Bible College for my undergrad. Then, I went to school and worked for Andrews University and Ball State University. I studied English literature for a M.A. and a Ph.D. I have worked in higher ed for approx. 16 years. I love bringing this experience to the institutions that I work with day to day. I have worked for Nelnet for over a year. I came from the service and call center for our student loan processing to Nelnet Campus Commerce, where I have been since January. I based this recipe on a bruschetta dish from the restaurant Papa Vinos. When I worked as an office manager at Andrews University, I would have a pasta dinner at my apartment for our students. I would serve this dish every time. It's a crowd pleaser. For me, this would be a late summer or early fall dish.

- 1-2 pounds of Roma tomatoes
- 2 cups of balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons of roasted garlic, chopped (prepared or you can make yourself)
- 1 cup of Kraft shredded parmesan, romano and asiago cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ a bunch of fresh basil
- 2 cups of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 loaf of crusty bread







CREAM CHEESE STUFFED MINI PEPPERS WITH SAUSAGE

PREP TIME: **20-30 MINUTES** COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Cut peppers in half lengthwise and remove ribs and seeds. Place them on a parchment lined baking sheet.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a medium skillet, crumble and brown the sausage until no longer pink and cooked through. Drain the fat.

Make the filling by mixing the sausage, cream cheese, cheddar, and parmesan together until well combined. Taste filling and add salt and/or pepper if needed.

Fill the peppers with the sausage mixture. Bake for 12-14 minutes. Serve warm.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Katie Steffen, account manager – Omaha, Nebraska

I was born and raised in Nebraska. I am originally from South Sioux City. I moved to Lincoln, NE for college. I graduated from Doane College with a bachelor's degree in human relations. When I am not working, I enjoy traveling (preferably to warmer climates), Husker football, being with friends, family and I have love/hate feelings towards running and working out. :)

This recipe is good for small get togethers and Husker football parties! Go Big Red!

- 1 pound fresh Tribelli peppers (sweet mini peppers)
- 1 pound mild Italian sausage, cooked, crumbled, drained of fat
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- ¹/₂ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ¹/₂ cup grated parmesan cheese
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste



GRANDMA'S DEVILED EGGS

PREP TIME: **20 MINUTES**

COOK TIME: **15 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Boil eggs for 15 minutes at an easy boil. Drain and cool eggs.

Once cool, carefully remove the shells from the eggs. Discard the shells, and gently dry the eggs with paper towels.

Cut eggs in half and gently remove yolks and place the yolks into a bowl. Place white halves on a plate. Smash the yolk thoroughly with a fork.

In another bowl, start mixing the dressing (mayo, mustard, vinegar, sugar, sour cream and salt).

Once you have the consistency you want for your filling, start adding the filling to the egg whites.

Garnish with paprika and chives (if desired).

Place in refrigerator and chill or serve immediately. Enjoy!

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Taylor Beck, account manager - lincoln, nebraska

I was born and raised in Lincoln, Nebraska. My favorite time of year is fall. I love the changing colors, the cooler weather, fall fashion, and most importantly, football! My hobbies include cooking, snowboarding, watching Netflix, and hanging out with my family. My mom is my best friend. I have an addiction to Amazon.com and good coffee.

I chose this recipe because when I was younger my grandma was my best friend. I would beg my mom to take me to her house so we could play with her. She used to make these deviled eggs and I have always loved them. They were the only deviled eggs I would even try because no one else makes them like grandma. My grandma has always been someone that I look up to. She is the most genuine, loving, and all around most amazing person that I know.

- 1 dozen eggs
- ³/₄ cup Hellmann's mayonnaise
- ¹/₂ teaspoons mustard
- 1/8 cup white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ³⁄₄ tablespoon sour cream
- 1-1 ½ teaspoon salt
- Paprika, garnish
- · Chives, garnish









VÄSTERBOTTENSOST WITH OLIVES

PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES SERVINGS:

6

DIRECTIONS:

Pre-heat the oven to 400°F, and line a tray with baking parchment paper.

Dry the olives thoroughly using a kitchen towel.

Mix the cheese, butter, water, flour, and cayenne pepper together into a dough. Using your fingers, divide the dough into 12 pieces.

Flatten a portion of dough with your fingers and wrap it round one of the olives and then roll it on the palm of your hand until you have a smooth ball.

Put the sesame seeds in a bowl and then roll the dough ball in the mixture until it is evenly coated with seeds. Place on the baking sheet.

Repeat with the rest of the dough and then bake for about 15 minutes.

When cool, transfer to a serving dish, adding cocktail sticks if desired.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 green olives, stoned
- 3 ounces Västerbottensost, grated (or use a mature (aged) Cheddar)
- 1 tablespoon butter, cut into small pieces
- 5 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon water
- A pinch of cayenne pepper
- 3 tablespoons sesame seeds

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Alan Whitenack,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I was born and raised in Lincoln, Nebraska. I have two sisters, one older, and one younger. I have a wonderful seven year old daughter. Rain or shine, tornado or blizzard, I love being outside. I enjoy playing games and watching movies with my daughter. In my spare time, I think up marketing ideas for work, and what food I should make next. My goal is to make every recipe in this cookbook.





CHICKEN DIVAN

PREP TIME: **15 MINUTES**

COOK TIME: **30 MINUTES** SERVINGS: 4

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Cut the chicken into bite size pieces. In a medium skillet, on medium high heat, add 1 ½ tablespoons of olive oil. Once the olive oil is heated, add the cubed chicken and brown until cooked through. You can season the chicken with salt and pepper if you like. Drain the chicken and set aside.

Place the broccoli in a saucepan with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil, and cook 5 minutes, or until tender. Drain.

Place the cooked broccoli in a 9 inch pie plate. Top with the chicken. In a bowl, mix the soup and milk, and pour over the chicken. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese. Mix the melted butter with the bread crumbs, and sprinkle over the cheese.

Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes, or until bubbly and lightly brown.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound chopped fresh broccoli
- 1¹/₂ cups cubed, cooked chicken meat (about 3/4 lb)
- 1¹/₂ tablespoons olive oil
- 1 (10.75 ounce) can condensed cream of broccoli soup
- ¹/₃ cup milk
- ¹/₂ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- ¹/₄ cup bread crumbs

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Matt Spethman, DIRECTOR OF CLIENT EXPERIENCE - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for 20 years. I oversee the implementation and account management teams, known as the client experience team. The best thing about working at Nelnet are the people I get to work with each day. I know that each of them will come to work with a great attitude and provide Best in Class experiences to our clients. I am truly blessed to be part of the client experience team.

My wife Michelle is a middle school English teacher and we have been married for 19 years. We have three sons, Sam, a senior in high school, Henry who is a freshman in high school, and Charlie who is in fourth grade.

This was a go to recipe that my Mom would throw together for the family. It was the first recipe that I learned to make on my own and actually was the dish I made the night I proposed to my wife. If a nervous 26 year old guy can make this dish, then anyone can make it! And she said YES! It is easy and tasty!









CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

PREP TIME: **15 MINUTES** **INACTIVE PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES – OVERNIGHT** COOK TIME: **40 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 4

DIRECTIONS:

In a bowl, combine chicken with all of the ingredients for the chicken marinade. Marinate for 15 minutes to an hour (or overnight if time allows).

Heat oil in a large skillet or pot over medium-high heat. When the oil is heated through, add chicken pieces in batches, making sure not to overcrowd the pan, so that the chicken can brown. Fry for about 3 minutes on each side. Finish cooking the chicken in the sauce, then set aside keeping the juices sealed in.

Melt butter in the same pan, then fry the onions until soft (about 3 minutes) while scraping up any browned bits stuck on the bottom of the pan.

Add garlic and ginger and sauté for 1 minute or until fragrant. Add the garam masala, cumin, turmeric, and coriander. Fry for about 20 seconds or until fragrant, stirring occasionally.

Pour in the tomato puree, chili powders, and salt. Let simmer for about 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally until sauce thickens and becomes a deep brownish-red color.

Stir in the cream and sugar through the sauce. Add the chicken and its juices back into the pan and cook for an additional 10 minutes or until the chicken is cooked though and the sauce is thick and bubbling. If the sauce is too thick, slowly add water as needed. Garnish with cilantro or coriander, then serve over basmati rice.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: John Dutter, ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I have been married to my wife, Erin, for 20 years, and have 5 great kids. From a 3-year-old to a 17-year-old, their ages are pretty spread out. Both Erin and I were born and raised in Lincoln. Nebraska. I have worked at Nelnet Campus Commerce since August 26, 2019 and have never worked at such an amazing company. I love food, sports, and my family...not necessarily in that order! I once spent 15 days traveling the country of India while meeting various leaders in education and ministry. Throughout my entire time in India one distinct

smell always stood out - the food. From thousands of street vendors to local restaurants, there was always something cooking. Whenever I cook food from India, I remember the wonderful time I spent exploring the country.



INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE CHICKEN MARINADE:

- 2 pounds boneless and skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 ½ tablespoons minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon ginger
- 2 teaspoons garam masala
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon Kashmiri chili (or 1/2 teaspoon ground red chili powder)
- 1 teaspoon salt

FOR THE SAUCE:

- 2 tablespoons of vegetable/canola oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- · 2 small onions finely diced (or 1 large)
- 1½ tablespoons garlic, finely grated or minced
- 1 tablespoons ginger, finely grated
- 1 ½ teaspoons garam masala
- 1¹/₂ teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 14 ounces tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon Kashmiri chili (optional for color and spice)
- 1 teaspoon ground red chili powder (adjust to your taste preference)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1¹/₄ cups of heavy cream (use evaporated milk for lower calories)
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- ¹/₄ cup water, if needed
- 4 tablespoons fresh cilantro or coriander to garnish



PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES COOK TIME: 3.5 HOURS SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

Place corned beef in large pot or Dutch oven and cover with water. Add the spice packet that came with the corned beef. Cover pot and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Simmer approximately 50 minutes per pound or until tender.

Add whole potatoes and carrots, then cook until the vegetables are tender. Remove meat and let rest for 15 minutes.

Place vegetables in a separate bowl and cover. Add as much broth (cooking liquid reserved in the Dutch oven or large pot) as you want. Slice meat across the grain.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Stephen Lamoureux, ACCOUNT MANAGER - OMAHA, NEBRASKA

My name is Stephen Lamoureux (pictured with my lovely wife and son). I have worked at Nelnet Campus Commerce for about three months as an account manager in Omaha. This year, I wanted to share my grandmother's very own Irish Corned Beef recipe. Hope you enjoy!

- 3 pounds Colorado Premium corned beef brisket with spice packet
- 10 small red potatoes
- 5 carrots, peeled and cut into 3-inch pieces



MISSISSIPPI POT ROAST

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES COOK TIME: 8 HOURS SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Combine chuck roast, pepperoncini, pepperoncini juice, au jus mix, buttermilk ranch dressing, salt, and pepper in a slow cooker.

Cook on low until roast is fork-tender, about 8 hours.

Pull chuck roast apart with 2 forks. Cover with aluminum foil to keep warm.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Jenni Friegen,

MANAGER OF HIGHER ED ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I have been a part of the Nelnet Campus Commerce family going on 13 years and have worked in a variety of customer support roles throughout my tenure. Currently, I have the pleasure of working with the Higher Ed Account Management team. I have been married to my husband Casey for almost 12 years and we have two beautiful girls, Emerson (seven) and Sienna (four). In my spare time I love to travel, cook, and party plan. My kids still allow me to go overboard on birthday decorations and food (which I know won't last long, so I take full advantage of it).

If you like flavor, this pot roast recipe is for you! It is an easy, great meal to have on a cold winter day. My family loves this recipe, as we eat it at least once a month throughout the winter season. Throw in some potatoes and/or carrots to complete your meal, or try it on top of a cheeseburger. You won't be disappointed!

- 3 pounds chuck roast
- 6 ounces pepperoncini
- 6 ounces pepperoncini juice
- 1 ounce packet au jus gravy mix
- 4 ounce package buttermilk ranch dressing (such as Hidden Valley)
- Salt and ground black pepper (to taste)











SOUTH SUDANESE OXTAIL SOUP

PREP TIME: 15-20 MINUTES COOK TIME: 2 HOURS 15 Minutes SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

Place all ingredients (except chicken powder and salt) in a soup pot and fill with just enough water to fully cover them.

Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for at least 2 hours or until the oxtail meat is tender. Add more water as needed.

Add a little salt and chicken seasoning powder and simmer for 15 minutes before you turn off the stove.

Enjoy with rice or noodles!

Note: If you have leftover soup, just store in the fridge for next day. You can add some thin beef slices, vegetables and flat noodles in it for a nice, hot bowl of beef noodles.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Monica Geng,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for almost four years and I have been an account manager for nearly three years. I have lived in four countries (South Sudan, Kenya, Japan, and USA) and I have almost always been able to make oxtail soup because the ingredients are not restricted to any specific region. You can find everything you need in any market anywhere in the world. I may have lived in a lot of countries, but I am fluent in only one language, while everyone in my family can speak at least three languages. This makes visiting home very difficult — communicating with my extended family is very entertaining.

I selected this recipe because I grew up eating it and it goes well with almost anything. It's a very old soup that has been eaten throughout the continent of Africa and the Middle East. Like its chicken noodle relative, oxtail soup is often made for unwell individuals. It's often eaten throughout the year with rice, noodles, asida, bread, or kisra all year round . In America, it is normally eaten in the spring and winter. The strength of this recipe is its simplicity — I'm a lousy cook, and even I can make this. It makes for a healthy, easy lunch throughout the week.

- 14-17 ounces oxtail, blanched
- 1 large onion, cut in quarters
- 1 large unpeeled carrot, cut into chunks
- 1 large red or green pepper
- 2 peeled russet potatoes, cut into big pieces
- 2 teaspoons chicken seasoning powder (No MSG)
- 2 bay leaves (optional)
- Salt (to taste)
- Water





SPANISH TORTILLA

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES COOK TIME: 12-15 MINUTES SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add potatoes, onion, and salt. Use a heatproof spatula to coat potatoes with oil. When oil begins to bubble, reduce heat to medium-low and cook, turning frequently, until potatoes are tender but not browned (about 20-25 minutes).

Using a slotted spoon, transfer potatoes and onion to a large heatproof bowl. Add eggs and stir gently to combine; do not break up potatoes. Strain oil into a glass measuring cup; wipe out skillet.

Heat 3 tablespoons of oil (reserved from the measuring cup) in skillet over medium-high heat. Add egg-potato mixture and cook, stirring constantly but gently to keep potatoes intact, until eggs begin to set (eggs will look scrambled), about 2 minutes. Spread mixture in an even layer; reduce heat to medium-low. Preheat broiler to high.

Cook tortilla, shaking pan occasionally to prevent it from sticking, until eggs are nearly cooked through, about 12 minutes. Transfer skillet to oven and broil for about 2 minutes or until top of tortilla is just cooked.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Lawra Anderson,

QA ANALYST III – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I've been with the higher education team in various capacities for the past 13 years, currently serving as a quality assurance (QA) analyst. In our off time, my husband Jeff and I really enjoy traveling to Europe, scouting potential locations for our future retirement home. We spent a week in Granada, Spain a few years ago and fell in love with the town and its traditions and culture. This Spanish tortilla can be served as tapas (several bite-sized dishes) or as a breakfast item.

- 1 ½ cups extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 pounds large Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled, quartered, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 1 onion, quartered, thinly sliced
- 2 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 8 large eggs, beaten to blend





STACKABLE CHEESE ENCHILADAS

PREP TIME: **30 MINUTES**

COOK TIME: **15 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oil in large saucepan (must be able to dunk 8" tortilla in pan). Combine flour, chili powder, and garlic powder in a small bowl, then add to hot oil to make a paste. Add tomato juice and whisk until smooth.

Heat until sauce thickens and bubbles slightly, stirring intermittently. Once sauce is thick, leave on low heat. Dip 8" soft flour tortilla into sauce and then place on plate. Sprinkle with shredded cheese and other desired toppings. Layer another sauced tortilla on top and repeat. On top layer, place a fried (over medium) egg on top. (I'd suggest 2-3 layers at most.)

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Cheryl Davis, account manager - Lincoln, Nebraska

I have worked at Nelnet for a total of 17 years and spent the last six years as an account manager in Lincoln, Nebraska. When I'm not at work you can find me hanging out with my family and playing with my fur babies, Seamus and Blue. For fun, I love going to see the Lincoln Stars, a local hockey team - I have front row seats right on the glass! My best vacation ever was last year when I went to Wyoming to visit my brother and sister-in-law. If you ever get the chance, you should visit Big Horn National Forest/Big Horn Canyon — it's absolutely beautiful.

This recipe has been handed down on my dad's side of the family for many generations. Being from Texas and growing up in New Mexico, my dad ate a lot of Tex-Mex food, but this was his favorite family recipe. My mom enhanced the recipe by adding the fried egg on top (mainly to reduce the spiciness for those who can't take the heat - it was mostly me). My sisters like to change it up sometimes and roll taco meat up in the tortilla, then pour the sauce over and add toppings. Each generation has their own take on things (so feel free to improvise), but my mom's way is the best!

INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE SAUCE

- ¹/₄ cup oil
- ¹/₂ cup flour (if using gluten free flour use about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- 1-2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 can (46 ounces) tomato juice

SUGGESTED TOPPINGS

- Soft flour tortillas 8" (for healthier option consider using Carb Balance tortillas)
- Shredded cheese (I prefer mild cheddar)
- Sour cream
- Jalapenos
- Green chili peppers
- Salsa
- Shredded lettuce (put around the edge of tortilla)
- Black olives
- Chopped onions
- Diced avocados
- Cilantro







CHEESY POTATO CASSEROLE

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES COOK TIME: 55 MINUTES SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, combine all of the ingredients and stir until well-blended.

Pour into an ungreased 13-by-9-inch glass baking dish.

Bake 45 minutes.

NOTE: If you like bell peppers, try using potatoes O'Brien instead of regular hashbrowns.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Matthew Valentine,

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I grew up in Hastings, Nebraska and attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, receiving a bachelor's degree in business administration. I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for six and a half years. I am a die-hard fan of the Denver Broncos and Nebraska Cornhuskers. When I'm not working, I enjoy going to concerts and hanging out with friends and family. I submitted this recipe because cheesy potatoes are my favorite side dish for holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas.

- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 can (10 3/4 ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon garlic salt
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 bag (30 ounce) frozen country-style shredded hash brown potatoes, partially thawed
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese









CHEESY RANCH POTATOES

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES COOK TIME: 45 MINUTES SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Cube potatoes and bring a large pot of water to a boil. Then, drop in chopped potatoes and cook for 10 minutes.

Drain potatoes and mix in ranch, garlic powder, salt, and pepper.

Transfer to a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and bake for 30-35 minutes, or until nicely browned. While still hot, mix in cheese.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Joel Mueller,

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I've been with Nelnet for almost nine years. When I'm not at work, I enjoy doing things in the outdoors, hanging out with my nieces and nephews, and spending time with my wife (Marci), my dog (Gizmo), and my cat (Rascal).

I chose the cheesy ranch potatoes because it is really good and very easy to make. We usually pair it with some sort of smoked/barbecued meat.

- 9 red potatoes or 4-5 regular potatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ranch dressing
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup shredded cheese







CORN CASSEROLE

PREP TIME: **10 MINUTES** COOK TIME: 45-60 minutes SERVINGS: 8

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Lightly brush $2\frac{1}{2}$ quart casserole dish with butter. Beat eggs with a wooden spoon until foamy.

Add remaining melted butter, onion dip, and pepper. Beat until blended, then stir in muffin mix and corn.

Bake for 45-60 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Bitt Bierman, senior account manager – lincoln, nebraska

My husband Joe and I have one daughter, Brynlee, nine, and two miniature schnauzers named Rudy and Ralphie. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time in my sewing room and hanging out with family and friends.

This is one of my favorite recipes that my family makes every year at Thanksgiving - hope you enjoy!

- ¹/₂ cup butter, melted
- 3 eggs
- 1 can whole kernel corn, undrained
- 8 ounce container french onion dip
- ¹/₈ teaspoon pepper
- 8 ounce corn muffin mix







DUTCH POTATOES

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES COOK TIME: 10-15 MINUTES SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

In a small skillet, sauté chopped onion in butter for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown.

Meanwhile, place potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with water until it begins to boil.

Once boiling, reduce heat and add carrots, then cover and cook until tender.

Drain potatoes and carrots, then add to a small mixing bowl. Mash the ingredients, then add onion, sour cream, and salt.

Finish by sprinkling with chives.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Katie Johansen,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – OMAHA, NEBRASKA

This recipe originally came from my grandmother (my mother made a variation as well). I am a mix of ethnicities, but a large part of my background is Danish — hoping you enjoy this dish as much as my family does!

I started at Nelnet Campus Commerce in July 2019 — only four months after getting engaged. As of this entry, wedding planning has taken up much of my free time, but my fiancé and I are huge football fans. We have season tickets to Kansas City Chiefs games, so we make the drive there quite often. The University of Nebraska — Lincoln is my alma mater, so I am also a big Husker fan. I enjoy running and try to participate at least a few half marathons and other races each year. We love to travel, and take the opportunity whenever we can get time away!



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- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 4 teaspoons butter
- 4 cups peeled, cubed potatoes
- 2 cups sliced or shredded fresh carrots
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Snipped chives (optional)



POTATO SALAD

PREP TIME: **15 MINUTES**

COOK TIME: **10-15 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Wash potatoes and cut them into ³/₄ to 1-inch cubes. Place potatoes in a large pot and cover with salted water, bringing to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until tender, about 10-15 minutes.

Drain, then return potatoes to the empty pot to dry and sprinkle with salt. Now, on to the dressing.

Stir mayonnaise, pickles, hard-cooked eggs, red onion, celery, mustard, cider vinegar, 1 teaspoon salt, and pepper together in a large bowl until well-mixed.

Once potatoes are dry and cool, fold them into the mayonnaise mixture (if your potatoes are still warm, wait before adding dressing - otherwise, your potato salad will be greasy).

Allow to chill at least six hours, or overnight, before serving.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Andy Mealon, TEAM LEAD - LINCOLN, NEBRASA

I've worked at Nelnet for almost seven years. In my free time I enjoy being outside, going to the lake, or finding a new golf course to play. I also enjoy spending time with my dog, Otis. (Since there were squirrels outside our window, it was difficult to take this picture.)

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 pounds red potatoes, chopped
- 3 cups mayonnaise
- 2 cups finely chopped pickles
- 5 hard cooked eggs, chopped
- ¹/₂ cup chopped red onion
- ¹/₂ cup chopped celery
- 3 tablespoons of mustard
- 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- ¹/₂ teaspoon of pepper





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ZUCCHINI CASSEROLE

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES COOK TIME: 8-12 MINUTES SERVINGS: 1-2

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Grate zucchini and onion over a towel and squeeze excess liquid out.

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients.

Spray two 8-inch pie pans and spread the mixture evenly between the two pans. Cover with foil and cook for 35 minutes, then uncover and cook for another 10 minutes or until golden brown.

This can also be stored uncooked in the freezer for up to 6 months in tin pie pans and cooked when needed by adding another 10 to 20 minutes to the cook time.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups grated zucchini
- 1 cup grated onion
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 cups crushed crackers
- ¹/₃ cup butter, melted
- ½ tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon dry parsley

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Caitlin Wallace,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – OMAHA, NEBRASKA

I'm originally from Southwest Missouri and my family really comes together around food. This recipe has been a family favorite that we have always made with homegrown zucchini that the whole family put effort into growing. Since I finally have my own garden area in Omaha, this is the first time in ten years that I've been able to make this casserole with homegrown zucchini. This is typically a fall recipe, but since you can freeze it up to six months it can be eaten year-round as well.

I have been with Nelnet since April of this year. I enjoy cooking, going out to the movies with my boyfriend, and playing video games.











SAINT LUCIA BUNS

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES INACTIVE PREP TIME: 1-2 ½ HOURS COOK TIME: 10-11 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Heat milk, saffron, sugar: In a small pot, heat the milk, saffron, and 1 teaspoon of sugar together until the milk is steamy. Remove from heat and stir to dissolve the sugar. Let cool until about 115°F, or warm to the touch, but not hot. Sprinkle the yeast over the warm saffron-infused milk and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes until foamy.

Whisk flour, sugar, salt, and cardamom: Whisk together 3 ½ cups of the flour, remaining ¼ cup of sugar, and salt. Make a well in the center of the flour, then add the yeast/milk/ saffron mixture, eggs, butter, and sour cream. Mix these ingredients until well incorporated.

Knead the dough: Slowly add additional flour, 1 tablespoon at a time, kneading to incorporate after each addition. Do this until the dough is a little sticky to the touch, but does not completely stick to your hands when you handle it.

Let dough rise: Shape the dough into a ball and place in a large bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm place for 1 to 2 hours, until the dough has doubled in size.

Form dough into "S" shapes: When the dough has doubled in size, gently press it down and knead it a couple of times. Break off a piece and form it into a ball about 2 inches wide. Roll the ball out into a snake, about 14 inches long. Then curl the ends in opposite directions, forming an "S" with spirals at each end. Place on a lined baking sheet and repeat with the rest of the dough.

Let dough rise (again): Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm spot until the dough shapes double in size once more (roughly 30 minutes to an hour). After the buns have risen, brush with egg wash and place raisins on each one.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Using a pastry brush, brush some beaten egg over the tops and sides of the uncooked buns. Place raisins in the centers of the "S" spirals.

Bake: Place in the oven and bake at 400°F for about 10 to 11 minutes (turning halfway through cooking to ensure even browning), until the buns are golden brown.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Rebecca Mc Mickell,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

My name is Rebecca and I have been an account manager with Nelnet Campus Commerce since March 2019. In my free time, I love to be outdoors and travel. Each year in August my boyfriend and I take a two to three week road trip to explore national parks. We've been all over the county, but the Pacific Northwest is our favorite destination.

This recipe is a Christmastime favorite in my family, and honors our Swedish heritage. Saint Lucia Day is a tradition celebrated on December 13 in Sweden. For a family reunion one year as a kid, I was chosen to play Saint Lucia and got to dress up in a white gown with a crown of candles (mine were battery-operated) and a bright red sash. These buns always remind me how fun and exciting that was!

- ³⁄₄ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon saffron threads
- 1 teaspoon plus ¼ cup white, granulated sugar
- One ¼-ounce packet active dry yeast
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup (1/2 stick, 4 tablespoons) unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup of sour cream (or quark if available)
- 2 large eggs, beaten (plus 1 beaten egg for the glaze)
- Raisins







CLASSIC PAVLOVA

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES COOK TIME: 90 MINUTES, 2-12 HOURS COOLING SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

Prepare Template

Preheat oven to 340°F. (Note: This temperature will change as soon as you place the pavlova into the oven. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.) Use an 8-inch baking pan as a guide and trace a circle on the parchment paper. Flip the paper so the pencil side is down (not under the meringue).

Make the Meringue

In a mixing bowl, with whisk attachment, measure the egg whites. Start the mixer on medium with a pinch of salt. When the egg whites reach a foamy consistency (after about 2 minutes), start adding the white sugar one tablespoon at a time. When all the sugar has been added, continue to whip the meringue until you have stiff peaks. (The meringue should be sticky, with stiff peaks, and a shiny appearance.) Switch to a spatula and fold in the vanilla extract. Sift in the cream of tartar and cornstarch. Spread the meringue on the circle you created (be careful and stay inside the lines!) Use a spatula to smooth the sides evenly. Keep the sides high and the top flat.

Baking and Cooling

Place the pavlova in the oven on the center rack. Close the oven door and immediately reduce the oven temperature to 260° F. (Do not open the oven door during baking.) Bake for 90 minutes. When the baking time is done, turn off the oven, but do not open the door — let the pavlova cool inside the oven naturally for 2-12 hours.

Whipped Cream and Fruits

Whip the cream with confectioner's sugar. Use a spatula to gently loosen the pavlova from the parchment paper. Place it on a serving platter or cake board. Evenly spread the whipped cream on pavlova. Arrange with fruits of your choice.

Tips

Any grease in the egg whites will not whip the meringue. Break each egg separately in a bowl before you combine all four. If any egg yolk breaks when cracking the egg, save it for your breakfast omelet and use another egg. Aged eggs are often the best for making meringues. So if you have any egg whites in the freezer or fridge use them for this recipe as long as they are yolk free. DO NOT OPEN THE OVEN DOOR WHEN BAKING — OR AFTER THE PAVLOVA HAS BAKED. Cooling naturally in the oven will prevent sinking. A well-baked pavlova will have cracks on the outside with a small marshallow like a pillow on the inside. Add whipped cream and fruits just before serving. Moisture from the cream and fruits will start to soften the crisp outer shell and soak into the inside.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Lawra Giddings, TEAM LEAD - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I came to the United States 10 years ago and I have worked for Nelnet for 10 years. I have two beautiful girls. One is sassy and one is sassier, depending on the day. Some people think that I am Canadian, but I'm actually from Ireland. I have no idea how you can confuse those two accents. My favorite vacation spot is going back home to Ireland. I chose this recipe because it is my dad's favorite dessert. Note that humidity is not a pavlova's friend — keep it in a dry spot.

INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE SAUCE

- 4 large egg whites (approx. 150-160 grams)
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornflour/cornstartch
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar (or white vinegar)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

FOR SERVING

- 8 ounces whipping cream
- 2 cups chopped fruits (I use 8-10 strawberries, 2 chopped kiwis and ½ cup frozen blueberries)







CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE DOUGH DIP

PREP TIME: 15 MIN COOK TIME: 0 MINUTES SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter with the cream cheese and brown sugar until light and fluffy (3 to 4 minutes).

Add the confectioners' sugar and mix until well-combined. Add the vanilla extract and mix to combine. Stir in the chocolate chips.

Serve at room temperature with graham crackers for dipping. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to three days (bring to room temperature before serving).

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Rhonda Plooster.

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

My husband Stacy and I have two daughters, Cassidy, 19, and Taylor, 16. We also have a dog named Charlie. In my spare time I enjoy spending time watching our girls play volleyball and road tripping to tap rooms and wineries with family and friends.

- 1 stick unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- ³/₄ cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 ¼ cups mini chocolate chips
- Graham crackers (as needed for serving)





FILIPINO BIBINGKA

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES COOK TIME: 45-60 MINUTES SERVINGS: 8-12 SERVINGS

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, mix all of the ingredients together using a whisk until there are no lumps. Pour in a 9x13 pan.

NOTE: If using coconut, you can put 1 cup in the batter and then sprinkle 1 cup over the top. if you have picky relatives (like me) you can also use a parchment paper to create a coconut-free section.

Bake 45-60 minutes until golden on top (if using coconut, don't bake for more than 45 minutes to avoid burning).

Let cool. If serving less people, cut into squares. When I bring this to parties I cut it in diagonals about 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Rachel Rock,

ACCOUNT MANAGER - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I have worked for Nelnet for four and a half years. I was born and raised in Sacramento, California and I moved to Lincoln, Nebraska about eight years ago. I love it here. I recently married my best friend and just found out that we will be expecting our first child in April 2020! We are extremely excited for our new adventure. We have two fur babies: one tabby cat named Mr. Meowy and a Yorkshire Terrier named Kobe. My favorite vacation spot is Disneyland — one day, I hope to visit all the Disney parks around the world.

Filipino bibingka is a party favorite. We make this for holidays, birthday parties, reunions, and for whatever reason we want to celebrate. I like to describe this dessert as a filipino cake or a butter mochi. I hope you enjoy our family recipe!

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- 2 cups Mochiko sweet rice flour
- 1 can (13.5 ounces) coconut milk
- 1 can (12 ounce) Carnation evaporated milk
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- ³/₄ cup melted butter
- 4 eggs
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 2 cups shredded coconut, optional



KOLACHE

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES

DESSERT

COOK TIME: 12-15 MINUTES SERVINGS: 6-8

DIRECTIONS:

Dissolve yeast and 1 teaspoon sugar in 1/4 cup lukewarm water. Stir and let sit until bubbly.

Combine yeast mixture, sugar, and dissolve in milk.

Add 2 cups flour and blend well and let rise 15-20 minutes.

Add salt, eggs, butter, and Crisco beat until well blended.

Add the last 2 1/4 cup flour and blend until smooth.

Cover tightly and refrigerate overnight.

Option 1: Remove ¼ of the dough at a time leaving the rest in the refrigerator. Roll into walnut sized balls. Place on grease or parchment lined baking sheet. Flatten an area in the center of the ball. Fill with filling and let rise again. Brush with egg wash. Bake at 350°F for 12-15 minutes. Rub butter on dough hot from the oven and drizzle with glaze.

Option 2: Remove dough from refrigerator and place on lightly-floured counter. Roll out the dough approximately ½ inch thick. Cut into 2 ½ inch rounds. Place on grease or parchment lined baking sheet. Using your thumb, back of spoon or other object press and indentation into the center of the round for the filling. Fill with filling and let rise again. Brush with egg wash. Bake at 350°F for 12-15 minutes. Rub butter on dough hot from the oven and drizzle with glaze.

Egg Wash

Mix together 1 large egg and 1 tsp milk, cream, or water.

Glaze

Mix together powdered sugar, butter, cream (or milk), vanilla, canned pie filling.

- Powdered sugar
- Butter
- Cream or milk
- Vanilla

Filling

• Canned pie filling or many recipes online for various homemade fillings.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Andrey Michelson, TRAINER - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I've been with Nelnet for about 11 years. I am very passionate about my training position and my work family. My husband Scott and I have been married for 34 years. We have two dogs: a 14-year-old miniature Aussie named Sienna, and and a 2-year-old Yorkie named Larry. Every Sunday morning my parents make brunch at 10 a.m. sharp, rain or shine, and for whoever walks in the door.

- 2 packages dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 cup warm water
- ½ cup sugar
- 1¹/₂ cup warm milk
- 4 ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¹/₃ cup melted butter
- ¹/₃ cup melted Crisco









AFRICAN PUFF-PUFFS

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES IN ACTIVE PREP TIME: 1-2 HOURS

COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES SERVINGS: 4-6

INGREDIENTS:

dry yeast

• 3 1/2 cups flour

• $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup white sugar

• 1/2 tablespoon salt

• Oil for deep frying

• 2 cups warm water

• 1 packet or 2 1/4 teaspoons active

DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl, mix salt, sugar, water, and yeast. Set aside for 5 minutes.

Add flour and mix.

Cover loosely with a kitchen towel. Set aside and let the mixture rise for approximately 1-2 hours.

In a large sauce pan, pour vegetable oil into a pot, until it is at least 3 inches high (too little will result in flatter balls), and place on low heat.

Test to make sure the oil is hot enough by putting a 'drop' of batter into the oil. If it is not hot enough, the batter will stay at the bottom of the pot rather than rising to the top.

When the oil is hot enough, use a spoon to dish up the batter, and another spoon or spatula to drop it in the oil, sort of in the shape of a ball.

Fry for a few minutes until the bottom side is golden brown.

Turn the ball over and fry for a few more minutes until the other side is golden brown.

Use a large spoon to take it out of the oil. Place them on napkins right away to soak up some of the excess oil.

If desired, you can roll the finished product in table sugar or powdered sugar to make it sweeter.

Tips

For a softer puff-puff, add about 1-2 tablespoons more water. Some people find it a little bit hard after it stays out. Do not overcrowd the frying pan — it will absorb excess oil and sometimes make it soggy. If you're watching your salt intake, you can reduce the amount of salt to 1 tsp. If your house is too cold, turn on the stove for about 2-3 minutes until warm. Then turn it off and let the puff-puff rise, next to it. Or heat up the oven, turn it off when hot, wait until it cools down. You want it warm but not hot then let it rise in the oven. Check after 30 minutes to ensure it is rising.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Koko Tetteh,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – OMAHA, NEBRASKA

I am originally from Ghana, West Africa and moved to Omaha with my family almost 20 years ago. I love fashion and my favorite movies are "The Sound of Music" and "Coming to America". My spare time is mostly spent with my family — especially my three-year-old daughter — or catching up with reality shows when all is quiet.

Most West African countries are familiar with the popular street food "puff-puff", which is known by different names depending on the country. The basic ingredient consists are: flour, sugar, yeast, water, salt, and oil for deep frying.

It is an easy and quick recipe to make with different variations. This recipe is the one my family has been making for years and the one that takes me back to my hometown. It brings back memories of late night snacking with friends.

Puff-puff is usually eaten for breakfast, as a snack or as a side dish. Regardless of when you eat them, they are enjoyable with or without a side dish. A must-have for me — pepper sauce. Use a spoon instead to scoop the dough into the oil if you do not want to use your hands. It still tastes delicious!

Follow these simple instructions to create delicious little African Puff Puffs, a sweet treat for everyone.





SPICED HERMIT COOKIES

PREP TIME: **10 MINUTES** COOK TIME: 8-10 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 2 DOZEN

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 375°F.

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients; mix well.

Drop dough by rounded tablespoons onto ungreased cookie sheets.

Bake 8-10 minutes.

Cool 1 minute on cookie sheet; remove to wire cooling rack.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Amy Graham, account manager - lincoln, nebraska

I have worked at Nelnet Campus Commerce for ten years. My husband and I have a four-year-old daughter named Zoie, and a three-year-old son named Bryck. When I am not working, I enjoy baking, spending time with my family, and making crafts with my kids.

Spiced Hermit Cookies are some of my favorite cookies to make. You can enjoy this recipe throughout the year, but they make excellent fall and winter treats. My grandma made these cookies all the time when we would come visit her.

- INGREDIENTS:
- 3 cups large flake Quaker oats or quick Quaker oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 pound (2 sticks) butter or margarine, melted
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ¹/₄ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)
- ¹/₄ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips (optional)







GRANDDAD'S TOM & JERRY'S

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PREP TIME: 10-15 MINUTES INACTIVE PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

In a bowl, beat the egg yolks. Then add sugar, cinnamon, cloves, and allspice. Cover with saran wrap and refrigerate this for about an hour. You can do this portion the night before if you like as well.

Whip egg whites until they form stiff peaks then fold in yolk/sugar mixture. Cover with saran wrap and refrigerate for about an hour.

Put 1 tablespoon of the batter into a mug, add hot water, and stir. Add 1 ounce of bourbon (or more if you like) and sprinkle with nutmeg.

Enjoy!

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Justin Behrends,

ACCOUNT MANAGER – LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I have lived in Lincoln for 10 years and worked for Nelnet for the past 4 years. I enjoy hunting and fishing — I just returned from a Wyoming mule deer hunt. Also, I enjoy watching the Nebraska Cornhuskers!

One of my fondest memories of Christmas growing up is with when Granddad made Tom & Jerry's every Christmas starting at noon and told stories of when he was growing up. He passed away 10 years ago, but his tradition lives on with my family.

- 3 eggs (separated)
- 2 ½ teaspoons white sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
- 4 ounces bourbon (Maker's Mark) or to your liking





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PREP TIME: 0 MINUTES

DRINKS

COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES SERVINGS:

DIRECTIONS:

In a medium saucepan, combine the cocoa powder, sugar, water, and salt over medium heat.

Cook, stirring constantly until smooth and bring to a simmer.

Reduce heat, stir in the milk. (Before adding the milk, make sure you haven't reached boiling!)

Remove from heat and stir in vanilla.

Pour into mugs and serve immediately.

Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 cups milk
- 1/3 cup hot water
- ½ cup sugar
- Dash of salt
- 1⁄4 cup Hershey's cocoa
- Top with marshmallows or whip cream

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Marci Mueller,

TEAM LEAD OF OPERATIONS - OMAHA, NEBRASKA

My husband and I enjoy spending as much time outdoors and with our amazing family. This year we booked several trips to enjoy the outdoors and time with our family. Our annual trip to our family location of Burwell, Nebraska and two trips to Estes Park, Colorado.

The first chocolate drink is believed to have been created by the Maya around 2,500-3,000 years ago, and a cocoa drink was an essential part of Aztec culture by 1400 AD, by which they referred to as xocōlātl. The drink became popular in Europe after being introduced from Mexico in the New World and has undergone multiple changes since then. Until the 19th century, hot chocolate was even used medicinally to treat ailments such as liver and stomach diseases.

We make this every Christmas morning with the family to go along with our homemade cinnamon rolls. This is something my siblings and I looked forward to every Christmas morning from our mom, and we've passed this down the family.





PISCO SOUR

PREP TIME: **5 MINUTES**

DRINKS

COOK TIME: **0 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 1-2

DIRECTIONS:

For simple syrup: In a jar, combine 1 cup water with 1 cup superfine sugar. Seal jar and shake until sugar is completely dissolved. Keep remainder refrigerated.

Combine pisco, lime, simple syrup and egg white in a cocktail shaker without ice and seal. Shake vigorously until egg white is foamy, about 10 seconds. Add ice to shaker and shake again very hard until well-chilled, about 10 seconds. Strain into chilled cocktail glass; dash bitters atop the egg-white foam.

A little tip is: Pisco can be very strong so don't be afraid to lower the ounces.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Antorn Rojas, account manager - lincoln, nebraska

I started with Nelnet at a young age of 18 and been here for about 4 years since and I have been an Account Manager for little over a year. Nelnet has always been a great company to work for in my book and I love how close our Higher Ed team is.

I am a mom of a soon to be 7-year-old boy (Jahziel), who is a goofball and keeps me on my toes. I have been married for a little over 3 years with my husband, Daniel Rojas who works at Nelnet as well. In my free time, I play on 4 soccer leagues, spending time with family and going on little dates with my son. My family and I are huge soccer fans, and we take pride in our Peruvian ancestry! I chose this recipe since it is a very well-known Peruvian drink. Anytime we have Pisco (a type of brandy) on hand, my family and I make it for any occasion. This drink has a more sour taste, but the white foam balances it out perfectly! I hope you enjoy the drink with your family and friends as much as I do with mine!

- 3 ounces pisco
- 1 ounce of fresh-squeezed lime juice
- ³/₄ ounce simple syrup (1 cup water, 1 cup super fine sugar)
- 1 fresh egg white
- 1 dash angostura or amargo bitters









SALTED CARAMEL APPLE CIDER

PREP TIME: **5 MINUTES**

COOK TIME: **13 MINUTES**

SERVINGS: 4

DIRECTIONS:

Combine brown sugar and heavy cream over medium-high heat in a medium heavy bottomed sauce pot.

Stir until sugar is dissolved in the cream, and the mixture bubbles, about 3 minutes.

Add vanilla, sea salt, and apple cider - stir to combine.

Allow mixture to simmer for 10 minutes, or until heated through.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Matt Meyer, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER - LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

I am passionate about playing, writing, and listening to music. A few of my favorites to listen to are the likes of Tom Waits, Gregory Alan Isakov, and Blind Pilot. I enjoy long road trips out west - my wife says that the thrill of driving you have when you're 16 never really wore off for me, and that is certainly true! Some of my favorite places to visit have been Monterey, California and Depoe Bay, Oregon. My favorite camping spot, however, is in Moab, Utah at the "Moonflower" campground, followed closely by a spot in Montaña de Oro State Park in San Luis Obispo, California. There is a wonderful spot where you hike up and camp on top of a fair-sized hill overlooking the ocean.

I grew up in Prescott, Arizona, which is a town that really goes all out for Christmas. Every year we would have the courthouse lighting down at the town square; it was always fairly cold and so my mother would allow me to buy a hot beverage from

the coffee shop on the walk down. My favorite was always the caramel apple cider which is why I chose this for my recipe.



INGREDIENTS:

• ¹/₃ cup dark brown sugar

• 1 teaspoon vanilla

• 4 cups apple cider

• 1/2 teaspoon sea salt

• ¹/₃ cup heavy whipping cream

• Whipped cream, caramel syrup,

and cinnamon (for garnish)



Pictured left to right: Koko Tetteh, Katie Steffen, Katie Johansen



Front Row: Cheryl Davis, Audrey Nichelson, Jenni Friesen, Laura Giddings, Aurora Rojas, Amy Graham Back Row: Braden Bomberger, Matthew Meyer, Matthew Valentine, Jim Chambers, Justin Behrends, Alan Whitenack





Pictured left to right: Marci Mueller, Stephen Lamoureux, Christine Stevens, Caitlin Wallace

Front Row: Rachel Rock, Taylor Beck, Laura Anderson, Rebecca McMickell, Andy Nealon Back Row: Joel Mueller, Monica Geng, Rhonda Plooster, Reese Beninghaus



