

April Fools' Day is celebrated all around the world. Here are a few fun facts:

The exact origin of April Fools' Day is unknown but is believed to have started in France in the 16th Century. In Scotland, April Fools' Day is celebrated for two days. In France, April Fools' Day is known as "*Poisson d'avril*" or April Fish. It is customary to place a paper fish on someone's back without them knowing. The famous comic strip "Peanuts," created by Charles Schultz, featured a character named April Fool, who played pranks on his friends.

This week, we have a few April Fools' food ideas, as well as a few spring meals to help us through Mother Nature's April Fools' joke on us with the snow!

April Fools' 'Cinnamon' Rolls

Prep Time: 30 mins

Total Time: 3 hrs 10 mins

Servings: 12

1/2 C. whole milk
1/2 C. unsalted butter, cubed
3 T. honey
1/4 C. plus 1 T. medium yellow cornmeal, divided
3-3/4 C. all-purpose flour, divided
2-1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 oz. packet instant yeast (2-1/4 tsp.)
3 lg. eggs, room temperature and divided
Nonstick cooking spray
12 oz. container sauceless pulled pork
3/4 C. barbecue sauce
2 T. unsalted butter, melted
1 C. Alabama White Sauce

Combine 1/2 C. of water, the milk, butter, and honey in a medium saucepan over medium heat until steaming. While stirring constantly with a whisk or a wooden spoon to prevent clumps, gradually add 1/4 C. of cornmeal. Cook until mixture is bubbling and thickened, about 2 to 3 minutes. (It will have the consistency of thin grits.) Remove from heat and allow to cool to 120 to 130°, or until cool enough to touch.

Whisk 1-3/4 C. of flour, salt, and yeast in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the cornmeal mixture to the flour mixture. Beat on low speed for one minute, scraping down the sides and bottom of the bowl. Add 2 of the eggs, one at a time, and beat on low until combined, scraping down sides and bottom of bowl. With the mixer on low speed, gradually add 2 C. of flour and beat until the dough comes together.

Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium-low speed until the dough is elastic and clears the sides of the bowl, about 6 to 8 minutes. (The dough will stick to the bottom of the bowl).

Spray a large bowl with nonstick cooking spray. On a clean surface form dough into a smooth ball. Place in the prepared bowl, turning to coat the top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until puffy, 45 min to 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 350°. Spray a 13-by-9-inch baking pan with cooking spray and sprinkle with the remaining 1 T. of cornmeal. Heat the pulled pork according to the package directions and finely shred. Fold in the barbecue sauce and allow to cool.

Turn dough out onto a clean surface. Roll the dough into an 18-by-12-inch rectangle. Spread the pork mixture over the surface of the dough, leaving a 1-inch border on one long end. Starting with the other long end, roll the dough tightly towards the long end with the border, creating a log. Pinch the seam together and place seam side down on a cutting board. With a serrated knife, cut the roll into 12 buns, each about 1-1/2 inch thick.

Place the rolls, cut side down and evenly spaced, in the prepared pan. Cover the pan with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap and let rise until the rolls are just touching each other, 45 min to 1 hour.

Beat the remaining egg and brush the rolls with the egg wash.

Bake the rolls for 35 to 40 min until golden brown on top. Brush the rolls with 2 T. of melted butter. Let the rolls cool for 10 min in the pan.

Serve hot, warm, or room temperature, drizzled with Alabama White Sauce.

Tip: Tuck the loose ends of the rolls underneath the cut side of the rolls for perfectly round buns.

Alabama White Sauce

Total Time: 5 min

Servings: 2 cups

1-1/4 C. mayonnaise
3/4 C. distilled white vinegar
1 T. black pepper
1-1/4 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. granulated sugar
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1/2 tsp. hot sauce

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl.

Whisk together until smooth and combined. Use immediately, or store in an airtight container in refrigerator up to 2 weeks.

April Fools' Day Fries

Total Time: 25 Min

4 apples (peeled)
cinnamon
sugar
cooking spray
strawberry preserves

Preheat your oven to 400°F and spray a baking sheet with cooking spray.

Cut apples into crinkle fries. Slice the apples into 3"-4" long French fries using a crinkle-cut knife.

Toss with sugar and spice. Toss cut apple fries with sugar and cinnamon.

Bake the apple fries. Then, spread the apples out in a single layer on your greased baking sheet and bake until they are fork-tender and crispy on the outside (8-12 min). Serve with strawberry preserves or your favorite dessert dip, and enjoy!

April Fools' Grilled Cheese Sandwich

Prep Time: 15 min

Cook Time: 10 min

Additional Time: 10 min

Total Time: 35 min

Servings: 6

1 lb. cake, cut into 1/2-inch slices
6 T. butter, softened
1 C. white frosting
1/2 tsp. yellow food coloring, or as needed
1/8 tsp. red food coloring, or as needed

Spread butter on both sides of each pound cake slice.

Heat a griddle over medium heat. Cook cake slices on hot griddle, turning once, until golden brown on each side, 3 to 5 min. Transfer cake slices to a wire rack to cool completely.

Stir frosting, yellow food coloring, and red food coloring together in a bowl until frosting is the color of American cheese.

Spread frosting on 1 side of half of the pound cake slices and top with another slice of pound cake.

April Fools' Ice Cream Baked Potatoes

Prep Time: 10 min

Total Time: 10 min

Servings: 4

1 pint vanilla ice cream
1 (1 oz.) envelope instant cocoa
4 T. sweetened whipped cream

Scoop out 4 balls of ice cream roughly the size and shape of small potatoes. Roll in the hot cocoa mix until coated. Place on a plate and top with a dollop of whipped cream. The ice cream will look like baked potatoes with sour cream on top. Eat and enjoy.

April Fools' Meatloaf Cupcakes

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 40 min

Total Time: 1 hr

Servings: 6

1 lb. ground beef
1 C. crushed saltine crackers
1/2 C. chopped onion
1/2 C. chopped green bell pepper
1/3 C. milk
1 egg
1 T. Worcestershire sauce
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tsp. ground black pepper
1 tsp. seasoned salt
1/2 C. ketchup
1/2 C. brown sugar
4 C. mashed potatoes

1 C. shredded Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Mix ground beef, saltine crackers, onion, green bell pepper, milk, egg, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, black pepper, and seasoned salt together in a bowl.

Stir ketchup and brown sugar together in a bowl. Spoon ketchup mixture into the bottom of each muffin cup of a 6-cup muffin tin.

Fill muffin cups with beef mixture, leaving 1/2-inch space on the top.

Bake in the preheated oven until no longer pink in the center, about 30 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 160°

F. Drain fat from muffin cups.

Top each 'cupcake' with mashed potatoes and Cheddar cheese.

Continue baking until cheese is melted, about 10 min.

Leftover Easter Ham Breakfast Egg Nests

Prep: 15 min

Cook: 32 min

Total Time: 47 min

Servings: 16

20 oz/ hash brown potatoes (frozen but need to be thawed)

12 lg. eggs

1/2 C. whole milk

2 green onions, sliced + more for garnish

1 C. cubed ham

2 C. cheddar cheese, divided

Salt and pepper

Butter and non-stick spray for greasing muffin tins

Preheat oven to 425°F

Generously grease muffin pans and set aside. In a bowl combine hash brown potatoes and cheese and mix to combine. If you are using frozen hash browns, make sure they are thawed before using.

Press potato and cheese mixture into the bottom and up the sides of all 16 greased muffin cups making sure that the sides come out the top of the muffin pan just slightly as they will shrink while cooking.

Season each potato cup generously with salt and pepper.

Bake at 425°F for 20 min until edges are golden and potato is tender.

Meanwhile in a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, green onion, ham and cheddar cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

When potato cups are done baking, remove from oven and fill each with about 1/4 C. filling. You should have just enough to fill all 16 cups.

Reduce oven temperature to 350°F. and bake an additional 12 min or just until eggs cups are set and puffed. If the centers are slightly soft it's ok, you don't want to overcook and make eggs rubbery.

Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly until you can handle them.

Carefully run a small offset spatula around the side of each egg cup helping release it from the muffin pan.

Serve with a dollop of sour cream and sprinkling of green onions.

French Spring Soup

Prep Time: 25 min

Cook Time: 35 min

Total Time: 1 hr

Servings: 10

1/4 C. butter

1 lb. leeks, chopped

1 onion, chopped

2 qts. water

3 lg. potatoes, chopped

2 lg. carrots, chopped

1 bunch fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces

1/3 C. uncooked long-grain white rice

4 tsp. salt

1/2 lb. fresh spinach

1 C. heavy cream

Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Stir in the leeks and onion and cook until tender.

Pour water into the pot. Mix in potatoes, carrots, asparagus, and rice. Season with salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 30 min, until vegetables and rice are tender.

Stir spinach and heavy cream into the soup mixture and continue cooking about 5 min. before serving.

Quote of the Week:

"Easter is the only time when it's perfectly safe to put all of your eggs in one basket."

