

Meals and Memories Cookbook

This cookbook is a compilation of recipes from all sides of mine and BJ's family. Each recipe is a family favorite and has a memory or story attached to it showing how most of our memories and traditions as a family center around food.

Many of the recipes we know by heart, but no one has documented many of the recipes in this cookbook. Documenting the recipes will ensure that future generations in our family will be able to enjoy these wonderful dishes in the years to come.

I learned a lot while compiling this cookbook, and I feel honored to have interviewed all of you who helped make this cookbook possible. Because of your help creating this cookbook, we will be able to treasure these recipes and memories forever.

With love,
McKenzie (Self) Hansen
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Chicken and Dressing

Recipe from Virginia Self (McKenzie's grandmother)

Story / memory provided by Jill Sanders (McKenzie's aunt)

Ingredients:

- 6 to 8 chicken legs
- Chicken bouillon cubes
- 3 eggs
- 1 box of cornbread
- 1 onion
- Celery stalks
- 3 cups of chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons of sage
- Salt

Steps:

Cook chicken legs in a pot of water. Add 2 chicken bouillon cubes and salt. Bake a 13x9 pan of cornbread. Boil three eggs. After your chicken, cornbread, and eggs are done you are ready to mix the ingredients.

In another baking dish crumble up cornbread and add the onion, celery, chopped eggs, and pour in the chicken broth. Mix all the ingredients together, making sure your mixture is not too thick.

Add your chicken legs to the dressing mix. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until your dressing starts to turn golden-brown.

Memory:

“My mama would make her chicken and dressing every year around the holidays. It was a family favorite, especially for my daddy. Mama never taught me how to make it, but over the years I would watch her as she would make it and ask her questions. She passed away in 2015 and now I make it for my daddy around the holidays because I am the only one who can make it like her.”

Pecan Pie with Karo Syrup

Recipe from Virginia Self (McKenzie's grandmother)

Story / memory provided by Jason Self (McKenzie's dad)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Karo light or dark corn syrup
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1 1/2 cups pecans
- 1 (9-inch) unbaked or frozen deep-dish pie crust

Steps:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a mixing bowl, mix corn syrup, eggs, sugar, butter, and vanilla using a spoon.

Stir in pecans. Pour filling into pie crust.

Bake on center rack of oven until center reaches 200°F and springs back when tapped lightly, about 55 to 70 minutes.

Memory:

“My mom would make 4-6 pecan pies at Thanksgiving and Christmas. I can still remember the smell of them when they would come out of the oven and my mom’s voice as she would say, ‘stay out of that’ because she knew I was going to get into them as soon as possible.”

Chicken and Dumplings

Recipe from Michelle Self (McKenzie's bonus mom)

Story / memory provided by Jason Self (McKenzie's dad)

Ingredients:

For the soup

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 (3-pound) chicken, cut into pieces
- 1/4 cup flour, seasoned with salt and pepper to taste
- 1 medium yellow onion, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 2 carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 2 stalks celery, cut into large chunks
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sprig thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon turmeric
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Fresh parsley

For the dumplings

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 cup coarsely ground cornmeal
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 3/4 cups heavy cream

Steps:

In a wide, heavy pot with a tight-fitting lid, heat the olive oil. Dredge the chicken pieces in the seasoned flour, then brown them in the oil over medium heat, about 2 minutes a side. Remove and set aside.

Add the onion to the pot and cook for 2 minutes. Add the carrots, celery, bay leaf, thyme, turmeric, salt, and pepper and cook for 1 minute more. Stir in the broth.

Return the chicken to the pot, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine the first five dumpling ingredients. Add the cream and mix until just combined. Drop about 12 heaping tablespoons of the dumpling mixture into the pot. Cover and simmer for 12 minutes more.

To serve, scoop the dumplings and chicken into bowls, then cover with broth. Garnish with the parsley.

Memory:

“My wife Michelle is a wonderful cook, and her chicken and dumplings are the best! It was the first meal she made me when we were dating. The smell of the meal was just as amazing as the taste.”

Pork Chops and Rice

Recipe from Tricia Vogelpohl (McKenzie's mom)

Story / memory provided by McKenzie Hansen

Ingredients:

- 4 to 8 pork chops (thin or thick)
- Flour
- Salt
- Pepper
- 3 to 4 boxes of wild grain rice
- 2 cans of cream of mushroom soup
- Milk

Steps:

Salt and pepper the pork chops and then add a thin layer of flour to each side of the pork chops. Fry them in a pan. Meanwhile, cook the rice according the package instructions.

When the pork chops are done, cut them into smaller pieces and scatter them at the bottom of a 13x9 pan.

In a large bowl add the cream of mushroom soup, rice, and milk (use the empty can of cream of mushroom soup as a way to measure). Mix well until you reach the consistency you want. Add the soup and rice mixture to the 13x9 pan on top of the pork chops.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Memory:

“My mom would make this meal quite a bit when me and my siblings were growing up--it is the dish I think of when I think of a ‘home cooked meal’. My best friend, Caitlen, even got hooked on this delicious meal. One time my mom made a bunch of pork chops and rice for a potluck and there was still plenty left over after the potluck was over. However, rather than taking the leftovers, she left it in case anyone wanted to take some with them. It took us years to *‘forgive’* her for leaving it!”

Sherried Chicken

Recipe from Jeannie Burlsworth (BJ's aunt)

Story / memory provided by McKenzie Hansen

Ingredients:

- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 block of cream cheese
- 1/4 cup of cream sherry
- Paprika
- 2 lbs fresh chicken tenders
- White rice (cook the amount desired for your meal)

Steps:

Unwrap the block of cream cheese and place on a microwave safe plate. Defrost the cream cheese in the microwave for 60 seconds at 50% power.

While the cream cheese is defrosting, combine the cream of chicken soup, the cream of mushroom soup, and cream sherry in a large mixing bowl. Whisk until thoroughly combined.

Add the cream cheese to the soup/sherry mixture and whisk until combined. A few cream cheese lumps are ok.

Place the chicken tenders 1 layer thick in a 13x9 baking dish. Pour the soup/cream cheese/sherry mixture over the chicken and smooth evenly with a spatula/scrapper.

Lightly sprinkle paprika over the top.

Bake at 350 for 45-50 minutes

Once the chicken is in the oven, start cooking your white rice. Follow the instructions provided with the rice.

Serve the chicken and sauce over a bed of white rice. This meal goes great with steamed veggies or asparagus!

Memory:

“Sherried chicken was the first meal that BJ made me when we started dating; however, it did not turn out right when he made it--he added way too much sherry

and salt. After we got married, we decided to try it again and he made it the way it was supposed to be made! Now it is one of our favorite ‘home cooked meals’”