HOLIDAY SIDE DISHES

Volume 1

TEST KITCHEN COOKBOOKS

COOK IT. BRING IT. TASTE IT. RATE IT.



WELCOME PAGE+ HOW IT WORKS

WELCOME TO THE TEST KITCHEN

The Holiday Side Dish Test Kitchen is all about trying something new, building confidence in the kitchen, and gathering around the table to share good food and good conversation. This collection features seasonal recipes with a fresh twist on familiar holiday flavors. Whether you're an experienced cook or still building your skills, choose a recipe that feels like the right fit for you and have fun with the process.

How It Works

1. Choose Your Recipe
Select one recipe from the Test Kitchen collection. Each recipe includes its difficulty level, prep and cook time, spice level, serving size, and allergen information to help you decide.

2. Make It at Home
Prepare your recipe as written so we can experience and evaluate the recipe together. If you must make a substitution because of an allergy or dietary need, please let us know.

3. Bring It Ready to Share
Bring your finished dish to the Hangout along with any serving utensil it may need. Remember, this is a tasting event, so full-size portions for every guest are not necessary.

4. Taste the Test Kitchen
We'll sample the dishes in tasting-size portions, talk about what we enjoyed, and experience some flavors, ingredients, and techniques that may be new to us.

5. Rate & Discover
As you taste, rate each dish on flavor, texture, holiday worthiness, and whether you would make or serve it again.

At the end of the night, we'll see which recipes became favorites—and which ones just might earn a place on our Thanksgiving or Christmas tables.

WELCOME TO THE TEST KITCHEN

Choose Your Challenge.

GIVE IT A TRY
Approachable recipes with simple techniques. Great if you want something easy or are still building your confidence.

STEP IT UP
A little more prep, technique, or attention—but still very doable.

TEST KITCHEN CHALLENGE
For anyone ready to stretch their skills and try something a little more involved.

Spice Level
0 — No Heat
1 — Mild
2 — Medium
3 — Spicy

“Spiced” does not always mean spicy. Ingredients such as cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, or nutmeg may add warm flavor without adding heat.

A Note About Allergies
Allergen information is based on each recipe as written. Ingredient brands can vary, and food prepared in home kitchens may be exposed to cross-contact. If you have a serious food allergy or dietary concern, please review the recipe carefully and communicate with the cook before tasting.

Cook it. Bring it. Taste it. Rate it.
Come curious—and maybe leave with a new holiday favorite.



BROWN BUTTER BOURSIN MASHED POTATOES

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Give It a Try	0 — No Heat	15 min	35 min	50 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Dairy/Milk

Creamy mashed potatoes get an elevated twist from nutty brown butter, garlic-herb Boursin, and fresh chives.

Ingredients:

- **4 lbs** Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- **8 tablespoons** unsalted butter
- **1 package (5.2 oz)** garlic & fine herbs Boursin cheese
- **¾ cup** whole milk or heavy cream, warmed
- **1 teaspoon** kosher salt, plus more for the cooking water
- **½ teaspoon** black pepper
- **2 tablespoons** fresh chives, chopped

Test Kitchen Tip:

For the smoothest mashed potatoes, let the drained potatoes sit in the warm pot for 1–2 minutes so excess moisture evaporates, then mash or rice them before adding the warm dairy and browned butter. Overmixing can make potatoes gummy, so fold everything together gently.

Instructions:

1. Peel the potatoes and cut them into evenly sized chunks. Place in a large pot, cover with cold salted water, and bring to a boil. Reduce to a steady simmer and cook for 15–20 minutes, or until the potatoes are completely tender when pierced with a fork.

2. While the potatoes cook, melt the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Continue cooking until the butter foams, turns golden brown, and smells nutty. Remove from heat

3. Drain the potatoes thoroughly and return them to the warm pot for 1–2 minutes to allow excess moisture to evaporate.

4. Mash or rice the potatoes until smooth. Gently fold in the Boursin cheese, browned butter, and warmed milk or cream.

5. Season with salt and black pepper to taste. Add additional warm milk if needed to reach your preferred consistency.

6. Transfer to a serving dish and finish with chopped chives and a drizzle of reserved brown butter.



MAPLE-CHIPOTLE SWEET POTATO GRATIN

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Step It Up	1 — Mild	25 min	60 min	1 hr 25 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Dairy/Milk

Thinly layered sweet potatoes bake in a creamy maple-thyme sauce with a subtle smoky chipotle finish.

Ingredients:

- **3 lbs** sweet potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- **1½ cups** heavy cream
- **2 tablespoons** pure maple syrup
- **2 garlic cloves,** minced
- **1 teaspoon f**resh thyme leaves
- **½ teaspoon** ground chipotle pepper
- **¾ teaspoon** kosher salt
- **¼ teaspoon** black pepper
- **½ cup** grated Parmesan cheese
- **1 tablespoon butter,** for the baking dish

Test Kitchen Tip:

- Slice the sweet potatoes as evenly and thinly as possible–about ⅛ inch–so they cook at the same rate and create tender, distinct layers. A mandoline makes this much easier
- Allow the gratin to rest for 10–15 minutes before serving so the cream can thicken slightly.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Butter a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. Peel the sweet potatoes and slice them very thinly, preferably about ⅛-inch thick.
3. In a bowl, whisk together the heavy cream, maple syrup, minced garlic, thyme, chipotle, salt, and black pepper.
4. Arrange the sweet potato slices in overlapping rows in the prepared baking dish.
5. Slowly pour the cream mixture over the potatoes, making sure it reaches between the layers.
6. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 40 minutes.
7. Remove the foil, sprinkle Parmesan over the top, and continue baking for 20–25 minutes, until the potatoes are tender and the top is golden.



SMOKED GOUDA MAC & CHEESE WITH ROSEMARY-PANKO CRUNCH

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Give It a Try	0 — No Heat	15 min	35 min	50 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Dairy

Classic baked mac and cheese is upgraded with smoky Gouda and a crisp, savory rosemary-Parmesan topping.

Ingredients:

- **1 lb** cavatappi or elbow macaroni
- **4 tablespoons** unsalted butter
- **¼ cup** all-purpose flour
- **3 cups** whole milk
- **1 cup** heavy cream
- **2 cups s**moked Gouda, freshly shredded
- **1½ cups** sharp cheddar cheese**,** shredded
- **½ cup** Parmesan cheese, grated
- **½ teaspoon** garlic powder
- **¼ teaspoon** smoked paprika
- **½ teaspoon** kosher salt
- **¼ teaspoon** black pepper
-

Test Kitchen Tip:

- Slice the sweet potatoes as evenly and thinly as possible—about ⅛ inch—so they cook at the same rate and create tender, distinct layers. A mandoline makes this much easier
- Allow the gratin to rest for 10–15 minutes before serving so the cream can thicken slightly.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta about 2 minutes less than the package directions. Drain and set aside.
3. Melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in the flour and cook for about 1 minute.
4. Slowly whisk in the milk and cream. Continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the sauce begins to thicken.
5. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the smoked Gouda, cheddar, and Parmesan until completely melted. Season with garlic powder, salt, pepper, and a small amount of smoked paprika if desired.
6. Fold the cooked pasta into the cheese sauce and transfer to the baking dish.
7. Combine panko, melted butter, Parmesan, and finely chopped rosemary. Sprinkle evenly over the pasta.
8. Bake for 20–25 minutes, until bubbling around the edges and golden on top. Rest for 5–10 minutes before serving.



HONEY-HARISSA ROASTED CARROTS WITH WHIPPED FETA

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Give It a Try	1—Mild	15 min	30 min	45 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: DairyMilk; verify harissa label

Sweet roasted carrots pair with mild harissa warmth and tangy whipped feta for a colorful, modern holiday side.

Ingredients:

Roasted Carrots

- **2 lbs carrots,** peeled
- **2 tablespoons** olive oil
- **2 tablespoons** honey
- **1 tablespoon** mild harissa paste
- **½ teaspoon** kosher salt
- **¼ teaspoon** black pepper

Whipped Feta

- **8 oz** feta cheese
- **½ cup** plain Greek yogurt
- **1 tablespoon** olive oil
- **1 tablespoon** fresh lemon juice

To Finish

- **2 tablespoons** chopped fresh parsley or mint
- Optional: extra honey for drizzling

Test Kitchen Tip:

- Roast the carrots in a single layer with a little space between them so they caramelize instead of steam, and don't add the whipped feta to the hot pan—spread it on the serving platter first, then arrange the warm carrots over it so the feta stays creamy rather than melting.ream can thicken slightly.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Peel the carrots and cut thicker carrots lengthwise so they cook evenly.
3. Whisk together olive oil, honey, harissa, salt, and black pepper. Toss with the carrots until evenly coated.
4. Spread the carrots in a single layer and roast for 25–30 minutes, turning once, until tender and caramelized around the edges.
5. Meanwhile, blend feta, Greek yogurt, a small drizzle of olive oil, and lemon juice until creamy and smooth.
6. Spread the whipped feta across the bottom of a serving platter.
7. Arrange the warm roasted carrots over the feta and finish with fresh herbs and an optional drizzle of honey.



MISO-MAPLE BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH SAGE

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Give It a Try	0 —No Heat	15 min	35 min	50 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Soy; some miso may contain Wheat/Gluten; Milk/Dairy from butter

Roasted butternut squash combines sweet maple, savory miso, and fragrant sage for a rich, unexpected holiday flavor.

Ingredients:

- **3 lbs butternut squash**, peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes
- **2 tablespoons** white miso paste
- **2 tablespoons** pure maple syrup
- **2 tablespoons** olive oil
- **1 tablespoon w**arm water
- **¼ teaspoon** black pepper
- **3 tablespoons** unsalted butter
- **8 fresh sage leaves,** thinly sliced

Test Kitchen Tip:

Don't overcrowd the baking sheet–the open space helps the squash caramelize instead of becoming soft and steamed.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Trim the Brussels sprouts and cut them in half.
2. Toss the sprouts with olive oil, salt, and black pepper.
3. Arrange them cut-side down on a large baking sheet, leaving space between them. Roast for 25–30 minutes, until deeply browned and crisp around the edges.
4. While the sprouts roast, place the pecans in a dry skillet over medium-low heat. Toast for 3–5 minutes, stirring frequently, until fragrant and lightly browned. Transfer the pecans to a plate and set aside.
5. In the same skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Continue cooking until the butter foams, turns golden brown, and smells nutty.
6. Stir the hot honey into the browned butter, then remove the skillet from the heat.
7. Toss the roasted Brussels sprouts with the brown butter–hot honey mixture and toasted pecans.
8. Taste and adjust with additional salt or a small splash of lemon juice before serving.



BROWN BUTTER BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH HOT HONEY & PECANS

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Give It a Try	1 —Mild	15 min	30 min	45 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy, Tree Nuts (pecans)

Caramelized Brussels sprouts are tossed with brown butter, hot honey, and toasted pecans for a sweet, savory, slightly spicy finish.

Ingredients:

- **2 lbs Brussels sprouts**, trimmed and halved
- **2 tablespoons** olive oil
- **¾ teaspoon** kosher salt
- **½ teaspoon** black pepper
- **4 tablespoons** unsalted butter
- **2 tablespoons** hot honey
- **½ cup pecans**, toasted and roughly chopped
- **1 teaspoon** fresh lemon juice

Test Kitchen Tip:

- Test Kitchen Tip: Give the Brussels sprouts plenty of space on the pan and roast them cut-side down so they caramelize instead of steam
- . Toast the pecans only until fragrant,
- Watch the butter closely once it begins to brown—it can go from nutty to burnt quickly.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Trim the Brussels sprouts and cut them in half.
2. Toss the sprouts with olive oil, salt, and black pepper.
3. Arrange them cut-side down on a large baking sheet, leaving space between them. Roast for 25–30 minutes, until deeply browned and crisp around the edges.
4. While the sprouts roast, place the pecans in a dry skillet over medium-low heat. Toast for 3–5 minutes, stirring frequently, until fragrant and lightly browned. Transfer the pecans to a plate and set aside.
5. In the same skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Continue cooking until the butter foams, turns golden brown, and smells nutty.
6. Stir the hot honey into the browned butter, then remove the skillet from the heat.
7. Toss the roasted Brussels sprouts with the brown butter–hot honey mixture and toasted pecans.
8. Taste and adjust with additional salt or a small splash of lemon juice before serving.



SAVORY CROISSANT STUFFING WITH MUSHROOMS, LEEKS & GRUYÈRE

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Test Kitchen Challenge	0 — No Heat	30 min	45 min	1 hr 15 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy, Wheat/Gluten, Eggs

Buttery croissants, earthy mushrooms, tender leeks, and Gruyère transform traditional stuffing into something rich and elegant.

Ingredients:

- **8 large day-old croissants,** cut or torn into bite-size pieces
- **6 tablespoon**s unsalted butter
- **12 oz** cremini mushrooms, sliced
- **2 medium leeks**, white and light green parts only, cleaned and sliced
- **3 garlic cloves**, minced
- **2 teaspoons** fresh thyme leaves
- **1 tablespoon** chopped fresh sage
- **1 teaspoon** kosher salt
- **½ teaspoon** black pepper
- **1½ cups** Gruyère cheese, shredded
- **2½ cups** low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- **2 large eggs**

Test Kitchen Tip:

Add the broth gradually—the croissants should be moist enough to hold together without becoming soggy

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and butter a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. Spread the croissant pieces on baking sheets and toast for 8–10 minutes.
3. Melt butter in a skillet and brown the mushrooms.
4. Add leeks and cook until tender.
5. Stir in garlic, thyme, sage, salt, and pepper and cook 1 minute.
6. Combine toasted croissants, mushroom mixture, and Gruyère in a large bowl.
7. Whisk the broth and eggs together and gradually pour over the croissants, folding gently.
8. Transfer to the baking dish and cover with foil.
9. Bake 25 minutes, uncover, then bake another 15–20 minutes until golden and crisp.



WILD RICE PILAF WITH ROASTED GRAPES, MUSHROOMS & HERBS

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Step It Up	0 — No Heat	20 min	50 min	1 hr 10 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy · Verify broth for additional allergens

Earthy wild rice and mushrooms are brightened by sweet roasted grapes and fresh herbs for a balanced seasonal side.

Ingredients:

- **2 cups wild rice blend**
- **4 cups vegetable or chicken broth**
- **2 cups seedless red grapes**
- **2 tablespoons olive oil, divided**
- **2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **12 oz cremini mushrooms, sliced**
- **1 small yellow onion, diced**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 teaspoon fresh thyme**
- **½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **¼ cup chopped fresh parsley**

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Cook wild rice in broth according to package directions.
2. Toss grapes lightly with olive oil and roast 15–20 minutes until softened and beginning to burst.
3. Heat remaining olive oil and butter in a skillet.
4. Add mushrooms and cook until deeply browned.
5. Add onion and cook until softened.
6. Stir in garlic and thyme and cook for 1 minute.
7. Fold in the cooked wild rice.
8. Gently add roasted grapes and parsley.
9. Season with salt and pepper and serve warm.

Test Kitchen Tip:

Let the mushrooms brown before stirring too often—deep browning builds the savory flavor that balances the sweet roasted grapes.



JALAPEÑO-CHEDDAR CORN SPOON BREAD WITH HONEY BUTTER

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Step It Up	1 — Mild	15 min	40 min	55 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy · Eggs

Soft, spoonable corn bread blends cheddar and gentle jalapeño heat with sweet honey butter.

Ingredients:

Spoon Bread

- **3 cups whole milk**
- **1 cup yellow cornmeal**
- **4 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **1½ cups sharp cheddar, shredded**
- **1 small jalapeño, seeded and finely chopped**
- **1 teaspoon kosher salt**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **4 large eggs, separated**

Honey Butter

- **4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- **2 tablespoons honey**
- **Pinch of salt**

Test Kitchen Tip:

Fold the whipped egg whites in gently so you preserve the air that gives spoon bread its soft, light texture.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F and butter a 2- to 2½-quart baking dish.
2. Bring milk to a gentle simmer.
3. Gradually whisk in cornmeal and cook 3–5 minutes until thick.
4. Remove from heat and cool slightly.
5. Stir in butter, cheddar, jalapeño, salt, and pepper.
6. Whisk in the egg yolks.
7. Beat egg whites to soft peaks in a separate bowl.
8. Gently fold the egg whites into the cornmeal mixture.
9. Transfer to the baking dish and bake 35–40 minutes until puffed and lightly golden.
10. Mix honey-butter ingredients together and serve alongside.



BROWN BUTTER APPLE CRISP WITH SALTED MAPLE OAT TOPPING

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Give It A Try	0 — No Heat	20 min	45 min	1 hr 5 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy · Wheat/Gluten · Oats may have gluten cross-contact

Warm spiced apples bake beneath a crunchy brown-butter oat topping finished with maple and a touch of salt.

Ingredients:

Apple Filling

- 6 large apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
- 3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
-

Brown Butter Oat Topping

- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- Optional flaky sea salt

Test Kitchen Tip:

Use a mix of sweet and tart apples so the finished crisp has more depth and doesn't become overly sweet.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and butter a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. Toss apples with maple syrup, lemon juice, cinnamon, flour, and salt.
3. Spread apples evenly in the baking dish.
4. Brown the butter in a saucepan until golden and nutty.
5. Combine oats, flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Stir in the browned butter until crumbly.
6. Sprinkle evenly over the apples.
7. Bake 40–45 minutes until bubbling and golden.
8. Rest for at least 10 minutes and finish with flaky salt if desired.



SWEET POTATO CHEESECAKE BARS WITH GINGERSNAP CRUST

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Step It Up	0 — No Heat	25 min	45 min	4 hr including Chilling

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy · Eggs · Wheat/Gluten

Creamy sweet potato cheesecake sits on a warmly spiced gingersnap crust for a festive twist on a holiday classic.

Ingredients:

Gingersnap Crust

- 2 cups finely crushed gingersnap cookies
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

Sweet Potato Cheesecake

- **16 oz cream cheese, softened**
- **¾ cup granulated sugar**
- **1 cup cooked and mashed sweet potato**
- **3 large eggs**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla**
- **1 teaspoon cinnamon**
- **½ teaspoon ground ginger**
- **¼ teaspoon nutmeg**
- **¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

Test Kitchen Tip:

Bring the cream cheese to room temperature before mixing for a smooth filling, and avoid overbeating once the eggs are added.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a 9x13-inch pan with parchment.
2. Mix gingersnap crumbs with melted butter.
3. Press firmly into the pan and bake for 8–10 minutes.
4. Beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth.
5. Mix in sweet potato.
6. Add eggs one at a time, followed by vanilla, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and salt.
7. Pour over the crust and smooth the top.
8. Bake 35–45 minutes until the edges are set and the center has a slight wobble.
9. Cool completely, then refrigerate at least 2–3 hours before slicing.



CRANBERRY-ORANGE UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

DIFFICULTY	SPICE	PREP	COOK	TOTAL
Step It Up	0 — No Heat	20 min	45 min	1 hr 5 min

SERVES 8 - 10

ALLERGENS: Milk/Dairy · Eggs · Wheat/Gluten

Creamy sweet potato cheesecake sits on a warmly spiced gingersnap crust for a festive twist on a holiday classic.

Ingredients:

Cranberry Topping

- **4 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **¾ cup packed brown sugar**
- **2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries**

Orange Cake

- **1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1½ teaspoons baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **8 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- **¾ cup granulated sugar**
- **2 large eggs**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla**
- **Zest of 1 large orange**
- **½ cup whole milk or buttermilk**

Test Kitchen Tip:

Don't let the cake cool completely in the pan—the cranberry topping releases more easily while it is still warm.

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9-inch round cake pan and line the bottom with parchment.
2. Melt 4 tablespoons butter with brown sugar and spread across the bottom of the pan.
3. Arrange cranberries evenly over the mixture.
4. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt together.
5. Beat softened butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
6. Beat in eggs one at a time, followed by vanilla and orange zest.
7. Alternate adding the dry ingredients and milk, mixing only until combined.
8. Spread batter carefully over the cranberries.
9. Bake 40–45 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean.
10. Cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then carefully invert onto a serving plate.