

Cooking OUT OF THE BOX with Brenda Hall - April 10, 2025

Good morning and Happy Thursday!

Let's get started making some delicious and nutritious meals out of the box. This week the box had a bag of russet potatoes, Cubanelle sweet peppers, green grapes, eggs, grated parmesan cheese, and iceberg lettuce. Hmmmmm, what can I make....

So, I immediately thought of making some quiche-like muffins, minus the crust. These are so good that you could eat them for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or a snack. Yes, they're that good! And quick and easy to make and ready to have on hand when tummies start growling.

Here's what I made, adding a few more ingredients that I had on hand . . .

Mini Crustless Quiches:

2 Russet potatoes sliced in ¼" rounds

4 peppers, seeded and chopped

2 onions chopped

4-5 eggs

1 cup of milk, or unsweetened nut milks, or half and half....whatever you have on hand

½ c sour cream (optional)

3 green onions sliced thin

1 cup of your favorite shredded cheese

½ cup of grated parmesan cheese

½ cup of cooked bacon-optional

Salt and pepper to taste

Garlic powder to taste

1 tsp of cumin

Lay out potato slices on lined cookie tray. Brush with a little oil, salt and pepper, and garlic powder. Turn them over and do the same thing to the other side. Bake them in a 350 degree oven, or air fryer, or frying pan until soft and starting to brown. This is also a good time to fry up your bacon, if you're adding it to the dish. While that's cooking mix your eggs, peppers, onions, milk, sour cream, ½ cup of cheese, and cumin. When the

potatoes are almost done, get out your muffin tin and spray with non-stick spray. Next add your potato round as your base, Then, add your egg mixture almost to the top. Top off with the sliced green onions, crumbled bacon, ½ cup of shredded cheese, and the parmesan cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes, or until it gets lightly golden and bubbly on top. Remove from oven, let sit for 10 minutes, remove from muffin tin, and ENJOY!!!! This will make about 12-18 muffins, depending on how full you fill the muffin pan. Easy to double, or triple the recipe and throw them in the freezer for easy breakfasts on the run.

Ok, so I still have a TON of potatoes left. Let's make some more baked potatoe slices and dress them up with some yummy toppings. This is perfect for a snack, a party, or as a side dish with dinner.

Baked Potato Slices:

2-3 Russet potatoes sliced in ¼" rounds

1 cup of your favorite shredded cheese

½ cup of cooked bacon

Green onions sliced

Salt, pepper, and your favorite seasonings to taste

Lay out the potato slices on a cookie tray, air fryer, frying pan and give them a little oil and seasong on each side, like salt, pepper, cumin, smoked paprika, chili seasoning, chili flakes....whatever you like the most. Bake at 350 degrees for about 20-25 minutes, or until the potatoes start to turn brown. Remove from oven and top them with your favorite toppings. I used shredded cheese, some grated parmesan cheese, green onions, and some crumbled bacon. Put back in the oven for about 8-10 minutes until everything is bubbly and turning brown. Remove from oven and let rest for a few minutes. You could serve with sour cream, salsa, chili, peppers, anything you like! This will make about 2 dozen potato slices.

So, I have these green grapes that are already delicious by themselves, but let's make another dish that you could eat literally for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or a snack. You can even take this to a church picnic!

Grape Salad:

2-3 pounds of seedless grapes halved (any color grape works great)

8 oz cream cheese, softened

16 oz low fat, low sugar greek yogurt (if you like things sweet then go ahead and get one of the flavored greek yogurts, like honey or vanilla)

8 oz of pecans or walnuts-optional

2-3 apples, cut up-optional

Mix the cream cheese and yogurt by hand, or with mixer for a smoother consistency. Add the grape halves, and apples, if using. Put nuts in right before serving so they don't get soggy and mushy.

A few more ideas....if you went with flavored/sweetened yogurt, you don't need to add any sweetener. If you used plain Greek yogurt, then you may want to add a bit of sweetener and vanilla. And, fresh lemon zest and lemon juice give it a nice punch that blends nicely with the sweet grapes and tart yogurt sauce. This makes about 12 servings, so modify the recipe if you want more or less. Easy peasy!

Well, that's what I made out of the box this week. Here are a few more ideas on how to use your ingredients if these don't do it for you.

Saute peppers, onions, garlic, potatoes together and add some kielbasa sausage for a hearty and delicious meal.

Bake those potatoes and set out a condiment bar with all your favorite dips, cheeses, veges, chilis, etc., and make a baked potato bar-perfect for parties or a big family dinner.

Bake the potatoes and chop up to make a mashed potato salad with sour cream, peas, chives, green onions, salt and pepper. So good!!!!

Iceberg lettuce....best thing I know to do with it is make a wedge salad. Cut the head of lettuce into quarters, lay it on it's side, add all of your favorite salad toppings and dressing.

Grapes are a perfect addition to a delicious chicken salad with green onions and your favorite seasonings.

Grapes can also be added to a salad for a sweet addition which plays off nicely with feta cheese.

Happy cooking. See you soon!

Brenda Hall