



Stories We Stir: What Feeds Us

A Recipe Booklet
Created by Ashtyn Daniel, Farah Dashti, Char
Lamar, and Mary McDonald

Stories We Stir: What Feeds Us

Our Mission Statement

Stories We Stir: What Feeds Us is a graduate student-led recipe booklet stirred within the English Department at Auburn University. Created for the English Department community at Auburn University, this recipe booklet is created from a sincere desire to connect through culture and to generously share food and family stories.

Food feeds us in more ways than one. It fills us, but it also brings us together in kitchens and around tables, where we cook, taste, and break bread with the people in our lives. The recipes we share come from family kitchens, everyday routines, and dishes tied to memory. They carry the flavors, habits, and traditions that shaped us and the stories we work to keep alive.

Created within the English Department community at Auburn University, *Stories We Stir: What Feeds Us* values learning through doing. Regardless of skill level, we believe everyone belongs in the kitchen. We learn by stirring, tasting, kneading, and sharing meals together. We invite graduate students to share the foods that raised them, the dishes they return to, and to cook these recipes, enjoy them, and make them part of their own tables.

Edited by Farah Dashti, global editor, and Charlotte Lamar, local editor

Our Editorial Team



From left to right:

Ashtyn Daniel, Editor in Chief

Farah Dashti, Global Editor

Mary McDonald, Local Editor

Char Lamar, Local Editor

Table of Contents

Honey Chicken Wings by Jacob Crow	5
Cornbread by Lara White	7
Benekino/Benechin by Dr. Deborah Solomon	9
Biscochitos by Hannah Duckett	11
Wright Chicken and Sausage Gumbo by Jewel Odom	13
Pork and Pinto Beans Soup by Abby Jones	15
Not-Just-For-Salmon Dry Rub by Dr. Derek G. Ross	17
Buttermilk Scones with West Country Clotted Cream and Raspberry Butter by Lizzie McGlynn	19

Honey Chicken Wings

by Jacob Crow



Family Story

“One of my favorite foods in the world is a classic chicken wing, and I think I can probably trace the reasoning for that back to this particular recipe.

The Crow grandparents, who are unfortunately both lost to us now, were prolific cooks. This is evidenced by the massive cookbook “box” that my parents inherited. Even though they are lost now, I like to think that their traditions, essence, and flair for cooking lives on when we break out this recipe for whatever event we have planned.

For me, it’s most often when I want to impress some friends at a party, but I can remember eating these every single year at Christmas time, a memory that comes screaming back to the fore every time I make a new batch.

I hope you enjoy the stylings of Grandpa Crow, and feel free to experiment and add! We are nothing if not creative.” - Jacob Crow

Ingredients

- 16 Chicken Wings (about 3 lbs)
- 1 Cup Honey
- 1/2 Cup Catsup (Ketchup)
- 1/2 Cup Soy Sauce
- 2 Teaspoons Vegetable oil
- 2 Cloves garlic, crushed and minced
- Pepper (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375° F
2. Cut off bony tips of wings. Cut each wing in half at the joint.
3. Place in a single layer in a shallow 3-Quart baking dish.
4. In a medium bowl, stir honey, catsup, soy sauce, oil, garlic, and pepper until blended.
5. Pour over chicken pieces, turning to coat.
6. Bake for 1^{1/4} to 1^{1/2} hours or until browned, basting occasionally.

Cornbread

by Lara White



Family Story

“My momma rarely writes her recipes down. Her handwritten cookbooks are reserved for the special recipes that only get made once or twice a year. This recipe lives in her mind and never has exact measurements, though I have added some estimates for this submission. Her cornbread recipe, like all of her recipes, is the result of her ‘fiddling’ with it until it’s right. I encourage you to do the same.”

- Lara White

Ingredients

- Butter for greasing skillet
- 1 Cup, self-rising cornmeal
- 1 Stick, butter, melted and cooled
- A Pinch of sugar
- 1 egg
- Buttermilk to consistency

Directions

1. Grease cast iron by rubbing with butter. Preheat cast iron at 350°F for 7 minutes
2. Combine cornmeal, pinch of sugar, egg and cooled butter in mixing bowl.
3. Add buttermilk until batter “plops” off the spoon and is “fluffy”
4. Pour into preheated cast-iron skillet and bake until golden brown, about 25-30 minutes.

Benekino/Benechin

by Dr. Deborah Solomon



Family Story

“This is a vegetarian version of the well-known West African dish benekino (or jollof rice) - the national dish of The Gambia¹, where I was born and grew up. As simple as it is (who hasn’t made a one-pot rice meal?), this is my comfort food - the dish I cook when I want a taste of home and belonging.

While the classic Gambian version is topped with meat (usually chicken or fish), every household I knew had its own preferred variation. If you decide to make it, feel free to experiment with flavors such as lime, spring onion, bay leaf, or ginger. (Ghanaian versions of the dish, for example, include paprika and chili powder). I myself love to experiment – my latest success involved spring onion and smoked paprika. Its beauty lies in its versatility or adaptability, reflecting cooking traditions shaped by the seasonal availability of produce.” - Dr. Solomon

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons cooking oil of choice
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 4-6 cloves garlic, minced (let your own preferences guide you when it comes to the garlic; our family tends to use the full 6 cloves)
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon of your favorite curry (chili powder is also a favorite)
- 1-2 hot peppers of choice, chopped or cayenne powder to taste(optional)
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 ripe tomatoes, diced (or one can of diced tomatoes)
- 1 heaped cup of vegetables, chopped fairly small
- 1 cup of rice
- 2 cups of water or broth
- Salt to taste (I usually use the amount recommended for cooking rice)

Directions

1. In a pot with a bit of oil, sauté the onions and green pepper until softened (about 5 minutes).
2. Add the garlic, thyme, curry, and hot pepper or cayenne (if using), and stir until fragrant.
3. Next, add the tomato paste, diced tomatoes, veggies, rice, water or broth, and salt. Then, bring everything to a boil. (Adding a cup of cooked black beans at this stage will make this dish a complete protein.)
4. Reduce heat to low and allow to simmer until the rice has absorbed the water (15-30 minutes, depending on what kind of rice you decide to use).
5. Serve hot it in a hot iron skillet and bake until golden brown, about 25-30 minutes.

Note

If you're curious about Gambian cooking, check out Kendra Gray's *The Flavors of Gambia: A Culinary Journey*.

Biscochitos

by Hannah Duckett



Family Story

“Growing up, my Grandma Sherry’s neighbor Linda Mascarenas brought over her biscochitos (Spanish for little biscuit) around Christmas time. She was a stout Navajo-Mexican woman with long gray hair and a shrill voice, made louder when with my hard-of-hearing Grandma. We would eat the cookies with milk or tea and watch it snow on the Animas River that backed onto my Grandma’s property.

When I got to high school, I asked Linda for her recipe and began my own annual tradition of baking for the whole city: immediate and extended family, friends, parents’ coworkers, teachers, classmates, churchgoers, and strangers. Since then, I’ve spent some Christmases baking up to 800 cookies, our refrigerator full of a dozen lumps of biscochito dough waiting to be rolled, cut, and baked. I hope you can share them with your family and friends next Christmas and enjoy Linda’s biscochitos with a cup of coffee!” - Hannah Duckett

Ingredients

- 1/2 Cup unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 Cups lard
- 4 eggs
- 1 1/4 Cups sugar
- 1 Tablespoon anise, ground¹
- 1/4 Cup wine, brandy, or whiskey²
- 2 Tablespoons vanilla extract
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 6 Cups sifted flour³
- 1 Cup sugar for topping
- 1/8 Cup cinnamon for topping

Directions

1. In a stand-up mixer, beat butter and lard until fluffy.
2. Add 1-2 eggs and parts of sugar intermittently, stirring in between.
3. Add anise and stir. Let it sit for 15 minutes.
4. Mix in alcohol and vanilla.
5. Add baking powder and salt.
6. Add flour 2 cups at a time. Don't over mix it! The dough is ready when it no longer sticks to your hands. It should be smooth.
7. Remove dough from the bowl and wrap in plastic wrap. Put in the fridge for a minimum of 2 hours, maximum of 24. You can store the dough in the freezer for up to a few weeks to bake at your convenience!
8. When ready to bake, preheat the oven to 400°F.
Remove the dough from the fridge and roll it out on a floured surface to 1/8 - 1/4 inch thickness. Use a cookie cutter or a circular glass to cut out cookie shapes. You can use fun shapes, but they may cook unevenly if they're too thin.⁴
9. Mix the cinnamon-sugar topping in a shallow bowl/plate and plop the cookies in there only on one side! Set them on an ungreased cookie sheet with sugar side up.
10. Bake at 400°F for 8–10 minutes or until a light golden.
Remove from the cookie sheet immediately to prevent browning on the bottom. Let cool on a rack and enjoy!

Notes

1. You can find Star Anise at most grocery stores; however, you have to grind it yourself. I would go to a Mexican grocery store and find their bag of ground anise!
2. I've tested different alcohols in the cookies, and by far my favorites are either Bulleit Rye, Whiskey or Jameson Irish Whiskey.
3. Traditionally in New Mexico, we use Red Rose Flour or Bluebird Flour, but any quality flour works fine.
4. I personally like thicker cookies between 1/4 - 1/2 inch thick cut with a stemless wine glass. Perfect size. Bake them for 10-12 minutes.

Wright Chicken and Sausage Gumbo

by Jewel Odom

Family Story

“Instead of a traditional Thanksgiving or Christmas Eve dinner, my mom makes this gumbo for our family every year. Most families from Louisiana have their variation of a gumbo recipe, whether it’s chicken and sausage, seafood, or wild game. Our family recipe has been passed down by word of mouth from mother to daughter for generations, until my mom and her cousins gathered all their family recipes into the Wright Family Cookbook, which they produced, printed, and distributed to each member of the Wright family, from Louisiana to California. This dish is not just nostalgic for me because it is a holiday tradition, but because when I eat it, I taste my family heritage: the strong, capable women who perfected it over the years with care and dedication.” - Jewel Odom



Ingredients

- 1 Whole Chicken
- 2 Pounds Andouille Sausage, sliced
- Pam’s® Cooking Spray
- Tony’s® Seasoning
- 2 Onions, chopped
- ¾ Cup Celery, chopped
- 1 – 1 ½ Cup Prepared Roux, dry roux mixed with water recommended
- 3 ½ Quarts Water
- 3 – 4 Chicken Bouillon Cubes

Directions

1. Cut chicken into chunks.
2. Spray a deep pot with Pam® and heat over medium-high heat.
3. Season chicken with Tony's® to taste.
4. Place chicken in pot and brown chicken well. Work in batches if necessary.
5. Place cooked chicken in bowl and brown onion and celery in pot.
6. Add chicken back to pot and cook with onion and celery for a few minutes.
7. Add prepared roux, water, bouillon cubes, and Tony's® (to taste).
8. Bring to a boil and boil for 30 minutes. Do not let it boil over.
9. Add sausage and lower heat to low. Cook until chicken falls off the bones (typically 2 1/2-3 hours).
10. Remove chicken, debone and de-skin and add meat back to pot. Discard bones and skin.
11. Serve over rice with French Bread. Serves 6 to 8.

Pork and Pinto Bean Soup

by Abby Jones



Family Story

“My mom, Nikki, started making this Tex-Mex dish when I was a young teenager, sometime after my family moved to Houston, TX. Like any recipe my mom follows, she started with a totally different recipe and eventually ended up making it her own, and it has been a family favorite (especially beloved by my sister Claire and myself) for many years now! As a busy homemaker and homeschooler of her six kids, my mother is always comfortable adapting recipes to fit the needs of her lifestyle, whether that means doubling recipes, finding ways to save time, or just substituting ingredients and adapting the recipe based on what’s in the pantry or fridge at the moment. In the spirit of my mom’s cooking style, I recommend using this recipe as a starting point, a template you can adapt and adjust to meet your own needs and preferences. Enjoy!” - Abby Jones

Ingredients

- 4 lbs Boneless Pork Shoulder, cut into 2 or 3 inch chunks (can be prepped separately ahead of time if desired)
- 2 Tablespoons Neutral Oil
- 4-6 Cans Pinto Beans, plain, drained of canning liquid OR Bush's® Chili Beans, liquid included, OR 1 lb Dried Beans, cooked until tender
- 3 Teaspoons Mild Chili Powder
- 5-6 Cloves of Garlic, minced (use more or less according to personal preference)
- 2 Teaspoons Salt (plus more salt to taste at the end of the recipe)
- 3 Teaspoons Cumin
- Optional Seasoning Substitutes: salsa; any preferred taco seasoning blend
- 1 Large Onion, diced OR 2 Small Onions, diced
- 6 Cups Pork Broth, OR Chicken Broth (if not using liquid from beans)
- Green Onions, diced (suggested for topping)
- Jalapeños (suggested for topping)
- Limes (suggested for topping)
- Cheese (suggested for topping)
- Cilantro (suggested for topping)
- Sour Cream (suggested for topping)
- Chips (suggested for serving)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F.
2. Add pork, 2 t cumin, 2 t chili powder, 2 t salt, and 2 C of chicken stock to a large Dutch oven.
3. Roast for 2 1/2 to 3 hours until pork is tender and can be easily shredded with a fork.
4. Remove pork from Dutch oven, shred, and set aside.
5. Sauté the onion(s) in a large pot or Dutch oven in neutral oil over medium heat until translucent.
6. Add the minced garlic to the pot towards the end of cooking the onions and allow to cook for about a minute.
7. Add shredded pork and beans (either drained from the can, or previously cooked) to the pot.
8. Add remaining cumin and chili powder.
9. Add 4 C pork (or chicken) broth if you are NOT using the liquid from the beans.
10. Allow to simmer for at least twenty minutes over medium heat.
11. If it is not thick enough, make a slurry from cornstarch or arrowroot and water to thicken to a stew-like consistency.
12. Add salt to taste.

Not-Just-For-Salmon Dry Rub

by Dr. Derek G. Ross



Family Story

“We make this stuff in large quantities, usually doubling or tripling the recipe. It’s not only a delicious fish rub, it also makes a handy gift: ‘Hey look! I brought you yummy fish rub!’ And since you can make this days, weeks, or even months in advance, when paired with a couple of fast sides you can use it to turn out a gourmet-feeling dinner in 30 minutes or less, perfect for when you want to bring folks together for a shared meal but don’t have time for a lot of prep. That’s our story—sometimes we’re moving fast, but still want to share a table.” - Dr. Ross

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 1 tbsp dried parsley
- 1 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 1/2 tsp dried dill
- 1/2 tsp coriander
- 1/2 tsp cumin

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients together.
2. Store in an air-tight container.

Note

This dry rub can be used for a variety of fish dishes, but Dr. Ross uses it most often with salmon. See recipe below.

Salmon Recipe with Dry Rub

Ingredients

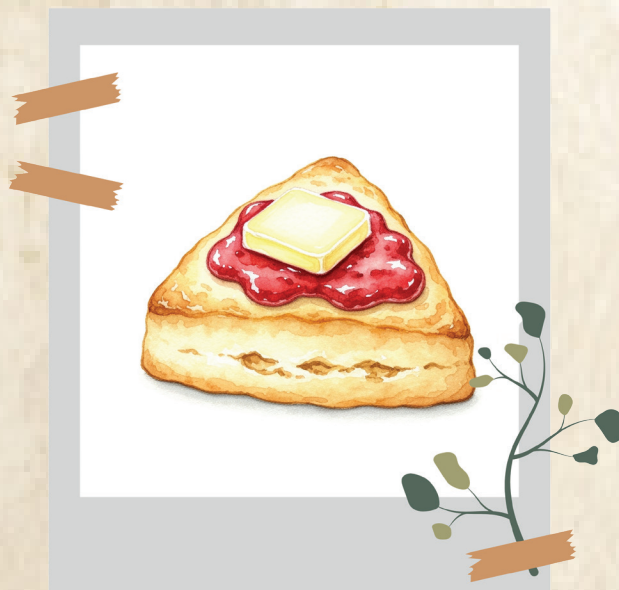
- Salmon (we use skin-on)
- Lemon juice
- Olive oil
- Butter
- Dry rub

Directions

1. Splash lemon juice and a small amount of olive oil on your salmon. Rub this in.
2. Generously coat both sides of the salmon with the rub.
3. Melt enough butter in a non-stick skillet on high heat to lightly coat the bottom.
4. Drop the fish in, skin side down, and cook for 4– 5 minutes.
5. Flip the salmon over and cook 1–3 minutes depending on how well-done you prefer your salmon.
6. Splash a little more lemon juice over the salmon and serve.

Buttermilk Scones with West Country Clotted Cream and Raspberry Butter

by Lizzie McGlynn



Family Story

“When my friend Judyth came to Auburn from Birmingham, England, she brought more than a suitcase and a soft Midlands accent, she brought tradition. As an intern at Auburn Christian Fellowship, she quickly became known for one sacred ritual: her buttermilk scones. It wasn’t wabout a specific day; it was about the moment word spread that she was baking. The kitchen she would cook in would fill with the warm, buttery scent of flour and cream rising in the oven. She insisted on doing it properly, cold butter rubbed in by hand, dough handled gently, never over-worked. And always, always served with proper West Country clotted cream she’d carefully sourced or made herself. People tried to recreate them after she left. They followed her measurements and copied her technique. But something was missing. No one ever made them quite like Judyth.” - Lizzie McGlynn

Ingredients

For the scones:

- 2-3 tablespoons buttermilk, plus a little extra for brushing
- 8 oz (225 g) self-raising flour, plus a little extra for dusting
- pinch of salt
- 3 oz (75 g) butter, at room temperature
- 1½ oz (40 g) golden caster sugar
- 1 large egg, beaten

For the raspberry butter:

- 1 lb (450 g) raspberries
- 6 oz (175 g) golden granulated sugar

To serve:

- clotted cream

Directions

1. To make the raspberry butter, purée the raspberries in a food processor, then pass them through a fine nylon sieve, pressing with a wooden spoon so that as much juice as possible gets through – you should get about 15fl oz (425 ml).
2. Now place the purée in a medium saucepan with the sugar and heat very gently until the sugar has dissolved. Then turn up the heat so the mixture boils rapidly for 8-10 minutes, but keep stirring from time to time so it doesn't catch on the base.
3. When it's ready, the mixture should have reduced by one third, and a wooden spoon drawn across the base of the pan should leave a trail for 1-2 seconds only, but be careful not to overcook it, or you will get glue.
4. Pour it into a serving dish and leave it to one side to cool and set for at least an hour.
5. For the scones, begin by sifting the flour and salt into a bowl, rub the butter lightly into the mixture until it looks like breadcrumbs, then add the sugar. Now, in a jug, beat the egg and 2 tablespoons of the buttermilk together and start to add this to the rest, mixing the dough with a palette knife.

6. When it begins to come together, finish off with your hands – it should be soft but not sticky (if the dough seems too dry, add a little more buttermilk, a teaspoon at a time).
7. When you have formed the dough into a ball, tip it onto a lightly floured surface and roll it into a circle at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick – be very careful not to roll it any thinner; the secret of well-risen scones is to start off with a thickness of no less than an inch.
8. Cut out the scones by placing the cutter on the dough and giving it a sharp tap – don't twist it, just lift it up and push the dough out.
9. Carry on until you are left with the trimmings, then bring these back together to roll out again until you can cut out the last scone.
10. Place the scones on the baking tray, brush them lightly with the buttermilk and dust with a little flour.
11. Now bake on the top shelf of the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until they are well risen and golden brown, then remove them to a wire rack to cool.
12. Serve the scones thickly spread with raspberry butter and lots of clotted cream.

The End

Dear Reader,

Thank you for joining us in discovering the recipes that shape the Auburn University English department! Remember, food is more than just nourishment for the body, it's nourishment for the soul. We hope you found a new recipe (or two!) to try out.

Best dishes,

The *Stories We Stir* Editorial Team :)

P.S. We offer a huge thank you to the people behind the recipes! Thanks to Lizzie McGlynn, Jewel Odom, Jacob Crow, Abby Jones, Hannah Duckett, Lara White, Dr. Derek G. Ross, and Dr. Deborah Solomon. Y'all made this endeavor possible.