

## **In the Kitchen – A Colorful Plate – by Marcy Lytle**

One of the coolest things about this new season is all the color we can have on our plate at home, on a picnic, or anywhere...really! Color on the plate is not only tasty and healthy, but it looks so pretty and makes us want to eat and savor every bite! “They say” the more color on our plates the better. So here are some fun recipes that add color and flavor and all the things good that we celebrate in the season of spring!

### **Succotash!**

We recently traveled to Mississippi and I bought a cookbook there, and found a fun succotash recipe on its pages, and made it my own. The cool thing is that this mixture can be served over rice or pasta, and both are good!

- 1 chopped yellow onion
- ½ lb ham steak cut into ½ in cubes
- 2 T veg oil or butter
- 1 qt water (I used less)
- 1 17oz can crushed tomatoes
- 1 can green beans (recipe called for frozen butter beans but I opted not)
- 1 sm can of yellow corn
- 1 sm can of white shoepeg corn
- Rice or pasta

Saute onions and ham in the oil or butter until ham browns. Add this to simmering water (I felt a quart was too much – so you choose). Add all the canned goods (drained, first) and then cook until everything is heated. You will need to season it to taste! So good!

### **Lemon Pesto Pasta**

I saw this recipe in Rachael Ray’s 30-minute meals and it looked so good. Not only that, but I found it so easy to make, and it didn’t take long. We both LOVED it and took it for a picnic.

- 1 lb corkscrew pasta
- 1 cup refrigerated pesto (I made my own, but you can buy, as well)
- 1 lemon, juiced and zested
- ¼ cup flat leaf parsley chopped
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, cut in half
- 4 scallions chopped
- ¾ lb of ricotta salata chopped and crumbled or 1lb tub bocconcini mini mozzarella drained and halved (I just used shredded mozzarella)
- Black pepper and coarse salt

Cook the pasta in salted water. Place all the other ingredients in a large bowl. When pasta is al dente, cold shock it and chill it under running cold water, and drain. Add to the bowl and mix. Season with salt and pepper. (I added a few Marcona almonds on top – loved the crunch!)

## **Lima Bean Hummus**

Okay, so this is a green colored hummus, but paired with the colors of carrots, radishes, cukes and red bell peppers, it makes a nice appetizer tray for you and yours! And the lima beans instead of chickpeas are so tasty. My husband thought this was guacamole!

- 1 ½ c frozen baby lima beans (8oz)
- ½ c fresh basil
- 1 T plus 1 ½ tsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 ½ t tahini
- 1 small clove garlic
- Sea salt and fresh black pepper, to taste

In a medium saucepan, combine lima beans and 1 ½ c water, and bring to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered, about 20 minutes til tender, and drain. In a blender or processor, combine these beans with the other ingredients, cover and blend til smooth. Season with salt and pepper, pulse again. Transfer to a bowl and chill til ready to serve!

## **Italian Sausage and Pepper Pizza**

HEB is the grocery store where I order curbside, and when I click on a product to purchase, if I scroll down the page there are recipes using that product – so cool. This is one of those recipes, and it's so colorful and so tasty – and it was really easy to make. In fact, you could prep all the ingredients ahead of time for a quick dinner later in the week!

- 1 pizza crust (I used HEB Midtown Crust)
- ¼ c roasted garlic pizza sauce
- 1 ½ c shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ c green bell pepper, diced
- 2 T sliced black olives
- 2 T red onion, diced
- ¼ cup sliced pepperoncini
- ½ cup sweet Italian sausage, browned and drained

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Place frozen pizza crust on pizza pan and evenly spread the sauce, leaving ½ crust around the edge.

Sprinkle cheese on top of the sauce, and then all of the rest of the ingredients, spreading out evenly.

Place in middle rack of oven and bake 8-10 minutes until cheese is melted and edges of crust are browned.

## **Noodle Stir Fry**

You know, those Ramen noodles we all used to love and enjoy? Or maybe you still do! Just soak a package of the noodles in a bowl of hot water for two minutes, then drain and add in the following:

Cooked fajita chicken

Chopped green pepper, chopped onion and garlic – stir fried til crisp-tender

½ cup chicken broth (low sodium)

2 T soy sauce

A bit of seasoned salt if needed (taste first)

Wedges of tomato

It's SO GOOD! We had this for lunch just today!