

Keeping It Fresh ... McCormick (Schilling) Spices in your pantry

When is it time to clean out your spice pantry? Here are some ideas to keep your pantry clean and your spices fresh.

Store spices in a tight container away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight. Avoid storing spices and herbs near the window, dishwasher, sink or over the stove.

Members of the red pepper family retain color better and stay fresher longer when stored in the refrigerator.

Here is a list for the shelf life for your spices.

Ground spices 2-3 years

Whole spices 3-4 years

Spice blends 1-3 years

Herbs 1-3 years

Extracts keep 4 years except pure vanilla which is indefinite.

Check your spices on the bottom of the bottle or the top for expiration dates. For any bottle without dates on the bottom look to see where it was made.

If it reads Baltimore Maryland, it is out of date.

Any spice with the Schilling label is at least 7 years old.

Source: mccormick.com

Sandie's Pork Rib BBQ

Based on a recipe by Karen Crabtree

A lot of people aren't enthusiastic about pork ribs. The common complaints are that they are greasy and are often too tough. It is plain to those of us who know their ribs that those other folks have never had good, home cooked, sweet Barbecue, ribs. Well here's a recipe that will convert the most hardened naysayer.

The meat falls off the bone and the flavor is fabulous. The secret behind these ribs is pre-boiling them in Coke. This removes most of the fat content and adds to the taste of the ribs. The overall cooking time is about an hour and 15 minutes, and the recipe below should feed six people.

Ingredients

2 lbs Pork Ribs

2 cups (8 ozs.) Coca-Cola

1 cup orange juice

Salt, Pepper, Garlic Powder, onion powder (use to fit your taste)

2 cups Sweet Baby Ray's Honey BBQ Sauce

Directions

Place Coke and enough water to fill a large pan for parboiling ribs.

Add salt, pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder to the parboiling mix.

Boil on medium heat for 30-40 minutes.

Remove ribs from pan and place into a bak-

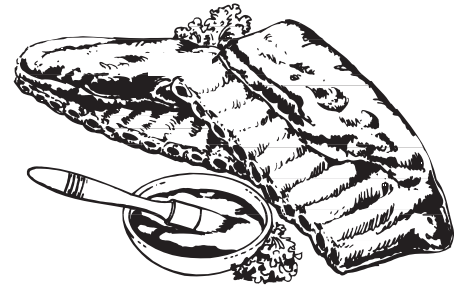
ing dish.

Pour two cups of BBQ sauce into a small bowl and stir in one cup of orange juice.

Cover the ribs with the BBQ sauce mixture and bake in a 350-degree oven for 20-25 minutes.

The orange juice adds a sweet taste to the barbecue sauce, but just enough to tease your taste buds. Add buttered corn on the cob and plenty of napkins or a few damp towels will help with the cleanup,

And I'm sorry, I don't know if this recipe is scalable for larger groups. But the average family will welcome these ribs any day of the week.



Dreaming of Bread

by Micki Sannar

Because I have long dark hair and wrote an olive oil dessert cookbook, often people think that I am of Italian descent. I was once at a friend's home for a wedding reception and their entire family was there. A bunch of people were crowding in the kitchen (where I almost always find myself at gatherings like this), when I was asked more than once, where I fit into the family (cousin, aunt, the wife of a mobster)? I answered that I was a Antonio's cousin. I didn't know anyone named Antonio; I just pulled that name out of thin air.

So here I was waiting to say the words "just kidding", but no one questioned me. I guess there must have been an Antonio and he must have been ridiculously good looking.

If you catch me in the right mood sometimes pretend that I am Italian. I especially like to toss out words like bravissimo, ciao, and grazie. It sounds so natural to use these words.... Who knows? If I dig far enough into my family tree, I might just find that I am indeed, Italian...

What an honor to be mistaken for an Italian because other than California olive oil, I believe some of the finest olive oil comes from Italy. I also believe that Italian food is a gift from the

Gods. One of my favorite delights from Italy is the bread, especially focaccia bread. Nothing makes me daydream more than the thought of a warm piece of focaccia dipped in a blend of extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and fresh basil. In fact, it is a family favorite. When I bake focaccia bread it is as if the aroma transcends out the front door and down the street, because the door starts knocking and doesn't seem to stop until the bread is gone, gone, gone. If you enjoy a good, crispy, soft inside, flavorful bread, than this simple and delightful piece of Italy is calling your name. BUON APPETITO!

Homemade Focaccia Bread

- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 ¾ cups warm water
- 2 teaspoonfuls active dry yeast
- 4 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ teaspoon coarse salt
- 5-6 cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese (freshly grated)
- Fresh or dried Italian (rosemary, thyme, basil)
- Freshly ground black pepper

In a large bowl, dissolve sugar into 1/4 cup of the warm water. Sprinkle in yeast and stir well. Allow to proof (will look bubbly) about 5 minutes.

Add remaining 2 1/2 cups of water, olive oil,

and salt.

Add (blend in) flour in one cup increments.

Knead dough until smooth and elastic, 4 to 5 minutes in an electric mixer fitted with a dough-hook, or 8 to 10 minutes by hand. Form dough into a ball, and place in a slightly oiled bowl. Cover with plastic wrap, and let rise at room temperature until doubled in bulk, 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

Spread dough evenly onto an oiled baking sheet. Spray tops and cover with plastic, and let rise for 30 minutes.

Dimple surface of dough with your fingertips, leaving deep indentations. Cover again, and let rise until doubled, 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Pre-heat oven to 425°F. Drizzle some olive oil on top of dough, allowing dimples to fill. Gently spread oil over surface without deflating dough. Brush lightly with water, then sprinkle with salt; pepper, herbs, and Parmesan cheese. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven, and slide onto a wire rack. Serve as soon as possible.

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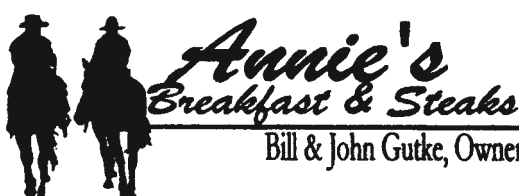
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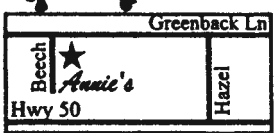
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