

Our State eats

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Slow-Cooker Pear Butter

Yield: 12 servings.

- 5 pounds Bartlett pears**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup light brown sugar**
- 2 teaspoons ground cardamom**
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**
- 1 large strip orange peel**

Core and slice pears. Leave skin on but remove brown spots and blemishes.

Place pears into slow cooker. Add brown sugar, cardamom, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Toss to coat. Place orange peel on top of pears. Cover slow cooker and cook on high for 6 hours.

Remove orange peel and discard. Puree pears, using an immersion blender for a chunkier consistency, or transfer pears to a blender for a smoother result.

Taste for sweetness and add more sugar if needed. Return pureed pears to slow cooker and continue to cook uncovered on high for 1 hour.

Place pear butter into clean jars and seal. Refrigerate until completely cooled.

Serve with crackers, fruit, toast, muffins, or pancakes. Refrigerate unused portions in a tightly sealed container for up to 1 week.



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Baked Pears With Maple Syrup & Cinnamon Cream

Yield: 4 servings.

- 2 ripe pears**
- Juice from a lemon**
- 3 teaspoons maple syrup, divided**
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg**

Preheat oven to 375°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Cut pears in half and brush flesh with lemon juice. Cut a small slice from skin side of each pear half so they lie flat on the baking sheet. Remove seeds with a spoon. Place pear halves on baking sheet, skin side up, and drizzle each with about ½ teaspoon maple syrup and more lemon juice.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until soft and lightly browned on the edges. Remove from oven and set aside.

In a small bowl, using a hand mixer, whip heavy cream until soft peaks form. Add cinnamon and nutmeg; mix a few seconds more.

Place pear halves on serving dish. Top with remaining maple syrup and a dollop of cinnamon cream.



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Pear Salad

Yield: 6 servings.

For the dressing:

- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup blue cheese crumbles
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

For the salad:

- 3 large ripe pears, cored
- 6 cups mixed spring greens
- ½ cup dried cherries
- ½ cup pecans

For the dressing: In a blender, add vinegar, honey, mustard, and blue cheese. Mix on low for 5 seconds. Remove top of blender and continue to blend on low speed for 5 more seconds while gradually adding olive oil. Taste and add salt and pepper if desired. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Just before serving: Thinly slice pears, cover with plastic wrap, and set aside. Place mixed greens in a large bowl. Drizzle half of the dressing over greens and gently massage with clean hands. Add dried cherries and pecans; lightly toss.

Place dressed salad into individual salad bowls or on plates. Arrange pears over salad mix and drizzle a small amount of



dressing over pears. Refrigerate remaining dressing for up to 1 week. Serve salad immediately.

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Country Ham & Pear Tart

Yield: 6 to 8 servings.

- 1** underripe red pear, thinly sliced
- 2** tablespoons orange juice
- 1** sheet store-bought puff pastry, thawed
- 2** tablespoons apricot or fig jam
- 12** ounces thinly sliced country ham, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 3** ounces crumbled goat cheese
- 1** large egg, beaten
- 2** teaspoons fresh thyme leaves

Preheat oven to 400°.

Place pear slices on paper towel and brush with orange juice.

Unroll puff pastry and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Using a sharp knife, score around the edge about ½-inch in (not cutting all the way through the dough) to create a border for the tart.

Using an offset spatula, spread jam onto pastry, staying within the border. Top with sliced pears, country ham pieces, and goat cheese. Brush edges of puff pastry with beaten egg.

Bake for 20 minutes or until pastry is golden brown. The tart will set as it cools.

Garnish with fresh thyme leaves and cut into 4 x 4-inch squares. Serve warm or at room temperature.



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