



Enameled Cast Iron Pans

Things to Know about Enameled Cast Iron Pans

What is an Enameled Dutch Oven? Typically made of cast iron with an enamel coating, this hefty, versatile piece of cookware is the key to many a delicious braise or casserole. It also tends to be an investment piece, with popular brands running into the hundreds of dollars, so you want to make sure you treat it properly!

1. You should wash it first.

Before you use your Dutch oven for the first time, wash it in hot, soapy water, and dry it with a soft cloth. While many Dutch ovens are dishwasher-safe, it's generally recommended to hand-wash it when you can.

2. Cast iron works on all heat sources.

You can use an enameled cast iron Dutch oven on the stovetop (whether it's electric, gas, or induction), oven, or grill. It even works on coal- or wood-powered ovens. When you're using your Dutch oven on a direct heat source, like the stovetop or grill, make sure that your temperatures are not too hot or you could scorch it. Which brings us to our next point.

3. High temps should be avoided.

"High heat temperatures should only be used for boiling water for vegetables or pasta, or for reducing the consistency of stocks or sauces," says the Le Creuset website. Dutch ovens work best when they slowly heat up and stay warm, so don't preheat it on high. Heating one up on too high a setting can make food stick or burn since the heat is conducted so efficiently.

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Tricia Mathis, FCS/4-H Educator 55 S. 500 E. Heber City, UT 84032 | patricia.mathis@usu.edu | 435-657-3234

4. Cast iron holds in heat.

Cast iron gets very hot and distributes the heat evenly throughout the whole piece of cookware. Then, it stays hot – good news if you want to keep food warm for second servings (just keep the lid on), and also good to remember when you're ready to serve at the table or bring it to the sink. Keep your oven mitts and trivets handy!

5. Cast iron gets cold, too!

The conductive properties in cast iron work both ways. If you put it in the freezer or fridge, the Dutch oven will retain the cold, so it can be a good option for, say, pasta salads and desserts, too. And feel free to put it right into the fridge once it has cooled if you need to store whatever you've just cooked. Just don't move it straight from the stove to the fridge (or vice versa) as the sudden temperature change could crack the enamel!

6. Oil is important!

In general, you shouldn't put food into the Dutch oven dry, as that can make it stick and burn. Use liquid, oil, fat, or butter to coat the bottom of the Dutch oven before adding whatever it is you're cooking.

7. You can marinate food in it.

The vitreous enamel surface is not porous, so it's safe to use with raw foods, and it's tough enough to stand up to marinating with wine or acids.

8. You should be careful not to scratch it.

If you drop your Dutch oven, drag it across the countertop, or scratch it with a metal cooking utensil, you risk compromising the enameled finish. Generally, use silicone or wooden cooking utensils to reduce your risk of scratching. When you clean it, avoid abrasive cleaners or scrubbers like metallic scrubbing pads.

9. The accents might not be as heat safe.

If your Dutch oven has plastic, wooden, or other metal accents or handles, be sure to read up to the specs – while the cast iron can get super-hot, some lids or handles can only deal with lower temperatures before melting or degrading.

10. You've got to watch out for water.

Always let the Dutch oven to dry fully before storing it, and make sure to keep it in a cabinet or shelf that's away from moisture, so that the iron doesn't rust.

Information from thekitchen.com.



Tamale Pie

Yield: 6 servings Time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

Meat filling:

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 medium onion, diced
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 cup enchilada sauce
- 1 cup corn
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 2 cups Mexican blend shredded cheese

For cornbread topping:

- 3/4 cup cornmeal
- 3/4 cup flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 3 Tablespoons oil
- 1 jalapeno, sliced

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat 9-10" Dutch oven to medium.
2. Add ground beef and onion and cook until ground beef is done.
3. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
4. Add the cumin, chili powder, enchilada sauce, corn and tomatoes
5. Simmer for 5-10 minutes, then add the cheese, give it a quick stir and turn off heat.
6. For the cornbread topping, combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a bowl.
7. In another small bowl, combine the buttermilk, egg and oil.
8. The the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients. Stir until just combined.
9. Spread the cornbread topping on the warm meat mixture. Top with sliced jalapeno if desired.
10. Bake at 400 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

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Scalloped Potatoes

Yield: 10-12 servings Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 2 cups whole milk
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 4 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and sliced to 1/8" thick
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2 Tablespoons minced fresh chives.

DIRECTIONS

1. Adjust oven rack to the lower-middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Melt butter in Dutch oven over medium heat.
2. Add onion and cook until softened, 5-7 minutes.
3. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
4. Stir in cream, milk, thyme sprigs, bay leaves, salt and pepper. Stir in potatoes and bring to a simmer.
5. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook stirring occasionally, until potatoes are almost tender, 15-20 minutes.
6. Discard thyme and bay leaves. Smooth surface of potatoes and sprinkle with cheddar cheese.
7. Transfer pot to oven and bake, uncovered, until sauce is thickened and potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes.
8. Remove pot from oven and heat broiler element. Return pot to oven and broil until bubbling around the edges and top starts to brown, 5 to 10 minutes. Let cool for 15 minutes.
9. Sprinkle with chives and serve.

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Olive Bread

Yield: 1 loaf Time: 1 hour

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1/4 cup chopped basil
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cups Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 large egg
- 5 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup pitted Kalamata olives, halved
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded

DIRECTIONS

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Grease 10-inch cast-iron skillet.
2. Whisk flour, basil, baking powder, and salt together in large bowl. Stir in 1 cup parmesan,
3. Cook oil and garlic in 9-10" cast iron skillet over medium heat until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Pour oil mixture into milk mixture and whisk to combine.
4. Stir milk mixture into flour mixture until just combined, then fold in olives. Batter will be heavy and thick; do not overmix.
5. Place batter into prepared skillet and smooth top. Sprinkle with shredded Parmesan. Transfer skillet to oven and bake until loaf is golden brown and toothpick inserted into center comes out clean, 20-25 minutes, rotating skillet halfway through baking.
6. Using potholders, transfer skillet to wire rack and let loaf cool for 10 minutes.
7. Remove loaf from skillet, return to rack, and let cool for at least 20 minutes before serving.

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Hot Fudge Chocolate Pudding Cake

Yield: 9 servings Time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

Cake:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour (or plain flour)
- 1/2 cup white granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder*
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Fudge Sauce;

- 1/2 cup white granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder (I like unsweetened cocoa powder.
- 1-1/4 cups boiling water

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Lightly grease a 9-inch cast iron pan*. Pre-boil water in a kettle while preparing cake.

FOR THE CAKE:

1. Combine 1/2 cup granulated sugar with the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Add in the milk, butter and vanilla; whisk until smooth and fairly lump free.
2. Pour the batter into prepared baking pan or dish and spread evenly.

FOR THE SAUCE:

1. Combine together the remaining 1/2 cup white sugar, brown sugar and remaining 3 tablespoons cocoa powder. Evenly sprinkle mixture over the batter. Slowly pour the boiling water over the top (DO NOT STIR OR MIX INTO THE BATTER. ALLOW THE WATER TO SIT ON TOP).
2. Bake 35 minutes or until the center is almost set. Remove from oven. Allow to cool for 15 minutes.
3. Serve in dessert dishes with ice cream or whipped cream, and spoon fudge sauce from the bottom of pan over top of each serve of cake.

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