

THE SIMPLE JOYS OF FALL

OCTOBER 2021

CountryLiving

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Botanical wallpaper (“Raphaël”; [sandberg wallpaper.com](http://sandbergwallpaper.com)) brings the beauty of the outdoors in.

Bed and Breakfast
**Highlander
Mountain House**

In the beloved Blue Ridge vacation town of Highlands, North Carolina, a year-old inn combines English influences with Appalachian sensibilities.

OPPOSITE: BANANA BREAD; BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER; FOOD STYLING BY KATELYN HARDWICK; PROP STYLING BY MINDI SHAPIRO.

COME FOR THE...

English Eclectic Interiors

Inspired by his time in the English Cotswolds, HMH proprietor Jason Reeves layered the Highlander's rooms and common areas with artwork and antiques spanning continents and centuries. "I wanted inspiration in every corner," he says. The inn's distinctive exterior shade (Inchyra Blue by Farrow & Ball) pays homage to its first life as a retired sea captain's farmhouse.



In the lounge, a wood fire warms the hearth in all four seasons, while Cherokee portraiture honors the Native American heritage of the surrounding lands.



STAY FOR THE...

Griddled Banana Bread

Served with a healthy pour of sorghum syrup and a sprinkle of Maldon salt flakes, the Griddled Banana Bread is a brunch favorite at the Ruffed Grouse, Highlander's seasonally inspired on-site tavern. For Jason, the dish evokes fond memories of early morning fishing trips during his teenage years. *Recipe, pg. 100*

BOOK YOUR BED

Highlander Mountain House (highlander-mountainhouse.com). Rooms from \$175

• PRIZE RECIPES •



Ask a Country Cook

Q.

Can I eat the skin of winter squash?

—Carrie L., Huntsville, AL

A.

Well, yes and no. It depends on the type of squash and how you plan to use it. Some varieties, such as acorn and delicata, have soft, edible skin that is packed with nutrients (vitamins A and C and loads of fiber), so nosh away. Others, such as butternut, Hubbard, and kabocha, require peeling if you want to cut and roast or braise them. The best way to do this is to cut the squash into pieces that are small enough to handle and peel with a sharp U-shaped peeler.



Superkind Snickerdoodles

WORKING TIME 25 minutes

TOTAL TIME 1 hour

MAKES about 2 dozen

- 3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled**
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt**
- 3 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided**
- 1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar**
- 1 cup plus 1/4 cup granulated sugar, divided**
- 2 large eggs**
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Whisk together flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, salt, and 2 teaspoons cinnamon.
- 2.** Beat butter, brown sugar, and 1 cup granulated sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy, 1 to 2 minutes. Beat in eggs, 1 at a time, beating until incorporated after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Reduce mixer speed to low and gradually add flour mixture, beating just until incorporated.
- 3.** Combine remaining 1/4 cup sugar and teaspoon cinnamon in a bowl. Roll dough into 1 3/4-inch balls (about 2 tablespoons each).

Roll balls in sugar mixture and place 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets.

- 4.** Bake until lightly brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.



Griddled Banana Bread with Sorghum Syrup

WORKING TIME 20 minutes

TOTAL TIME 2 hours
(including cooling)

MAKES 8 servings

Cooking spray

- 2 cups self-rising flour, spooned and leveled**
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for browning and serving**
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar**
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature**
- 1/3 cup plain Greek yogurt**
- 3 large, very ripe bananas, mashed**
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

Sorghum syrup and flaky sea salt (such as Maldon), for serving

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan. Whisk together flour, kosher salt, and cinnamon in a bowl.
- 2.** Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes.

Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until incorporated after each addition. Beat in yogurt, bananas, and vanilla. Reduce mixer speed to low and gradually beat in flour mixture just until incorporated; transfer to prepared pan.

3. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 60 to 65 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Once cool, cut into 16 (1/2-inch-thick) slices.

4. Melt desired amount of butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add bread, in batches, adding more butter if necessary, and cook, turning once, until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Serve topped with sorghum syrup and sea salt.



Butternut Squash Pie

WORKING TIME 20 minutes
TOTAL TIME 4 hours, 50 minutes
(including chilling, cooling,
and pie dough)
MAKES 8 to 10 servings

FOR PIE:

Cooking spray

- 1 (2-pound) butternut squash, halved lengthwise and seeded**

Basic Pie Dough, see recipe, at right

All-purpose flour, for work surface

3/4 cup whole milk

3 large eggs

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

FOR TOPPING:

2 large egg whites

1/3 cup granulated sugar

1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1. Make pie: Preheat oven to 400°F. Lightly grease a rimmed baking sheet. Place squash on baking sheet, cut sides down. Bake, in lower half of oven, until golden brown and cooked through, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool completely. Once cool, scoop out flesh. Discard skin.

2. Meanwhile, roll dough into a 12-inch circle on a lightly floured surface. Fit on bottom and up sides of a 9-inch pie plate. Trim, leaving a 1-inch overhang; fold overhang under and crimp. Chill 20 minutes to 24 hours.

3. Reduce oven temperature to 375°F. Line dough with parchment paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake 12 minutes. Remove parchment and beans and bake until crust is set but still pale, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from oven. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F.

4. Pulse squash, milk, eggs, and ginger in a food processor until combined. Add brown sugar, granulated sugar, cinnamon, allspice, and salt and puree until smooth, 10 to 12 seconds.

5. Pour filling into crust. Bake until edges are just set and center is still slightly wobbly, 30 to 40 minutes. Cool completely.

6. Make topping: Whisk together egg whites, sugar, and cream of tartar in a bowl. Set bowl over a saucepan of simmering water (bowl should not touch water) and cook, whisking constantly, until sugar is dissolved and whites are very warm to the touch, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and beat with an electric mixer

on low speed, gradually increasing to high, until glossy and soft peaks form, 4 to 6 minutes. Beat in vanilla. Spoon on pie and broil or use a kitchen torch to toast topping.

Basic Pie Dough

WORKING TIME 10 minutes
TOTAL TIME 2 hours, 10 minutes
(including chilling)

MAKES enough for 1 single-crust pie

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1/2 cup (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into pieces

2 tablespoons to 1/4 cup ice-cold water

1. Whisk together flour, salt, and sugar in a bowl. Cut in butter using 2 forks or a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal with a few pea-size pieces of butter remaining. Add 2 tablespoons ice-cold water, 1 tablespoon at a time, using forks to pull dough together into a shaggy, crumbly pile (add up to 2 tablespoons more water if needed to bring dough together).

2. Wrap dough in plastic wrap, using plastic to flatten and press dough together. Refrigerate until firm, 2 hours or up to 3 days.



More Fall Recipes

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