

Political

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firemen to put out infernos, no matter what happens on Tuesday.

Seems to me that anytime a politician devises a plan that includes confiscating more of our money, said politico will mention that if the tax hike, user’s fee, or whatever term they conjure up this time around fails, we will have to cut out the cops on patrol and empty the prisons. Which would really create quite a problem, wouldn’t it?

Have you heard the TV ads supporting Props 1A-1F? We are told that the props will help “hold the line on higher taxes.” But those against say what will actually happen is that we will be hit with a 16 billion buck bump in money being confiscated from us by the administrative failures working in Sacramento.

The proponents of the props claim there will be a spending cap in place if the props pass. So we will be saving our taxpayer nickels down the road. Nope, says the other side. The reforms will give us budget stability in Sac Town if passed, eliminating “boom or bust” cycles. Or so the proponents say in their ads. And if passed, the measures will “hold politicians accountable.” Sure, and double-sure, the No on 1A-F folks retort.

What a mess. Seems to me that the folks running our fine state, who are part and parcel to creating and propagating this fine pickle that we are in, are doing nothing more than

attempting to put their collective fingers in the dike, trying like hell to hold back the flood waters, praying that the Federal bailout money gets here before the state ends up in bankruptcy court.

Not even sure if a state can end up in bankruptcy court, but you get the idea, right?

Instead of taking on the special interest groups that seem to own Sacramento like the trial lawyers, the teacher’s unions, and Indian gaming interests, Sac Town bureaucrats, led by the seemingly castrated Terminator, are waiting and stalling, praying for manna from heaven. Or money from Mr. Obama. Which may be the same, according to some Obamaites.

Of course, we all share in this fine mess. We are the folks who send these people to Sacramento, again and again. We are the folks who don’t take the time to vote. Can’t find the time to read the voter’s pamphlet, but sure have enough time to research that third plasma TV for the game room, right?

So there is more than enough blame to go around. But it is our elected officials’ mandate to figure out a way to deal with this “challenge.” And not just put a band-aid on the problem and hope that it will somehow go away. Or pass this financial fiasco down the road to the lucky guy or gal who takes Arnold’s place next year. Somewhere, Gray Davis must be having a good laugh. Again! •

Food



CHOCOLATE, CHERRY & ALMOND BREAD PUDDING

This pudding’s rich vanilla flavor plays perfectly with the luscious chocolate, cherries and almonds.

Servings: 8 servings  
Total Time: 1 3/4 hours  
Ease of Preparation: Easy  
Health: Low Sodium

**Ingredients:**  
Custard  
4 large egg whites  
4 large eggs  
1-cup skim milk

**Seasonings:**  
1/2-cup sugar  
1-tablespoon vanilla extract  
1/2-teaspoon ground cinnamon

**Bread & filling:**  
4 cups whole-grain bread, crusts removed if desired, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 1/2 pound, 4-6 slices)  
2 cups pitted cherries, fresh or frozen (thawed)  
3/4-cup semisweet chocolate chips, preferably mini  
1/4 cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted (see Tip)  
Topping  
1/4 cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted, or

**ORANGE-ROASTED DUCK**  
The orange marmalade and soy sauce glaze accentuates the rich, gamy taste of duck. It’s an irresistible treat for company any time of year.  
Servings: 4 servings  
Total Time: 2 hours 20 minutes  
Ease of Preparation: Moderate  
Health: Low Calorie, Low Sodium, Healthy Weight

**Ingredients:**  
Orange-Roasted Duck  
1 5-pound duck  
2 small oranges  
1/2 cup orange marmalade  
3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce, divided  
¾-cup reduced-sodium chicken broth  
2 teaspoons cornstarch  
1-teaspoon brown sugar

**Steps:**  
1: Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a large roasting pan with foil.  
2: Remove both wingtips at the top joint with kitchen scissors or a heavy knife; reserve wing tips. Reserve neck (discard the rest of the giblets). Trim the excess skin and fat around the neck and cavity opening. Grate 1/4 teaspoon orange zest and set aside. Cut oranges into quarters. Set aside 3 sections and place the remaining orange sections inside the duck; fold the wings under and tie the legs together with kitchen string. With a skewer or fork, prick holes in the skin without piercing the flesh. (This allows fat to drain during roasting.)  
3: Whisk marmalade and 2 tablespoons soy sauce in a small bowl. Loosen the skin over the breast and thigh meat and rub about 3 tablespoons of the marmalade mixture under the skin. Place breast-side down on a rack in the prepared roasting pan.

Streusel Topping (see Tip)  
**Steps:**  
1: Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat an 11-by-7-inch glass baking dish or a 2-quart casserole with cooking spray.  
2: To prepare custard: Whisk egg whites, eggs and milk in a medium bowl. Add sugar, vanilla and cinnamon: whisk to combine.  
3: Toss bread, cherries, chocolate chips and 1/4-cup almonds in a large bowl. Add the custard and toss well to coat. Transfer to the prepared baking dish and push down to compact. Cover with foil.  
4: Bake until the custard has set, 40 to 45 minutes. Uncover, sprinkle with 1/4-cup almonds (or Streusel Topping) and continue baking until the pudding is puffed and golden on top, 15 to 20 minutes more. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 15 to 20 minutes before serving.

**Nutrition: (Per serving)**  
Calories – 317  
Carbohydrates – 45  
Fat – 12  
Saturated Fat – 4  
Monounsaturated Fat – 5  
Protein – 11  
Cholesterol – 106  
Dietary Fiber – 4  
Potassium – 348  
Sodium – 219  
Nutrition Bonus - Magnesium (16 daily value), Fiber (15 dv).

Prepare the pudding through Step 3; refrigerate overnight. Let stand at room temperature while the oven preheats. Bake as directed in Step 4.  
Tips: Toast sliced almonds in a small dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until fragrant and lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes. To make streusel topping: Combine 1/3 cup flour, 1/4 cup oats (preferably old-fashioned), 2 tablespoons brown sugar and 2 tablespoons canola oil in a small bowl. Spread the mixture on top of the pudding after the initial 40 to 45 minutes of baking.  
Content provided by Katie Price Webster & Jessie Price. Courtesy of Arcamax.com. •

4: Roast the duck for 1 hour. Remove the duck from the pan and carefully pour off the fat. Return the duck to the rack breast-side up. Continue roasting, basting every 15 minutes with another 2 tablespoons of the marmalade mixture, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thigh without touching bone registers 165°F, 1 to 1 1/4 hours more.  
5: Meanwhile, place the reserved wing tips and neck in a medium saucepan, add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the broth is reduced by half, 5 to 7 minutes. Strain and discard solids; return the broth to the pan. Squeeze the juice from the reserved orange sections into a small bowl; add cornstarch and whisk until smooth. Stir the juice mixture, reserved zest and brown sugar into the broth; cook over medium heat, stirring, until thickened, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the remaining 1-tablespoon soy sauce.  
6: Transfer the duck to a cutting board; let rest for 15 minutes before removing the string and carving. Serve with the sauce on the side.  
**Nutrition: (Per serving)**  
Calories – 297  
Carbohydrates – 31  
Fat – 10  
Saturated Fat – 4  
Monounsaturated Fat – 3  
Protein – 22  
Cholesterol – 77  
Dietary Fiber – 0  
Potassium – 291  
Sodium – 397  
Nutrition Bonus - Vitamin C & Zinc (15 daily value).  
Equipment: Kitchen string  
Content provided by Weinstein, Bruce & Mark Scarbrough.  
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