

# The Essential James Beard Cookbook: 450 Recipes That Shaped the Tradition of American Cooking

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The best recipes from one of America's most influential food personalities in a big, delicious cookbook that delights in every category

Known as the Dean of American Cooking, James Beard set a standard of culinary excellence that's still a benchmark today. He was an early television presence who helped shape what America ate in restaurants and cooked at home, and was both an innovative recipe writer and a scholar of American foodways, preserving classic dishes from the past for his readers to cook in the present. Compiled from twelve of his classic books and freshened for a modern audience, The Essential James Beard will stand with definitive and lively cookbooks such as The New York Times Cookbook and The Joy of Cooking. It covers the best and most necessary recipes in every category:

- appetizers and hors d'oeuvres
- soups
- pastas and noodles fish and shellfish
- meat and game
- rice, potatoes and stuffings
- breads
- desserts
- and more

JAMES BEARD is why you are a foodie today. He was, with Julia Child, one of the two most influential chefs and food writers in America, championing both French cooking and the preservation and maintenance of great local food traditions to average home cooks. He was a prolific writer, producing twenty-one books, including James Beard's American Cookery and countless magazine articles; a tireless teacher; and early television personality and product promoter. The James Beard Foundation, which administers the industry's most influential awards and meaningful scholarships, was founded in his honor after his death in 1985 and is headquartered in his townhouse in New York City's Greenwich Village.

#### CRUDITÉS WITH ANCHOVY MAYONNAISE

MAKES ABOUT 12 SERVINGS

For the Anchovy Mayonnaise

12 to 14 drained anchovy fillets in oil, drained and coarsely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped fresh basil

1 tablespoon coarsely chopped capers

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

2 cups Mayonnaise

Thinly sliced cucumbers, sliced tomatoes, sliced onion, whole scallions, match stick carrots, thinly sliced raw beets, or other raw vegetables, for serving

To make the anchovy mayonnaise: Combine the anchovy fillets, garlic, parsley, basil,

capers, mustard, and mayonnaise, and taste for seasoning. Use little salt in the mayonnaise; anchovies and capers have plenty. Arrange the vegetables on a platter; dunk in the anchovy mayonnaise.

## CAPONATA

MAKES 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

While this Sicilian dish is traditionally served cold as part of the antipasto course, on its own it makes a zesty, refreshing appetizer for a summer meal.

3 globe eggplants, cut into 1-inch cubes, unpeeled

Kosher salt

1 celery heart (about 8 ribs), thinly sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup olive oil

1 large yellow onion, sliced

5 large ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and quartered, or one 28-ounce can Italian plum tomatoes, drained and coarsely chopped

1 or 2 pinches dried thyme

1 bay leaf

Freshly ground black pepper

6 to 8 anchovy fillets in oil, drained and chopped

1 cup pitted and coarsely chopped Mediterranean black olives, such as Kalamata

3 tablespoons nonpareil capers

3 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Freshly grated zest of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon (optional)

Sprinkle the eggplant with 2 teaspoons salt and let it drain in a colander. Blanch the celery for 1 minute in a large saucepan of boiling water, then drain and plunge into cold water to stop it from cooking further. Drain and pat dry with paper towels.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until tender and golden, about 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes, thyme, and bay leaf, and season with salt and pepper. Cook until the tomatoes are tender and thickened into a sauce, about 20 minutes. Rub the mixture through a coarse-mesh wire sieve and discard the seeds and skin.

While the tomato mixture is cooking, rinse the eggplant cubes and pat them dry with paper towels. Heat the remaining 6 tablespoons oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat until very hot but not smoking. Add the eggplant and cook, stirring occasionally, until the eggplant is browned, adding more oil as needed. They should just cook through. Add the tomato mixture, blanched celery, anchovies, olives, and capers. Dissolve the sugar in the vinegar and stir into the eggplant mixture. Add the parsley and lemon zest, if using.

## CHILI CON QUESO

MAKES 8 TO 12 SERVINGS

Editor: When this recipe was first published in *Menus for Entertaining* (1965), corn chips, such as Fritos, were the norm, and mass-produced tortilla chips were waiting in the wings. The truth is, you can dip just about anything crunchy (including the suggested bread sticks and celery) in chili con queso, and it would be addictive.

### For the Cream Sauce

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 cup Chicken Stock, heated

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup heavy cream

One 28-ounce can Italian plum tomatoes

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Two 4-ounce cans chopped green chilies, drained

1 pound shredded Monterey Jack or Cheddar cheese

Corn chips, bread sticks, and celery sticks, for serving

To make the cream sauce: Melt the butter over low heat in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan. Mix the flour into the butter with a whisk or spoon and cook slowly, stirring all the time, for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the roux is well blended and frothy. Gradually stir in the stock. Increase the heat to medium and cook, whisking all the time, until the sauce is smooth, thick, and at the boiling point. Let the sauce simmer, stirring, for 3 or 4 minutes. Stir in the cream and simmer for a few more minutes.

Combine the tomatoes and garlic in a medium saucepan and season with salt and pepper. Cook down for 20 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally to break up the tomatoes. Add the chilies. Cook until the juices evaporate and the mixture is thick and pasty, about 15 minutes. Add the cream sauce and cheese, and stir well until the cheese melts. Place in a chafing dish or electric skillet over warm heat. Serve with the chips, bread sticks, and celery.

### Anchovy-Parsley Dipping Sauce

Makes about 2 cups

Editor: As with Anchovy Mayonnaise, serve this with raw vegetables.

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves

18 anchovy fillets in oil, drained

Freshly grated zest of 1 lemon

3 garlic cloves, crushed under a knife and peeled

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Kosher salt

Combine all of the ingredients in blender and whirl for 1 minute. Correct the seasoning with salt and more pepper.

### SKORDALIA

(GREEK GARLIC SAUCE)

MAKES ABOUT 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  CUPS

Skordalia is basically a mayonnaise with a great deal of garlic, further thickened by finely ground almonds (you can make these by chopping blanched almonds in a blender or food processor until they are pulverized to the consistency of very fine bread crumbs).

Traditionally, the sauce is made with a mortar and pestle. First the whole garlic cloves are ground to a paste with the pestle, then raw egg yolks are pounded into the garlic with the pestle until thick and sticky, then the olive oil is pounded in drop by drop until it forms a mayonnaise. The other ingredients are then mixed into the mayonnaise.

I find it much easier to be less traditional and make the sauce in a blender or food processor. It is delicious with hot or cold poached fish, with fried fish, as a dip for shrimp, raw vegetables, or artichokes, and as a sauce for rather bland vegetables such as cauliflower and boiled potatoes.

4 to 6 garlic cloves, very finely chopped

2 large eggs

3 or 4 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup olive oil or half olive oil and half peanut oil

½ cup finely ground blanched almonds

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Put the garlic (the amount depends on your taste), eggs, 2 tablespoons of the lemon juice, and the salt into a blender or food processor and blend or process until just mixed. Add the oil in a thin, steady stream, according to the directions for blender or food-processor Mayonnaise. Transfer to a bowl and stir in the ground almonds. Mix in more lemon juice to taste, and then the parsley. Chill before serving.

#### VARIATIONS

**THICK SKORDALIA:** For a thicker sauce, stir in 1 cup fresh white bread crumbs with the ground almonds.

**POTATO SKORDALIA:** Instead of ground almonds, mix 1 cup plain mashed potatoes (with no butter or milk added) into the sauce. After the mayonnaise is made, put the potatoes into the blender or processor and blend until just combined.

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