

and serve remaining salsa on the side.

Make ahead: Salsa keeps 1 day, covered and chilled.

PER SERVING 396 CAL., 55% (216 CAL.) FROM FAT; 21 G PROTEIN; 24 G FAT (8.4 G SAT.); 25 G CARBO (2.9 G FIBER); 522 MG SODIUM; 374 MG CHOL.

Toffee French toast with pecans

The Kitchen, Boulder, CO

SERVES 4 TIME 45 minutes

The luscious sauce makes this French toast taste like sticky toffee pudding. (Put leftover sauce on ice cream.)

SAUCE

1 cup unsalted butter

1½ cups packed light brown sugar

¾ cup heavy whipping cream

½ cup roughly chopped pecans

FRENCH TOAST

8 large eggs

¼ tsp. nutmeg, preferably freshly grated

1 tsp. cinnamon

½ tsp. vanilla extract

3 tbsp. orange-flavored liqueur (such as Grand Marnier) or orange juice

2 tbsp. salted butter

8 thick slices (1 in.) brioche (about 1 lb.)

1. Prepare sauce: Melt unsalted butter in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Stir in brown sugar until well blended, then bring to a boil. Boil until sugar dissolves, 5 to 8 minutes. Carefully stir in cream (mixture may spatter) and pecans; reduce heat to low.

2. Make French toast: In a large shallow bowl, whisk together eggs, nutmeg, cinnamon, vanilla, and orange liqueur.

3. Heat a large cast-iron skillet or nonstick frying pan over medium heat. Melt 1 tbsp. salted butter in skillet, tipping pan to coat. Quickly dip bread, 1 piece at a time, into egg batter, coating both sides but not drenching. Lay bread in skillet and repeat with remaining bread. Cook until golden brown, 1½ to 2 minutes; then flip, add remaining 1 tbsp. butter, and cook until second side is golden brown, 1½ to 2 minutes more.

4. Transfer French toast to plates, top with some of warm toffee sauce, and serve remaining sauce on the side.

Make ahead: Sauce keeps up to 2 days, covered and chilled (reheat in a microwave oven).

PER SERVING 945 CAL., 50% (468 CAL.) FROM FAT; 24 G PROTEIN; 52 G FAT (24 G SAT.); 93 G CARBO (3 G FIBER); 779 MG SODIUM; 570 MG CHOL.

Devil's mess

Big Sky Café, San Luis Obispo, CA

SERVES 6 TIME 40 minutes

A big, spicy scramble of eggs, hot pork sausage, vegetables, and chiles in which all the flavors remain distinct.

1 tbsp. olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

8 oz. mushrooms, sliced

½ tsp. kosher salt

½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1 cup chopped andouille sausage (about 6 oz.)

10 large eggs

1 tbsp. minced garlic (about 3 cloves)

¼ tsp. red chile flakes, or to taste

6 oz. spinach, washed and thoroughly dried (about 2 qts.)

Hot sauce

1. Heat olive oil in a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat. Add onion, mushrooms, salt, and pepper, and stir often until onions are light golden, about 10 minutes.

2. Increase heat to medium-high, add sausage, and stir often until sausage has browned slightly and released some fat, about 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together eggs and 3 tbsp. water.

4. Reduce heat to medium and add garlic and chile flakes. Stir until garlic is fragrant, about 1 minute. Add spinach to pan and toss with tongs until it has wilted, about 2 minutes. Transfer sausage-vegetable mixture to a bowl and wipe pan clean.

5. Add eggs to pan and scramble just until set, 4 to 5 minutes, then gently stir in sausage-vegetable mixture. Serve with hot sauce if you like.

PER SERVING 244 CAL., 63% (153 CAL.) FROM FAT; 17 G PROTEIN; 17 G FAT (4.9 G SAT.); 7 G CARBO (1.8 G FIBER); 463 MG SODIUM; 370 MG CHOL.

Buttermilk biscuits with country sausage gravy

Mother's Bistro & Bar, Portland

SERVES 8 TIME 45 minutes

Chef Lisa Schroeder makes these tangy biscuits with heavy whipping cream and extra butter on top, but we found them to be plenty rich made with half-and-half and a little less butter. Schroeder also likes to toast the biscuits in a frying pan before topping with gravy.

BISCUITS

2 cups self-rising flour*

½ tsp. kosher salt

2 tbsp. sugar

¼ cup cold butter, plus 2 tbsp. melted

¾ cup buttermilk

¾ cup half-and-half or whipping cream

About 1 cup all-purpose flour

GRAVY

¾ lb. bulk pork sausage

1½ cups half-and-half or whipping cream

1½ cups whole milk

¾ tsp. each powdered garlic, powdered onion, and freshly ground black pepper

2 tsp. minced fresh thyme leaves, plus more for sprinkling

¼ to ½ tsp. cayenne

About ½ tsp. kosher salt

3 tbsp. butter

1. Make biscuits: Preheat oven to 450°. In a large bowl, whisk together self-rising flour, salt, and sugar. Cut cold butter into small cubes and, using a pastry blender, cut butter into flour mixture until pieces are the size of peas. Stir in buttermilk and half-and-half just until incorporated.

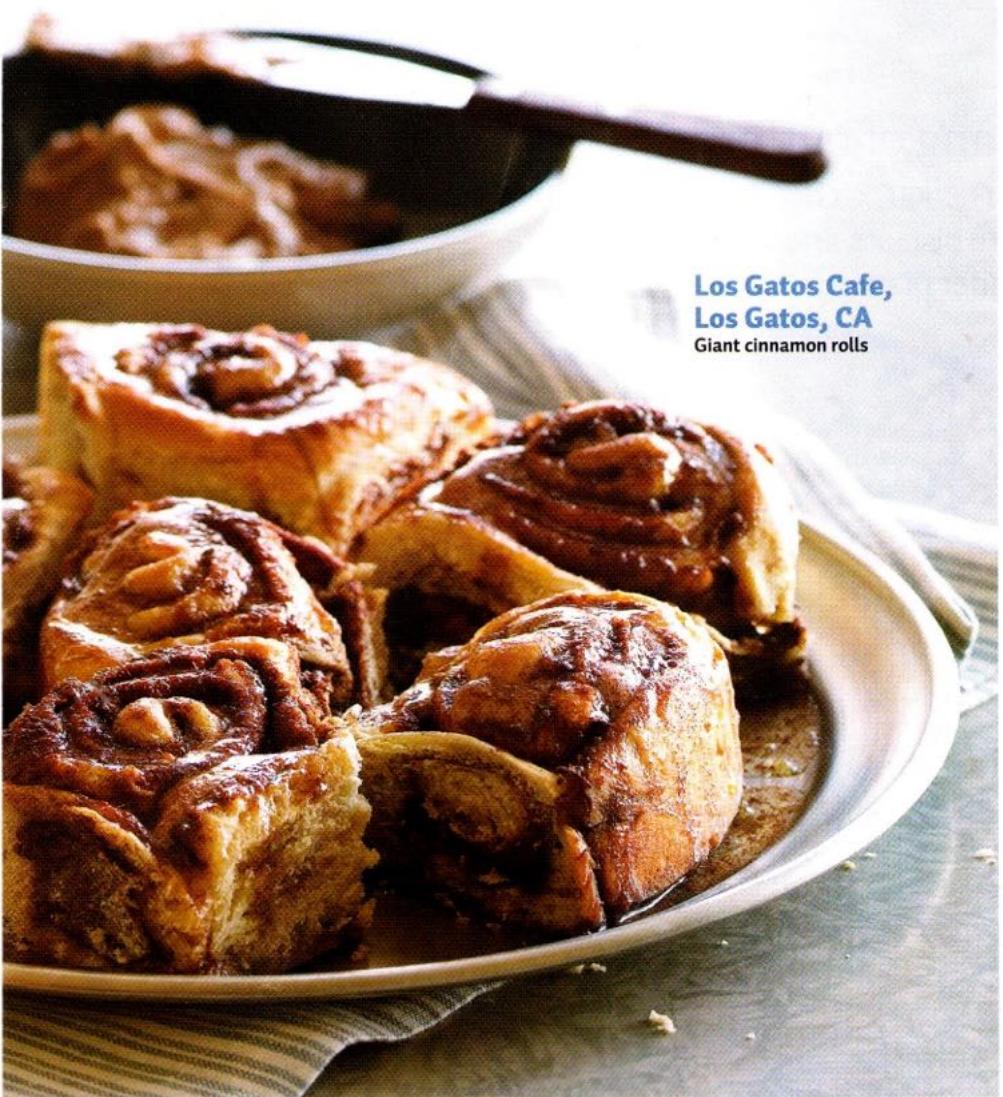
2. Put all-purpose flour in a shallow bowl or pie dish. Using an ice cream scoop or measuring cup, scoop ⅛ of dough and drop it into flour, tossing lightly to coat and shaking off excess. Put dough in an 8-in. cake pan. Repeat with remaining dough (biscuits will touch in pan). Reserve ¼ cup remaining all-purpose flour.

3. Bake biscuits until deep golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes. Brush with 2 tbsp. melted butter.

4. Make gravy: Put sausage in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook until lightly browned, 5 to 6 minutes, breaking it into small pieces with a wooden spoon. Transfer sausage to a plate with a slotted spoon, reserving any drippings.

5. Meanwhile, in another medium saucepan over medium-low heat, warm half-and-half, milk, powdered garlic and onion, pepper, thyme, cayenne, and ½ tsp. salt.

6. Add butter to sausage drippings and let melt. Add ¼ cup reserved flour and whisk until golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Gradually add warm milk mixture, whisking, until simmering. Stir in sausage and season to taste.



**Los Gatos Cafe,
Los Gatos, CA**

Giant cinnamon rolls

with salt. (For thicker gravy, simmer longer; for thinner gravy, add more milk.)

7. Halve biscuits and put on 8 plates. Top with gravy; sprinkle with thyme.

*You can substitute 2 cups all-purpose flour mixed with 3 tsp. baking powder and 1 tsp. kosher salt.

PER BISCUIT MADE WITH HALF-AND-HALF AND 1/2 CUP GRAVY
728 CAL., 70% (513 CAL.) FROM FAT; 14 G PROTEIN; 40 G FAT (20 G SAT.); 42 G CARBO (1.2 G FIBER); 1,033 MG SODIUM; 96 MG CHOL.

PER BISCUIT MADE WITH HEAVY CREAM AND 1/2 CUP GRAVY
728 CAL., 70% (513 CAL.) FROM FAT; 13 G PROTEIN; 57 G FAT (31 G SAT.); 41 G CARBO (1.2 G FIBER); 1,031 MG SODIUM; 163 MG CHOL.

Giant cinnamon rolls

Los Gatos Cafe, Los Gatos, CA

SERVES 8 TIME 3 hours

Warm cinnamon butter melting down the

sides of these rolls and into the grooves makes them a standout.

**15 tbsp. granulated sugar,
divided**

2 tbsp. active dry yeast

3/4 tsp. salt

2 tbsp. shortening or butter

1 large egg

**3 3/4 cups flour, plus about 1/4 cup
for rolling**

3 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. cinnamon

3/4 cup packed light brown sugar

Cooking-oil spray

1/2 cup butter, softened

1. In a large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, mix 1 tbsp. granulated sugar, 1/4 cup warm (110°)

water, and yeast. Let stand until softened, about 5 minutes. Add 1 1/4 cups more warm water, salt, 6 tbsp. granulated sugar, shortening, and egg. Mix until blended.

2. Change to dough hook, gradually add 3 3/4 cups flour, and beat on medium speed until dough is smooth and stretchy and pulls away somewhat from inside of bowl, about 10 minutes (dough will still feel quite wet).

3. Remove hook from bowl and loosely cover bowl. Let dough rise at room temperature until doubled, about 40 minutes.

4. In a small bowl, combine 3 tbsp. cinnamon with 1/2 cup granulated sugar. Generously flour a large work surface and scrape dough onto it. Generously sprinkle dough and a rolling pin with flour.

5. Very gently roll and pat dough into a 10- by 24-in. rectangle, keeping a light coating of flour on dough but trying not to work it in. Sprinkle with cinnamon-sugar mixture and brown sugar, then roll dough into a log starting from a 10-in. side. Cut dough straight down into 8 equal slices. Place slices cut-side up in a greased 10-in. springform pan. Let stand until puffy, about 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 325°.

6. Set springform pan on rimmed baking pan and bake rolls until golden and a toothpick inserted into the center roll (avoid cinnamon-sugar swirls) comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let cool in pan on rack, 30 minutes. Meanwhile, make the cinnamon butter: In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat butter with 1 tsp. cinnamon until blended.

7. Run a knife around inside of pan to release rolls; remove pan rim. With a serrated knife, cut rolls apart and top each with about 1 tbsp. cinnamon butter. Put rolls on a platter and place in warm oven until butter has mostly melted, about 1 minute.

Make ahead: Instead of letting rolls rise on the counter (step 5), immediately cover with a piece of oiled plastic wrap and chill overnight. In the morning, let stand at room temperature until puffy and no longer cold, about 1 1/4 hours. Bake as directed.

PER ROLL 554 CAL., 28% (153 CAL.) FROM FAT; 8.6 G PROTEIN; 17 G FAT (8.3 G SAT.); 95 G CARBO (2.5 G FIBER); 356 MG SODIUM; 57 MG CHOL. ■