



United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Seventh District

**AuxChef**



**eNewsletter - May 2013**

### ***Welcome to the D7 AuxChef eNewsletter***

This is the premier issue of the District 7 AuxChef eNewsletter and we hope you like it. First, we want to keep it fun. I know cooking can be serious business, but we will keep the newsletter light. No chef rantings here. Not all of the info will be new to you. Hopefully you will learn something from each issue. We all want to improve our skills and make an even more effective contribution to the men and women of the Coast Guard. We need your ideas. Please send us your recipes, AUXChef cooking war stories, cooking tips, ideas and suggestions.

– Paulette Parent, ADSO-HR/AUXCHEF DISTRICT 7



### **Technique - Using Puff Pastry**

Puff pastry is one pantry item that you cannot live without. In a matter of minutes you can make impressive savory hors d'oeuvres or sweet pastry treats from this very special dough. Puff pastry is classified as a rolled-in or laminated dough. To make it from scratch is difficult and time consuming. It is made by rolling a layer of butter or other fat between two layers of dough. Through a multi-step process of folding and rolling, the dough develops many thin layers. Hundreds of layers are created before the dough is finished. When puff pastry is baked, steam is created from the heating of the moisture in the dough. The layers of fat trap the steam and the dough rises. No yeast or other leavening agent is used. By almost magic, the result is a light, crisp and flaky product.

Fortunately you don't have to make your own puff pastry. Pre-made puff pastry is available in many large supermarkets. It may be found in the refrigerated or frozen food cases. Ask the store manager if you cannot find it. While difficult to make from scratch, puff pastry is very easy to use. Go to the web site listed on the box to get some recipes to start with. Try something easy first.

Here are a few tips. Plan ahead. Make sure you bring the puff pastry to room temperature before working with it. From a frozen state it will take about 40 minutes to come to room temperature. Read the entire recipe before starting your creation. Turn on your oven and set it to the correct temperature before starting. A pre-heated oven will generally bake more evenly. Don't be afraid to roll the puff pastry out a little before cutting it into shape. Cut the pastry with a sharp knife or biscuit cutter. Don't twist the cutter as it seals the edges and keeps the puff pastry from rising correctly. Generally use an egg wash (one egg and a little water, beaten slightly) on your product before baking. Keep an eye on it when it is in the oven. It will rise slowly at first and then rise and brown quickly. Try your first recipe with no time pressure or company waiting for dinner.

OK, still not sure. Here's the easiest way to get started. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F. Use kitchen oil spray to lightly oil a baking sheet. You can also use parchment paper. Cut 1/2" strips from a sheet of puff pastry. Twist strips and place on the baking sheet like you would do with cookies. Brush the twists with a light coating of egg wash. Try to keep the egg wash on the twists or you will "glue" them to the pan. Quickly sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Bake for 10 minutes or until they are golden brown. Get your favorite beverage and enjoy!

### **USDA Sets Pork Safe Cooking Temperatures**

For safety, the USDA recommends cooking ground pork patties and ground pork mixtures such as meat loaf to 160 °F. Cook all organ and variety meats (such as heart, kidney, liver, tongue, and chitterlings) to 160 °F. Cook all raw pork steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.



### Ingredient Basics - Butter

Butter is made by churning cream. In the U.S. butter is required to be at least 80% milkfat. The rest is water(15%) and milk solids(5%). Butter may be artificially colored with annatto and it is sold salted and unsalted. Salt acts as a preservative in butter so unsalted butter is more perishable. Most baking recipes call for unsalted butter as it has a fresher, sweeter taste.

Butter is clarified in the kitchen to remove the water and the milk solids. This process allows the resulting butterfat to be heated to a higher temperature without browning. Super clarified butter is called ghee and is used extensively in Indian cuisine.

Butter is the basis for many sauces. Butter and eggs are cooked together to make hollandaise and bearnaise. The popular beurre blanc is made with only butter and flavorings. Butter and flour are cooked together to form a roux. Roux is the basis for gumbo and many other soups and sauces. Butter and flour mixed together into a paste can be added to a sauce at the end of preparation to thicken it. This paste is called beurre manie.

The internet is full of recipes for beurre blanc. Try a citrus beurre blanc next time you grill fish. It's great!!

### Cooking Lingo

Associate the word(s) on the left with the best definition or related word(s) on the right.

Brunoise	A. driest champagne
Nappe	B. flatbread
Brunswick stew	C. small noodle dumplings
Brut	D. edible blossom
Bierkaese	E. milk foam
Nam pla	F. finely diced vegetables
Nuc mom	G. cheese
Kreplach	H. fish sauce
Kudzu	I. thin, even layer
Arrowroot	J. thickener
Lavash	K. cod
Spelt	L. squirrel
Tortilla	M. grain
Nasturtium	
Lutfisk	
Macchiato	

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