

Bay Leaf-Infused Preserved Lemons

Aromatic bay leaves add herbal notes to this make-at-home version of preserved lemons, a classic ingredient in North African and Middle Eastern cuisine.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Stand Time: 7 days

- 6 large lemons or 12 Meyer lemons, scrubbed
- 2/3 cup kosher salt
- 4 **McCormick® Bay Leaves**, torn into pieces
- 1 to 1 1/2 cups fresh lemon juice (from 5 large lemons or 10 Meyer lemons)
- Sterilized jar with lid (6-cup capacity)*

1. Bring water to boil in large saucepan. Add lemons; cook 5 minutes to soften peel. Drain. Dry lemons well. Cut each lemon into 8 wedges, discarding seeds.
2. Mix salt and bay leaves in large bowl. Add lemon wedges; toss to coat well. Using a sterilized spoon, pack lemons and salt tightly in sterilized jar. Add enough lemon juice to fill jar to the rim. (Lemon wedges should be completely covered in salt and lemon juice.) Cover jar. Let stand at room temperature in cool dry place 7 days. Shake jar gently each day to redistribute lemon juice and salt.
3. To use preserved lemon, remove lemon with a clean utensil. Rinse the lemon under running water, removing and discarding the pulp. Once opened, refrigerate preserved lemons in covered jar up to 6 months.

Makes 6 preserved lemons.

***To sterilize jar:** Wash jar in dishwasher on heavy soil cycle. Fill jar directly from the dishwasher while still hot. If jar cools down, place on a shallow baking pan in preheated 300°F oven until ready to fill.

Recipe adapted from *Couscous and Other Good Food From Morocco* by Paula Wolfert.

Lemon Twist Rice Pudding

Preserved lemon and bay leaves perfume a sweet and creamy rice pudding.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Refrigerate: 3 hours

- 1/2 preserved lemon
- 1/2 cup short grain rice, such as Arborio, pearl or Valencia
- 1 1/2 cups water
 - 1 **McCormick® Cinnamon Stick**
 - 1 quart (4 cups) milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 **McCormick® Bay Leaves**
- 1/4 cup unsalted pistachio nuts, chopped (optional)

1. Remove and discard pulp from preserved lemon. Rinse peel to remove excess salt. Finely chop peel (about 2 tablespoons). Set aside. Place rice, water and cinnamon stick in medium saucepan. Bring to boil on medium heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 15 minutes or until water is absorbed.
2. Meanwhile, bring milk and sugar to simmer in large saucepan on medium heat. Stir in cooked rice with cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Cook 45 minutes or until mixture is thick and creamy, stirring occasionally. Remove cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Stir in preserved lemon. Pour rice pudding into large bowl. (Pudding will thicken as it cools.) Place plastic wrap directly on surface of rice pudding. Cool slightly.
3. Refrigerate 3 hours or overnight until well chilled. Garnish each serving with pistachio nuts, if desired.

Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 187 Calories, Fat 3g, Protein 6g, Carbohydrates 34g, Cholesterol 13mg, Sodium 124mg, Fiber 0g

Lemon-Bay Tortellini with Spinach & Wild Mushrooms

Cheese tortellini take on the aromatic essence of bay leaves through a delicately infused cooking water. Briny preserved lemon, smoky bacon and earthy mushrooms round out this flavorful main course pasta.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

1/2 preserved lemon

2 **McCormick® Bay Leaves**

1 package (12 ounces) cheese tortellini

2 cups frozen leaf spinach, unfrozen

4 strips bacon

1 medium shallot, finely chopped

1/4 cup olive oil

8 ounces sliced assorted mushrooms

1 teaspoon **McCormick® Minced Garlic**

Grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

1. Remove and discard pulp from preserved lemon. Rinse peel to remove excess salt. Coarsely chop peel (about 2 tablespoons). Set aside.
2. Bring water and bay leaves to boil in large saucepot. Stir in tortellini. Cook as directed on package, adding frozen spinach during last minute of cooking. Drain, reserving 1/4 cup of the cooking water. Discard bay leaves.
3. Meanwhile, cook bacon in large skillet on medium heat until crisp. Drain on paper towels. Crumble bacon; set aside. Add shallots to bacon drippings; cook and stir 3 minutes. Add oil, mushrooms, garlic and preserved lemon peel; cook and stir 3 minutes or until mushrooms are tender. Add tortellini mixture and reserved cooking water; toss to mix well. Sprinkle with bacon. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Makes 6 servings.

To prepare with fresh spinach: Cook tortellini as directed, omitting the frozen leaf spinach. Cook bacon and mushrooms as directed. Stir in 1 package (6 ounces) baby spinach leaves until slightly wilted. Continue as above.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 416 Calories, Fat 24g, Protein 13g, Carbohydrates 37g, Cholesterol 46mg, Sodium 729mg, Fiber 5g

Simmered Moroccan Chicken with Preserved Lemon

This easy, one-pot Moroccan spiced chicken is a perfect blending of sweet, savory, bitter and tart flavors.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

- 1/2 preserved lemon
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon **McCormick® Gourmet Collection Sicilian Sea Salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon **McCormick® Ground Cinnamon**
- 1/2 teaspoon **McCormick® Ground Cumin**
- 8 small bone-in chicken thighs, skin removed (about 2 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1 medium carrot, coarsely chopped
- 1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 cup dried apricots, halved
- 3 **McCormick® Bay Leaves**
- 1/4 cup halved green olives

1. Remove and discard pulp from preserved lemon. Rinse peel to remove excess salt. Cut peel into 1/4-inch pieces (about 2 tablespoons). Set aside. Mix flour, sea salt, cinnamon and cumin in shallow dish. Coat chicken evenly with flour mixture.
2. Heat oil in large deep skillet or Dutch oven on medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook 10 minutes or until browned, turning once. Remove from skillet.
3. Stir onion, bell pepper and carrot into skillet. Cook and stir 5 minutes or until tender. Add tomatoes, broth, apricots and bay leaves; mix well. Bring to boil. Return chicken to skillet. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 5 minutes. Stir in preserved lemon and olives; cover and simmer 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Remove bay leaves. Serve with couscous, if desired.

Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 223 Calories, Fat 11g, Protein 17g, Carbohydrates 14g, Cholesterol 58mg, Sodium 661mg, Fiber 3g