



Cook'sCountry



enjoy tasty, tempting
CALIFORNIA FIGS

WITH RECIPES FROM **COOK'S COUNTRY FROM AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN** AND **VALLEY FIG GROWERS**





Enjoying good food with family and friends creates cherished memories. With recipes from America's Test Kitchen featuring Blue Ribbon® Orchard Choice® or Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs, you've got the good food covered. Now add family and friends, and let the good times roll.

Sun-drenched California figs, harvested and dried to sweet perfection, give a distinctive, special touch to recipes. Choose amber-colored Golden Figs or deep purple Mission Figs to deliver the key ingredient that quickly takes any dish from ordinary to extraordinary.

Begin with a salad. Think gently layered strips of salty prosciutto nestled next to sweet, chewy California dried figs infused with port, sitting atop a bed of mesclun. Crumbles of creamy blue cheese and a drizzle of dressing bring it all together—the memories continue. Ummm . . . But wait, there's more.

That salad will be just enough to whet your appetite until the aroma of *Roast Beef Tenderloin with Fig and Nut Stuffing and Stilton Butter* comes wafting from the kitchen and the conversation turns to how well red wines pair with beef and richly flavored Mission Figs. Whether figs grace your meat entrée in a flavorful stuffing or star as the perfect partner to olive oil and lemon in a vegetarian pasta dish, year-round, pantry-ready ingredients like California dried figs add a natural elegance to a meal that will delight young and old alike.

Save some room for dessert, which is last but definitely not least! How about a traditional family favorite that is simple to make and delicious to eat? The classic combination of sweet, gooey fig filling sandwiched between layers of buttery crust is irresistible in *Fig Bars*. Cut large squares and serve warm with a scoop of vanilla bean ice cream to create yet another special memory.

Now start creating some of your own fig memories.

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RECIPES

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- Mesclun Salad with
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- Sour Cream Coffee Cake with
Fig and Cream Cheese Filling 6



add figs for
IRRESISTIBLE FLAVOR

Broccoli Salad with Figs

SERVES 4 TO 6

When prepping the broccoli, keep the florets and stalks separate. If you don't own a salad spinner, lay the broccoli on a clean dish towel to dry in step 3. You can make the salad up to 6 hours in advance.

- 6 slices bacon, chopped fine**
- 1 cup Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs, stemmed and chopped into ¼-inch pieces**
- 1½ pounds broccoli, florets cut into 1-inch pieces, stalks peeled and sliced ¼ inch thick**
- ½ cup mayonnaise**
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar**
- Salt and pepper**
- ½ cup walnuts, toasted and chopped coarse**
- 1 large shallot, minced**



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fascinating **FIG FACTS**

Fig trees have no blossoms on their branches. The blossom is inside the fruit! Many tiny flowers produce the crunchy little edible seeds that give figs their unique texture.

Figs are harvested according to nature's clock, fully ripened and partially dried on the tree.

California grows many varieties of figs, but the most common are slightly nutty-flavored, Golden figs and sweet, dark purple Mission figs.

Just 3 to 5 California dried figs provide 3.5 grams insoluble fiber and 1.5 grams water-soluble fiber.

1. Cook bacon in 10-inch skillet over medium heat until crispy, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain on paper towel-lined plate.

2. Combine 4 cups water and 4 cups ice in large bowl. Bring 3 quarts water to boil in Dutch oven. Remove 1 cup boiling water and combine with figs in small bowl; cover, let sit for 5 minutes, and drain.

3. Meanwhile, add broccoli stalks to boiling water and cook for 1 minute. Add florets and cook until slightly tender, about 1 minute. Drain broccoli and place in ice water to cool. Drain again, transfer to salad spinner, and spin dry.

4. Whisk mayonnaise, vinegar, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper together in large bowl. Add broccoli, drained figs, walnuts, and shallot to bowl with dressing and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with bacon and serve.

Mesclun Salad with Blue Cheese, Figs, and Prosciutto

SERVES 4

For the best results, buy a hunk of blue cheese and crumble it yourself. Microwaving the figs and port together plumps the figs and also infuses them with flavor.

- 1/3 cup ruby port**
- 8 Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs, stemmed and quartered**
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar**
- 2 shallots, minced**
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 7 ounces (7 cups) mesclun**
- 8 (1/8-inch-thick) slices prosciutto**
- 6 ounces blue cheese, crumbled (1 1/2 cups)**
- Salt and pepper**



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fascinating **FIG FACTS**

In Roman times figs were considered to be restorative. They were believed to increase the strength of young people, to maintain the elderly in better health and to make them look younger with fewer wrinkles.
—Pliny (52-113 AD).

The fig tree is a symbol of abundance, fertility and sweetness.

Eating one half cup of figs has as much calcium as drinking one-half cup of milk.

Figs are an excellent source of dietary fiber, a wealth of essential minerals such as potassium, iron and calcium, and rich in health-promoting antioxidants and complex carbohydrates.

1. Combine port and figs in bowl and microwave, covered, until port is bubbling, about 1 minute. Let sit until figs have softened, about 5 minutes. Strain figs, reserving port.

2. Combine vinegar, shallots, and reserved port in large bowl. Slowly whisk in oil until combined.

3. Add mesclun, prosciutto, blue cheese, and figs to bowl with dressing and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.

Spaghetti with Figs, Lemon, and Olive Oil

SERVES 4 TO 6

Let the dish rest briefly before serving so the flavors develop and the sauce thickens.

- 1 pound spaghetti**
Salt and pepper
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for serving**
- 1 shallot, minced (3 tablespoons)**
- ¼ cup heavy cream**
- 1 cup Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs, stemmed and chopped into ¼-inch pieces**
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest plus ¼ cup juice (2 lemons)**
- 1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated (½ cup), plus extra for serving**
- 2 tablespoons shredded fresh basil**



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fascinating **FIG FACTS**

When chopping figs, run your knife under hot water periodically to reduce the sticking. You also can lightly spray your knife with non-stick cooking spray.

Dried and fresh figs are not interchangeable in recipes. Fresh figs have a lot more moisture than dried. We recommend you use fresh figs in recipes that call for fresh and dried figs in recipes that call for dried.

Enjoy figs as an afternoon and late morning snack or chopped and added to cereals, whole grain side dishes and yogurt.

1. Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large Dutch oven. Add pasta and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring often, until al dente. Reserve 1¾ cups cooking water, then drain pasta in colander and set aside.

2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in now-empty pot over medium heat until shimmering. Add shallot and ½ teaspoon salt; cook until shallot is softened, about 2 minutes. Whisk 1½ cups reserved cooking water and cream into pot; add figs and stir to combine. Bring to simmer and cook for 2 minutes. Remove pot from heat, add pasta, and stir until coated. Stir in remaining 3 tablespoons oil, lemon zest and juice, Parmesan, and ½ teaspoon pepper.

3. Cover and let pasta stand for 2 minutes, tossing frequently and adding remaining ¼ cup reserved cooking water as needed to adjust consistency. Stir in basil and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve, drizzling individual portions with extra oil and sprinkling with extra Parmesan.

Roast Beef Tenderloin With Fig and Nut Stuffing and Stilton Butter

SERVES 4 TO 6

Center-cut beef tenderloin roasts are sometimes sold as Châteaubriand. The roast should be an even thickness from end to end, without any portion of the butt end attached. The stuffing can be made a day in advance, but it must be microwaved to just room temperature before being stuffed into the roast. The roast can be stuffed, rolled, and tied the day before cooking. If you're serving a crowd, this recipe can be doubled to make two roasts. Follow the recipe as directed, searing the roasts one after the other, cleaning the pan and adding new oil after searing the first roast.

Stuffing

- 2 teaspoons olive oil**
- 1 shallot, minced (3 tablespoons)**
- ⅔ cup ruby port**
- ½ cup Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs, stemmed and chopped fine**
- ½ teaspoon minced fresh thyme**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper**
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar**

Beef Roast

- 1 (2- to 3-pound) center-cut beef tenderloin roast, trimmed**
- Kosher salt and pepper**
- 2 tablespoons chopped toasted pecans**
- 3 tablespoons olive oil**

Stilton Butter

- 1 ounce Stilton cheese, crumbled (¼ cup)**
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley**
- ⅛ teaspoon salt**



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1. FOR THE STUFFING: Heat oil in medium saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add shallot and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Meanwhile, combine port and figs in bowl; cover with plastic wrap and microwave until simmering, about 2 minutes. Set aside.

2. When shallot is softened, add port-fig mixture, thyme, salt, and pepper; continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture is thick, 1 to 2 minutes longer. Remove pan from heat and stir in vinegar. Transfer stuffing to plate. Let cool completely.

3. FOR THE BEEF ROAST: Butterfly roast. Season cut side of roast liberally with salt and pepper. Spread cooled stuffing in even layer over interior of roast, leaving ½-inch border on all sides. Sprinkle pecans in even layer on top of stuffing. Roll and tie roast.

4. In small bowl, stir together 1 tablespoon oil, 1½ teaspoons salt, and 1½ teaspoons pepper. Rub exterior of roast with oil mixture. Let roast stand at room temperature for 1 hour.

5. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat until smoking. Add roast to pan and cook until well browned on all sides, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer roast to rimmed baking sheet and place in oven. Roast until instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest part of meat registers 120 degrees (for rare), 16 to 18 minutes, or 125 degrees (for medium-rare), 20 to 22 minutes.

6. FOR THE STILTON BUTTER: While meat roasts, stir all ingredients together in small bowl until combined. Transfer roast to carving board; spread half of cheese-butter mixture evenly over top of roast. Loosely tent roast with aluminum foil; let rest for 15 minutes. Slice roast between pieces of kitchen twine into thick slices. Remove kitchen twine from individual slices and serve, passing remaining cheese-butter mixture separately.

Fig Bars

MAKES 16 BARS

These bars are similar to Fig Newtons but are a bit less sweet. The dough can get sticky. When that happens, we top the bottom layer with a greased piece of parchment paper before spreading it in the pan. Because it's difficult to find fresh figs year-round, we use dried figs in our recipe. Rehydrating the figs in apple juice adds needed moisture plus a slight sweetness and a subtle flavor boost.

- 2 cups apple juice**
- 8 ounces Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs, stemmed and quartered**
- Salt**
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces) all-purpose flour**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces) whole-wheat flour**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder**
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed (5 $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces) light brown sugar**
- 1 large egg, room temperature**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**

HOW TO LAYER FIG BARS



Once the bottom crust has been baked, spread the fig filling into an even layer over the baked crust with a rubber spatula. Freezing the top layer of dough makes it easier to handle; once it's unwrapped, gently lay it on top of the filling. Press lightly on the dough to adhere and then finish baking the bars.



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1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Line 8-inch square baking pan with aluminum foil, allowing excess to hang over pan edges. Grease foil. Cook apple juice, figs, and pinch salt in saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until very soft and syrupy, 15 to 20 minutes; let cool slightly. Process mixture with lemon juice in food processor until jamlike.

2. Combine all-purpose flour, whole-wheat flour, baking powder, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt in bowl; set aside. With electric mixer on medium-high speed, beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined. Stir in flour mixture until just incorporated. Place all but $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dough into prepared pan and press into even layer. Bake until just golden, about 20 minutes. Roll remaining dough into 8-inch square between 2 sheets of greased parchment paper, then place in freezer until firm.

3. Spread fig mixture evenly over baked crust. Top with frozen dough square. Bake until top is golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool completely on wire rack, about 2 hours. Using foil overhang, lift bars from pan. Cut into squares and serve.

Sour Cream Coffee Cake with Fig and Cream Cheese Filling

SERVES 12 TO 16

Leftovers should be stored in the refrigerator, covered tightly with plastic wrap. For optimal texture, allow the cake to return to room temperature before serving.

Orange Sugar–Almond Topping

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces) sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons finely grated orange zest
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced almonds

Cake

- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces) all-purpose flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 10 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened but still cool
- 1 cup plus 7 tablespoons (10 ounces) sugar
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest plus
- 4 teaspoons juice
- 4 large eggs
- 5 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups sour cream
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup **Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice** or **Sun-Maid Figs**, stemmed and chopped fine

1. FOR THE ORANGE SUGAR-ALMOND TOPPING: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Stir sugar and orange zest together in small bowl until combined and sugar is moistened. Stir in almonds; set aside.

2. FOR THE CAKE: Spray 10-inch tube pan with vegetable oil spray. Whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt together in medium bowl; set aside. Using stand mixer fitted with paddle, beat butter, 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, and orange zest on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes, scraping down bowl as needed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition, about 20 seconds, scraping down bowl as needed. Add 4 teaspoons vanilla and mix to combine. Reduce speed to low and add one-third flour mixture, followed by half of sour cream, mixing until incorporated after each addition, 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat, using half of remaining flour mixture and all of remaining



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sour cream. Scrape down bowl and add remaining flour mixture; mix at low speed until batter is thoroughly combined, about 10 seconds. Remove bowl from mixer and fold batter once or twice with rubber spatula to incorporate any remaining flour.

3. Reserve 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups batter. Spoon remaining batter into prepared pan and smooth top. Return now-empty bowl to mixer and beat cream cheese, remaining 5 tablespoons sugar, orange juice, and remaining 1 teaspoon vanilla on medium speed until smooth and slightly lightened, about 1 minute. Add figs and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup reserved batter and mix until incorporated. Spoon filling evenly over batter, keeping filling about 1 inch from outside edge of pan; smooth top. Spread remaining 1 cup reserved batter over filling and smooth top. With knife or offset spatula, gently swirl filling into batter, being careful not to drag filling to bottom or edges of pan. Firmly tap pan on counter 2 or 3 times to release air bubbles. Sprinkle orange sugar–almond topping evenly over batter and gently press into batter to adhere.

4. Bake until top is golden and just firm and long skewer inserted in center comes out clean (skewer will be wet if inserted in filling), 45 to 50 minutes. Remove pan from oven and firmly tap on counter 2 or 3 times to release air bubbles (top of cake may sink slightly). Let cake cool in pan on wire rack for 1 hour. Invert cake onto rimmed baking sheet (cake will be sugar side down); remove pan, place wire rack on top of cake, and invert cake sugar side up. Let cool completely, about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Cut into slices and serve.