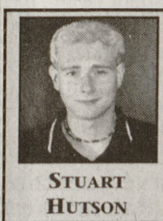


## Now you're cooking

Impress dates and parents with a three-course, home-cooked meal made from scratch



STUART HUTSON

Your parents are coming into town to see where you live and how you are doing in college. How do you show them that you are a responsible, mature adult, capable of handling an extra hundred dollars a month?

That special person you have been chasing for the last three months has finally broken down and agreed to go on a date with you. How do you show him or her just how much you care?

The answer to both of these questions is a good old-fashioned home-cooked meal. But who has the time? Well, if you have an hour to spare, here is a recipe guaranteed to impress.

### The Meal

The basic idea is to start off with a salad with homemade Caesar dressing, move on to the main course of baked white fish; and top it all off with vanilla custard.

While this roster of edibles may not be reminiscent of the cuisine of a gourmet restaurant, it does carry a sense of "homemade" quality that can only be delivered by food made from scratch (and it should only cost about \$20).

First, check if you have or can borrow the majority of the spices on the ingredient list. If you do not have a way of getting

eigen people looking for exotic spices to use in gourmet meals, it will more than likely bring you into contact with someone who apparently does not own a comb and is having trouble finding the "fugdg-ita" seasoning.

### Caesar Salad

It is important to actually make your own dressing. Store-bought dressing is noticeably lacking

bread crumbs and bake the fillets for 35 minutes at 350 degrees. Do not forget to preheat the oven. Do not toast the bread, before you tear it apart; the baking process will toast the crumbs to a deep golden brown.

I suggest making some instant rice to go along with the fish. Brown or white will do.

### Custard

What really makes the whole meal work is the custard. After you have the fish in the oven, break one egg into a small bowl and beat it until the yolk is mixed with the white.

Add the milk, sugar, vanilla and salt. Pour this into two tea cups and sprinkle the nutmeg on top.

Pour water into a baking pan until the water is about an inch deep. Set the two cups into the pan and bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 50 minutes.

The water adds extra moisture so the custard does not develop a hard crust. You will know when the custard is done when you can stick a knife into it and the knife comes out almost clean.

Serve the custard in the tea cups. Just let it cool off for about five minutes in the fridge before you eat it.

What really makes this meal combination great is that you can let the custard bake alongside the fish, and the custard will not pick up a fishy smell.

### Presentation

Just serve the fish on top of the rice with lemon wedges on the side. The rest I will leave to you. If you want to serve a wine, make sure it is white (I suggest a chardonnay).

### Baked Fish Fillets

Start cooking about an hour to an hour-and-a-half before the dinner is to be served.

Cut the white fish into whatever size portions you prefer (I suggest about 6 inch strips or longer) and put them into a shallow, greased pan. Sprinkle on lemon juice, paprika, salt and pepper to your taste. If you like, you can also sprinkle on about half a teaspoon of garlic powder, but keep in mind the after-effects. If you are on a date, this may not be a good idea, but it may be a good way to keep a distance from your parents.

In a saucepan, melt butter and then add the milk along with a dash of salt and pepper, again, to taste. Blend in the flour until it has a thicker consistency. Cook and stir until it is thick and bubbly. This should only take a few minutes.

Pour the sauce over the fillets. Butter a piece of the bread you want to serve with the meal (I suggest garlic, but then, I have discussed that before) and tear it into pieces larger than a pencil eraser but smaller than a dime.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cover the top of the fillets with the



SUSAN REDDING/THE BATTALION

the richness a homemade dressing possesses because the olive oil is usually overly blended with the rest of the ingredients.

The dressing for the Caesar salad should be prepared the night before the meal is to be served. This is to allow the flavors of the ingredients to seep into the olive oil, which constitutes the majority of the dressing.

To make the dressing, just pour the olive oil into a cup and then add lemon juice, garlic, Worcestershire sauce and pepper. Then mix thoroughly with a fork. Set it in the fridge overnight, and then remix it again before you pour it on the lettuce.

I prefer to use pure olive oil as opposed to extra virgin or virgin.

The best time to prepare the sal-

### Caesar Dressing

- ▶ 1/4 cup olive oil
- ▶ 1 garlic clove, minced or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- ▶ 4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- ▶ 1/2 teaspoon worcestershire sauce
- ▶ 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

### Salad

- ▶ 5 cups torn romaine lettuce
- ▶ 1 cup croutons
- ▶ 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

### Baked Fish Fillets

- ▶ 1 pound white fish fillets
- ▶ 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ▶ 1/8 teaspoon paprika
- ▶ 1 tablespoon butter
- ▶ 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- ▶ dash of salt and pepper
- ▶ 1/2 cup milk
- ▶ 1/4 cup buttered bread crumbs

### Baked Custard For Two

- ▶ 1 egg
- ▶ 1 cup milk
- ▶ 3 tablespoons sugar
- ▶ 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ▶ 1/8 teaspoon salt
- ▶ 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

## 50 years + $\frac{\text{Millions of Visitors}}{\text{Growing Enrollment}}$ (700 Student Organizations) = Aging MSC

**Problem:** The University Center Complex received its last major expansion in 1973, when Texas A&M's enrollment was 23,000. The buildings are used heavily, furnishings show wear and tear and the "look" is dated. In addition, the cost of utilities, equipment and staff continues to rise. Free meeting rooms for organizations are tightly scheduled—100 or more meetings each night. It is time to plan ahead, to consider the best use of space and to think about expanding the facilities.

**Solution:** Vote FOR the Student Center Complex Fee referendum on the general election ballot Sept. 26-27. The Student Center Complex Fee is currently \$30 per semester. The referendum will increase this fee to \$40 per semester. Two dollars will pay for daily operations; the remaining \$8 will pay to refurbish public areas on the MSC's first and second floors, to provide a detailed plan to remodel the basement and to begin planning for a major expansion of the MSC.

### What Do I Get From This Fee Now?

- \* Free rooms for student meetings, dances and banquets
- \* A nice place to lounge, take visitors and meet friends
- \* Furniture and audiovisual equipment for meeting rooms
- \* Cleaning, minor repairs and maintenance
- \* A new roof for the University Center

**Where Do I Vote?** Vote at the Memorial Student Center, Evans Library, Blocker, All Faiths Chapel, Commons, Duncan or Zachry. Or use the web-based polling site at <http://www.vote.tamu.edu>.

**Why?** The cap on this fee is currently \$40; the referendum will tell the Texas Legislature that students support increasing the cap to \$100. Any future increase of 10% (\$4) or less could be made with approval of a student advisory board. Any increase of more than 10% would require a student body vote. The Texas Legislature meets in January 2001 and not again until 2003. If the legislature approves, students could vote to renovate the basement or to expand the University Center without going back to the legislature for approval. A yes vote will give students control of this fee.

**What Will Happen To The Basement?** A committee recommended remodeling underused areas to add:

- \* Small meeting rooms
- \* A 50-100 seat theater
- \* "Cyber café" tables in a "branded" food court
- \* Other amenities that more students would use

**What Happens If This Vote Fails?** Complete refurbishing will not happen and plans can't be made to remodel the basement or to add meeting rooms without funds in sight to pay for these items.

## Vote Yes on the Student Center Complex Fee September 26-27

Monday, September 25, 2000

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