

Making Frittatas

Resembling a crustless quiche, a frittata is an Italian-style omelette that combines eggs with vegetables, cheese and sometimes meat. To save time in the morning, prep and cook the fillings the day before, then bring them to room temperature before adding them to the egg mixture.

Home Skillet Frittata

Topped with a crispy bacon lattice, this frittata is laced with potatoes, green onions, cheddar cheese and fresh herbs. A dash of paprika adds a spicy kick.

Preheat an oven to 375°F.

Overlap 2 bacon slices to create one 12-inch strip. Lay the bacon on a grill pan or on a rack set over a baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining bacon, weaving the strips to create a lattice formation that is 12 inches square. Transfer to the oven and bake until the top of the bacon is crisp and browned but the underside is still somewhat soft, 6 to 8 minutes. Let cool.

In the deep half of a frittata pan over high heat, warm 2 Tbs. of the oil. Add half of the potatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp and golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and transfer to a bowl. Repeat with 2 Tbs. of the oil and the remaining potatoes. Let cool.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and cream. Stir in the cheese, green onions, thyme, parsley, paprika and potatoes, and season with salt and pepper.

In the deep half of the frittata pan over medium-low heat, warm 1 tsp. of the oil. Add the egg mixture and cook, using a rubber spatula to lift the cooked edges and allow the uncooked eggs to flow underneath, about 4 minutes. Place the shallow pan upside down on top of the deep pan and cook until the frittata is almost completely set, 10 to 12 minutes more. Remove the shallow pan and gently lay the bacon lattice, with the crispier side down, on top of the eggs. Cover with the shallow pan and cook until the bacon begins to settle into the eggs, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat.

In the shallow half of the frittata pan over medium heat, warm the remaining 1 tsp. oil. Place the shallow pan upside down on top of the deep pan and flip the frittata into the shallow pan. Cook, covered, until the bacon is crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. Flip the frittata back into the deep pan and remove from the heat.

Gently shake the pan to loosen the frittata and slide it onto a serving plate. Serves 8 to 10.

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Ingredients for Home Skillet Frittata

20 bacon slices, about 9 oz. total

¼ cup plus 2 tsp. vegetable oil

1 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into ¾-inch dice and simmered until just fork-tender

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

10 eggs

¼ cup heavy cream

8 oz. mild cheddar cheese, grated

½ cup sliced green onions, white and light green portions

½ tsp. minced fresh thyme

1 Tbs. minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

½ tsp. paprika

Homemade Sausage

Artisan butchers rely on savory seasonings to add distinctive flavors to their signature sausages. With our exclusive spice blends, it's easy to craft homemade sausages and even encourage kids to participate. Combine the seasonings with your favorite meats—from pork and beef to chicken and turkey.

- **Breakfast Sausage Seasoning:** a mild, sweet sausage sweetened with pure maple sugar and delicately seasoned with thyme.

- **Chicken-Apple Sausage Seasoning:** a rich, fruity sausage made with dark brown sugar, sage, garlic and tender chunks of real apple.

- **Chorizo Seasoning:** a spicy Latin-style sausage with garlic, cumin, New Mexico chili powder and fragrant oregano.

- **Italian Sausage Seasoning:** a savory, mildly hot garlic-fennel sausage enlivened with aromatic thyme and oregano.

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Technique Class: Holiday Breakfast

Gather your guests around a festive table—the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and just-cooked waffles will make a welcome beginning to a chilly winter day. Don't hesitate to ask everyone to help out in the kitchen. Some guests can start preparing drinks and slicing the fruit, while others cook the eggs and sausages.

These tips will help you host a wonderful gathering:

- Set a bright and cheerful table by choosing a strong palette in a single color, including the dishes, linens and table decorations.
- Bring nature indoors by incorporating seasonal blooms such as forced narcissus and gathered rose hips, pinecones and chestnuts.
- Have hot coffee and tea ready for guests when they arrive.
- If children are coming, serve them hot chocolate topped with whipped cream.
- If you have a fireplace, build a glowing fire to create a warm welcome.

Creating a Waffle Bar

When entertaining a large group of people, a waffle bar is an easy way for all your guests to enjoy a breakfast of their choice without creating too much work. Simply set up your waffle maker on a counter that has ample room for pitchers of different batters on one side and for a stack of plates and various toppings on the other side. Favorite choices for toppings include:

- Fruit (sliced if necessary)—guests can bake fruit into waffles or use as toppings.
- Whipped butter and flavored butters, such as maple-cranberry butter.
- Syrups and sauces—provide a variety, including a good-quality maple syrup (warmed) and a fruit sauce, such as our Raspberry Ecstasy Sauce.
- Chocolate chips and other sweets—great for the kids.
- Whipped cream.

Tip: Make-Ahead Batter

To reduce the early-morning prep time for pancakes, waffles or quick breads, start the night before. Measure and combine the dry ingredients in one bowl and the wet ingredients in another. Cover both bowls; refrigerate the wet ingredients and let the dry ingredients stand at room temperature. In the morning, just whisk them together to form the batter.

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Ingredients for Gingerbread Waffles with Maple Butter
For the maple butter:
6 Tbs. (¾ stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
1½ Tbs. pure maple syrup
Pinch of salt
Pinch of ground cinnamon
2 eggs
1½ cups milk
8 Tbs. (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted, or ½ cup canola oil
3 Tbs. dark molasses
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1½ cups all-purpose flour
3 Tbs. firmly packed light brown sugar
1 Tbs. baking powder
2 tsp. ground ginger
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground cloves
½ tsp. salt
Warm maple syrup for serving (optional)

Ingredients for Poached Eggs with Spinach and Ricotta

8 slices thick-cut bacon

¾ cup ricotta cheese

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

8 eggs

4 Tbs. (½ stick) unsalted butter

12 oz. fresh baby spinach

20 to 24 grape tomatoes, halved

Buttered toast for serving

Gingerbread Waffles with Maple Butter

Full of spices and topped with rich maple butter, these waffles are perfect for holiday gatherings. Add sliced fruit and whipped cream for an extra flourish. If you are using a Belgian waffle maker, cook on medium-high.

To make the maple butter, in a small bowl, whisk together the butter, maple syrup, salt and cinnamon. Scoop into a ramekin or other serving dish. Place in the freezer for 5 minutes or in the refrigerator for 15 minutes to firm up before serving.

Preheat a waffle maker according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, melted butter, molasses and vanilla.

In a large bowl, stir together the flour, brown sugar, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon, cloves and salt. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture, then pour in the egg mixture. Whisk until mostly smooth, with just a few lumps remaining.

Ladle the batter into the waffle maker, using ½ to ¾ cup batter per batch. Spread the batter so that it almost reaches the edges of the waffle maker. Close the lid and cook according to the manufacturer’s instructions until the waffles are crisp and browned, 3 to 4 minutes.

Using a spatula, remove the waffles from the waffle maker and serve immediately, or place the waffles in a single layer on a baking sheet and keep warm in a 200°F oven for up to 20 minutes before serving. Top the waffles with pats of the maple butter and drizzle with maple syrup. Makes 4 to 8 waffles.

Adapted from *Waffles*, by Tara Duggan (Weldon Owen, 2011).

Poached Eggs with Spinach and Ricotta

This colorful brunch dish combines fresh spinach with grape tomatoes, ricotta cheese and poached eggs. Crisp bacon slices and buttered toast round out the plates.

Preheat an oven to 180°F.

In a nonstick fry pan over medium heat, cook the bacon until browned and crisp, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel–lined plate and keep warm in the oven.

Put the ricotta in a small bowl and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Fill an egg-poaching pan with ½ inch water and set over medium heat. Place the poacher insert in the pan, cover with the lid and bring the water to a simmer. Lightly spray the poaching cups with nonstick cooking spray. Crack an egg into each cup, cover the pan and cook until the egg whites are set, 2 to 4 minutes. Remove the eggs from the cups and repeat to poach the remaining eggs.

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In a small fry pan over medium heat, melt 1 Tbs. of the butter. Add one-fourth of the spinach and cook, turning the spinach with tongs, until wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer the spinach to an individual plate. Working in 3 more batches, repeat to cook the remaining spinach, transferring each portion to an individual plate.

To serve, top each portion of spinach with about 5 small spoonfuls of ricotta. Top with the tomato halves and 2 poached eggs per plate. Season the eggs with salt and pepper. Accompany each portion with 2 bacon slices and buttered toast. Serves 4.

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Strata with Chard, Sausage and Caramelized Onions

A strata is a fantastic make-ahead breakfast casserole that includes bread, eggs, cheese, vegetables and often meat. This recipe for caramelized onions makes more than you will need for the strata. Reserve the rest for another use, such as topping a pizza or blending into a frittata.

In a large, heavy fry pan over medium heat, warm 3 Tbs. of the olive oil. Add the onions, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until they are completely limp, 10 to 15 minutes. Uncover, reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, stirring frequently, until the onions are golden brown and sweet, 35 to 45 minutes; do not let them burn. Remove from the heat and let cool. You will need ⅔ cup caramelized onions for the strata; cover and refrigerate the remaining onions.

Butter a 10-inch nonstick braiser.

Put the bread in a large bowl.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat, warm the remaining 2 Tbs. olive oil. Add the sausage and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to the bowl with the bread.

Return the pan to medium heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the chard and cook, stirring occasionally, until wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with the bread mixture.

In another large bowl, whisk together the eggs and half-and-half. Pour the egg mixture over the bread mixture. Add the onions, cheese, salt and pepper and stir until well blended. Transfer the mixture to the prepared pan, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 4 to 24 hours.

Preheat an oven to 350°F.

Remove the plastic wrap from the pan. Bake the strata until golden brown and cooked through, about 55 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Serves 6.

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Ingredients for Strata with Chard, Sausage and Caramelized Onions

5 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil

2 large yellow onions, halved and very thinly sliced

4 oz. French bread, cut into 1-inch cubes

12 oz. sweet Italian sausage, casings removed

3 garlic cloves, minced

6 cups roughly chopped Swiss chard

8 eggs

2½ cups half-and-half

1¼ cups shredded fontina cheese

½ tsp. kosher salt

⅛ tsp. freshly ground pepper