



**“Vegetarian Night!”**  
**February 28, 2026**

**BAKED BRIE CRISPS WITH FRESH BERRY JAM**

- 1 sheet puff pastry, thawed and unfolded (approx. 8 3/4" X 8 3/4")**  
**(Found in your grocer's freezer section.)**
- 1-pint fresh blueberries, rinsed**
- 1-pint fresh strawberries, rinsed, hulled, and quartered**
- 1 TBSP. sugar**
- 1-tsp. corn starch**
- 1/8-cup water**
- 8-ounces brie, cut into 1/2-inch pieces**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Gently roll out the puff pastry to approx. a 12"X9" rectangle. Be sure to flour your rolling pin and counter to prevent the dough from sticking. Cut the pastry into 12 even squares (about 3"X3"). Using a non-stick mini muffin/tart pan, spray the pan with non-stick baking spray. Carefully, place one square of pastry into each of the 12 muffin cups spaces, being sure to lay the corners of the dough up and over the edge and onto the top of the pan. You may want to use every other cup so that the pastry from one won't stick to another. After all 12 cups have the puff pastry squares, place one piece of brie into the center of each. Bake for 7-10 minutes, then rotate the pan and continue baking for another 7-10 minutes, or until golden brown. When pastry is a golden brown, remove from oven.

While pastry is baking, cook the berries and sugar over medium high heat in a small saucepan until the juice from the berries is extracted, about 8-10 minutes. In a measuring cup, combine cornstarch and water and stir until cornstarch is dissolved. Add the cornstarch mixture to the hot berries and stir to thicken (approx. 2 minutes). After baked pastry is out of the oven, carefully remove the pastry cups from the hot pan (you may want to use a small spoon to do this) and place them on serving plate. Spoon a small amount of the warm jam onto each brie crisp. Allow to cool slightly before serving.

**BUTTERNUT SQUASH & CHICKPEA TAGINE**

- 1 TBSP. yellow curry oil**
- 1 small medium-size butternut squash, peeled, cored, and cut into 1" cubes**
- 1 small red onion, chopped**
- 3-ounces dry apricots, rough chopped**
- 1 1/2-cups chickpeas (canned, drained) or (fresh, rinsed, cooked until tender, drained)**
- 1-cup vegetable broth**
- 1/2-tsp. ground cinnamon**
- 1/2-tsp. Spicy Curry Sea Salt ([eastcoastsaltcompany.com](http://eastcoastsaltcompany.com))**
- 1/2-ounce fresh Italian flatleaf parsley (chopped)**
- optional: add 1/4-tsp. ground ginger or a pinch of chili pepper flakes for an extra kick!**

In a large sauté pan or skillet, heat oil over medium high heat until the oil begins to shimmer and travels quickly along the bottom of the pan when tilted. Add onion, cinnamon, and Spicy Curry Sea Salt; stir. Sauté until onion begin to become translucent and the cinnamon is very fragrant. Add butternut squash and broth. Cover, reduce heat to medium low and simmer for about 7 minutes, or until the squash is fork tender. Uncover. Add chickpeas, apricots, and parsley. Stir to combine and continue cooking for another 5 minutes. By this time, the broth should be almost all evaporated and the apricots should be soft and tender. Taste and adjust salt, if needed. This is one my absolute favorite vegan and gluten free dishes!

**ZUCCHINI FRITTERS WITH MINT YOGURT**

**1 ½-pounds zucchini, grated**  
**¾-tsp. salt**  
**¼-cup flour**  
**¼-cup grated parmesan cheese**  
**1 large egg, beaten**  
**2 cloves garlic, minced**  
**Salt and pepper to taste**  
**2 TBSP. olive oil**

Toss grated zucchini with salt in a colander set inside a bowl and set aside for at least 30 minutes, or over night. The salt will draw out the water in the zucchini. Transfer zucchini to the center of a clean kitchen towel or cheesecloth; wrap cheesecloth around zucchini and squeeze to drain as much water out as possible. In a separate bowl, combine flour, parmesan cheese, garlic, and egg; stir to combine. (Taste a few strands of zucchini to judge the amount of salt you may need to add, if any.) Add zucchini along with salt (if needed) and pepper and stir to evenly combine. Make sure there are no lumps of flour and cheese mixture. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, scoop tablespoons full of the zucchini mixture into the hot skillet. Gently press the mixture to slightly flatten them, and fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side. Swerve hot and enjoy!

### MINT YOGURT

**1-cup Greek yogurt**  
**1 TBSP. finely chopped fresh mint**  
**1/8-tsp ground black pepper**

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl, Stir to combine, set aside in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

### MERLOT-POACHED PEARS WITH GOAT CHEESE

**4 bartlet, Anjou or bosc pears, peeled**  
**1 bottle good merlot wine**  
**½-bottle of water (using the same wine bottle)**  
**1 cinnamon stick**  
**1 TBSP. sugar**  
**4-ounces goat cheese, softened**  
**4-ounces cream cheese, softened**

In medium-size saucepan (large enough to fit all 4 pears), add wine, water, sugar, and cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil. Add peeled pears and bring wine back to a low simmer. Once the liquid has returned to a boil, turn heat down to medium low. Place a round plate or small bowl on top of the pears to help keep them submerged in the wine. Simmer pears on low heat for 40 minutes, remove from heat, remove plate/bowl, and allow to cool to room temperature on the countertop, about three hours. Cover and refrigerate until cold (about 3-4 hours) until ready to use. The longer the pears remain in the poaching liquid, the darker and more vibrant the color! Pears can be poached up to three days in advance. When ready to serve, remove pears from wine. Cut pears in half, lengthwise through the stem. Using a melon baller or small spoon, remove the seeds/core from all the pear halves, leaving a neat, small cut-out oval hole in the pear. Remove the hard flower-end of the bottom of the pear. In a small mixing bowl, combine goat cheese and cream cheese until smooth. Spoon about 1 TBSP. goat cheese mixture into each pear. Serve immediately. You may prepare the pears ahead of time but spoon the goat cheese mixture into the pears right before serving. (You do not want to refrigerate the pears with the goat cheese already in them, as the goat cheese mixture will become too firm for serving, and the acid from the wine will begin to break down the cheese.) You want the pears cold, and the goat cheese mixture at room temperature. In my cooking classes, I top each pear with my candied pecans, coarsely chopped. Candied pecans can be found at [www.matthewmay.org](http://www.matthewmay.org). Sweet and savory!