

Pressure cooker



Y'know, I figured once I left the working world, specifically Corporate America, I was in for swell times. No more stress, just fun.

Then I took up this cockamamie cooking challenge and all of July evaporated and I still didn't have a recipe I wanted to cook.

Now it was the last day of the month and I knew everything was riding on this one, final day. My whole personal challenge was at the edge of a cliff, staring into the abyss...and the abyss couldn't even be bothered with staring back!

I spent yesterday trying to decide on which of two possible recipes I could make. I knew, based on weather conditions and timing, it had to be something I could manage strictly from my local Publix (which is not one of those big jobs at major intersections).

The two recipes I was considering were beef stew and eggplant parmagiana. I was initially leaning towards making crepes, but I had just come out of baking last month and wanted to do something different (there are still 5 months left).

It occurs to me that some of the recipes I consider may be ones you've already made or consider pretty easy to be included in a "challenge". I feel a need to remind you of the only two requirements to meet my cooking challenge:

1. It must be a food I like
2. I must not have ever cooked it before

There was also a sub-quest, as proposed by my elder nieceling:

3. Each dish should come from a different country

So far, I (accidentally) seem to have hit #3 while satisfying the primary conditions:

Sweden, Eastern Europe, Jamaica, China, USA (Texas), Morocco

Therefore, since I was already halfway toward completing the nieceling sub-quest, I chose the eggplant parmagiana.

Other than never having bought an eggplant before (shiny!), I handled most of the arrangements well. Indeed, my local Publix had everything I needed (a couple of the items were even on sale...kismet!).

One thing I have learned from my previous cooking adventures is to take off my shirt. No, I don't cook Putin-like (sans horse). I simply put on one of my walking/whatever t-shirts to accept the spatters, drips and other nefarious stains that are inevitable for someone with the Daniels' klutz gene.

How did it taste? Well, I thought the eggplant might have been just a tad on the soft side. That could mean I needed to fry them a bit longer or cook them longer. On the other hand, they were tasty and had not a hint of bitterness, despite my not salting the slices first.



As usual, I was over-cautious and bought two eggplant which meant I overcooked. I have 18 slices of eggplant parmagiana (now 16 after I ate two for lunch). That's a lot of freezer plates!

Whew. I need to figure out something for August early. I can't handle all this cooking under pressure.