



MERRY + BRIGHT

A HOLIDAY BRUNCH
RECIPE COLLECTION

FROM SWEET LAUREL

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FEATURING:

SWEDISH-STYLE CINNAMON ALMOND ROLLS / GREENS +
GRUYÈRE PASTRY CUPS / EGGS BENEDICT WAFFLES /
WINTER FRUIT SALAD / GRAPEFRUIT SAGE MIMOSAS

by Laurel Morley Butterfield





SWEDISH-STYLE CINNAMON ALMOND ROLLS

MAKES 8 LARGE ROLLS

1 package active dry yeast
2 tablespoons warm water
1 teaspoon sugar
1 cup, plus one tablespoon, of whole milk
6 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 large eggs (1 whole, 1 separated)
1 1/4 cups brown sugar
1 teaspoon salt
4 cups flour (plus extra, if needed)
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/4 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup almond butter
2 tablespoons cinnamon
Turbinado sugar, for sprinkling

Stir yeast, warm water and teaspoon of sugar together in a bowl and set aside until foamy, about 5 minutes. In a small saucepan, heat 1 cup milk (reserving the tablespoon), 6 tablespoons butter, and vanilla until butter is completely melted. Remove and let cool, then add yeast mixture. In a mixing bowl, crack 1 egg and add 1 egg yolk (saving egg white for later), add 1/2 cup of sugar, whisk in milk mixture and salt until well combined. Slowly stir in 4 cups flour and knead until soft dough forms, shape loosely into a ball. Cover dough ball in vegetable oil, place in a clean bowl. Cover with plastic wrap or towel and let rise to double, about 2 hours.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. In a bowl, combine softened butter, almond butter, remaining sugar, milk, and cinnamon. Roll out dough into a 16" x 20" horizontal rectangle. Spread filling mixture evenly over dough, then fold dough rectangle onto itself in thirds, as though you were folding a letter. Slice in half horizontally, then slice each half into eight 3/4" vertical strips. Twist two strips together like a loose rope, then form into a loose single knot and place on parchment. Repeat seven more times, then cover and let rise 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Brush tops of rolls with egg white and sprinkle with turbinado sugar, bake for 18-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove and let cool, then serve.





GREENS & GRUYÈRE PASTRY CUPS

These little pastry puffs are the perfect contradiction: light & flaky yet heaped with a dense filling, packed with healthy greens but made savory with the rich addition of Gruyère and a touch of butter. Garlicky greens are a favorite choice of mine for midwinter, and the portable size of these cups makes them perfect for the brunch table.

MAKES 9 PASTRY CUPS

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 20 oz spinach
- 1/3 cup diced onion
- 1 T minced garlic (about 3 large cloves)
- 1 beaten egg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 1/2 cup grated Gruyère or Jarlsberg

Remove frozen puff pastry from package, thaw completely, flatten out sheet and keep chilled. Heat a large skillet over medium heat, melt one of the tablespoons of butter in it. Add the frozen spinach and cook, stirring often, until spinach is fully thawed. Add onion and garlic, saute until onion is softened, about five more minutes. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature. Using your hands, squeeze as much water as possible out of the spinach mixture, then place in a mixing bowl. Add egg, salt, pepper and grated cheese, mix thoroughly.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. With a sharp knife, slice the sheet of puff pastry into 3 equal strips, then slice crosswise into 3 strips, creating nine equal squares. Briefly microwave the remaining tablespoon of butter to melt, then brush lightly on the inside of nine cups of a muffin pan. Place a square of pastry on each, press down into bottom of cup. Fill each pastry cup with an equal amount of spinach mixture. Bake at 400 degrees for about 20 minutes, or until pastry is golden brown.





EGGS BENEDICT WAFFLES

MAKES 10 SERVINGS

3 large eggs
1 cup milk
1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 melted butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
10 thin slices of deli ham, folded in half

Preheat waffle iron. Beat eggs in a mixing bowl, then add milk, yogurt, flour, baking powder, baking soda, butter and salt, mixing until smooth. Pour batter 1/3 cup at a time into the center of the hot waffle iron; the goal is to make small waffles, batter will not reach the edges. Cook until lightly golden, about 3-5 minutes. Open iron, place a slice of ham on top of the waffle, close iron and cook for ten more seconds.

10 large eggs
10 tablespoons white vinegar

Fill a wide skillet with at least two inches of water, heat to a gentle simmer over medium. Crack each egg into a small bowl or coffee cup containing a tablespoon white vinegar, let sit for a minute, then slide gently into water. Poach each egg until white has set, remove and place on a waffle. Change water after every few eggs so that it does not become too vinegary (or use two skillets).

1 1/4 cups (2 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter
2 large egg yolks
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon chopped fresh chives
salt, to taste

Melt butter in microwave or small saucepan. Place egg yolks & lemon juice in blender, cover and blend. Remove lid and pour hot butter in a slow stream into mixture with motor running, blend until creamy. Turn off blender, add fresh chives and salt, drizzle over each waffle. Top with extra fresh chives for garnish.







WINTER FRUIT SALAD

This fruit salad is so colorful and fresh, to me it looks like a bowl of vibrant winter jewels! I especially love the way each juicy little pomegranate aril catches the light, and of course, the beautiful sunrise colors of the citrus. If you've overdone it a bit on treats at the holiday table—which is, ahem, easy to do this time of year—this salad is the perfect, delicious antidote.

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

- 2 pomegranates
- 2 red pears
- 1 large red grapefruit
- 3 oranges or large tangerines
- 1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon of honey
- 2 cups plain Greek yogurt

Slice each pomegranate around its equator, cutting only through the tough outer shell, then break apart with your hands. Whack the back of each with a wooden spoon and catch the seeds (aka "arils") in a mixing bowl as they fall. Cut pears in half, remove core and cut into thin slivers, leaving skin on. Place in bowl with pomegranate arils.

To slice the citrus into neat segments, first slice the tops and bottoms off each fruit so that they sit flat, about an inch each. Slice away the peel and bitter white pith in sections until it's all gone. Take knife and slice into each fruit towards the center, avoiding the membrane between each slice and removing slices as you go. Add to mixing bowl, toss fruit together with a tablespoon of honey. Letting it sit for a few minutes at room temperature will encourage the juices and honey to mix and coat the fruit.

In a separate bowl, combine yogurt and remaining 1/4 cup of honey. Mix thoroughly and serve on the side of fruit salad.









GRAPEFRUIT + SAGE MIMOSAS

Just like our annual treat of Eggs Benedict, Christmas morning mimosas are a long-standing tradition in my family. They're bubbly, effervescent and bright as twinkly lights...and hey, you're just going to be sitting around chatting and opening gifts for a while, after all. Kick back with a refreshing glass of bubbles and soak in the holiday spirit while you can! This year, I'm updating the classic with a tart, modern twist, swapping ruby grapefruit juice for orange and adding a touch of herbaceous sweetness to round it all out. The delicate combination of citrus, sage and sparkling wine is a welcome change from tradition that still satisfies nostalgia, not to mention pairing perfectly with a brunch spread. Sparkling wine isn't your thing? Try swapping in seltzer or dry sparkling apple cider for a similar, equally refreshing sipper.

Sage Simple Syrup

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup whole sage leaves, loosely packed

Place all ingredients in a saucepan and bring just to a boil, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Set aside to cool to room temperature, then strain out leaves and place in a clean, resealable container.

Grapefruit + Sage Mimosa

- 3 oz. ruby grapefruit juice
- 1 oz. sage simple syrup
- 3 oz. dry sparkling wine
- Sage leaves to garnish

Pour juice into a champagne flute, top with syrup, swirl gently to combine. Finish with sparkling wine, garnish with a sage leaf, and let's celebrate!





