

the What to Cook easy-but-fancy christmas menu

California Christmas Roast

Serves 6

Cook time: 40-50 minutes (15 minutes active, 30-40 minutes inactive) + 24 hours for marinating and 10 minutes for resting

Tools:

- Large ziplock or [bowl](#)
- [Chef's knife](#)
- [Cutting board](#)
- Large spoon
- Your largest oven-proof skillet (such as a [cast iron](#) or stainless steel)
- [Meat thermometer](#)
- 2 cups red wine (whatever kind you like to drink)
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup brown sugar or honey
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 (3 to 4 pound) beef tri-tip roast
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature

Ingredients:

Add **2 cups red wine**, **1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil**, **1/4 cup soy sauce**, **1/4 cup brown sugar**, **1 tablespoon garlic powder**, **1 tablespoon dried oregano**, and **1 tablespoon black pepper** to a large ziplock or bowl and stir to combine.

Trim the fat (the hard white stuff) off of **1 tri-tip roast**. It doesn't have to be perfect, but there's usually a large fatty piece on one side of the roast, and we want to trim as much of that off as possible. (Fat on meat usually = good, but this is too much.) Add the tri-tip to the marinade and marinate for up to 24 hours, but 4 at the bare minimum.

When you're ready to cook, preheat the oven to 350°F. Bring **4 tablespoons of butter** to room temperature. *If you follow me on IG you know my tip — stick half a stick of (wrapped) butter in the waistline of your pants to bring it to room temp quickly.*

Shake off as much marinade from the tri-tip as possible, then pat it completely dry.

Warm **2 tablespoons oil** in your largest oven-proof skillet (such as a cast iron or stainless steel) over medium-high heat. When it starts to smoke, add the tri-tip and cook until a nice golden-brown crust forms, 4 to 6 minutes.

Flip, then smooch the room-temperature butter onto the top (seared) side of the tri-tip.

Transfer the skillet to the oven and roast for 11 minutes per pound to cook it to medium (which is better than medium-rare when cooking tri-tip). So, if you purchased a 3 1/2 pound tri-tip and cut off 1/2 pound of fat, $3 \times 11 = 33$ minutes of roast time. It should reach between 140 and 145°F internally.

Remove the tri-tip from the oven and let it rest in the skillet. Tilt the skillet to the side and use a large spoon to spoon the pan juices over top of the tri-tip.

Let it rest for 10 minutes, then [slice against the grain](#).

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Boursin Risotto

Serves 6

Cook time: 50 minutes (10 minutes active, 40 minutes inactive)

Tools:

- [Dutch oven](#)

Ingredients:

- 6 cups chicken stock (*I use water + Better Than Bouillon!*), divided
- 2 cups arborio rice
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 (5.2 ounce) package Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Add **5 cups chicken stock** to a Dutch oven and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir in **2 cups arborio rice**, then cover and transfer to the middle rack of the oven. Bake for 40 minutes.

Remove from oven and stir in the remaining **1 cup of stock, the juice of 1 lemon, 1 package of Boursin, 2 teaspoons salt**, and **1/2 teaspoon black pepper**. Add more stock if needed to achieve the consistency you like.

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Honey Roasted Carrots with Burrata and Pistachios

Serves 6

Cook time: 50 minutes (10 minutes active, 40 minutes inactive)

Tools:

- Your largest [rimmed baking sheet](#)
- [Parchment paper](#)
- [Chef's knife](#)
- [Cutting board](#)

Ingredients:

- 2 pound carrots, cleaned and sliced in half vertically
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 (8 ounce) container burrata
- 1/4 cup roasted, salted pistachios, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 425°F. Line your largest rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

Wash and slice **2 pounds carrots** in half vertically. You don't *need* to peel them, but you can if you want to. Drizzle with **3 tablespoons oil**, **3 tablespoons honey**, **1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt**, **1 teaspoon dried oregano**, and **1/2 teaspoon ground cumin**, and use your hands to really get in there and toss everything together to evenly distribute the ingredients.

Spread the carrots into an even layer and roast for 40 minutes. Meanwhile, take **the burrata** out of the fridge to let it come to room temperature, and finely chop **1/4 cup pistachios**.

Transfer the roasted carrots to a platter. Tear the burrata ball into several pieces and place them on top. Scatter the chopped pistachios over top. Finish with a drizzle of honey and extra-virgin olive oil.

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Kale Salad for All

Serves 6

Cook time: 15 minutes

Tools:

- Jar (or bowl with a lid)

Ingredients:

- 2 large lemons
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 10 to 12 ounces shredded kale (yes, I'm telling you to buy it pre-chopped)
- 1 large Honeycrisp apple, sliced into batons
- 1/2 cup roasted, salted almonds, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup yellow raisins
- 4 ounces Parmesan cheese, finely chopped (we want random chunks, not a fine powder)

In a jar, combine **the juice of 2 lemons, 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, 1 tablespoon honey, 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper**. Shake to combine. Taste and add more salt, honey, or whatever to your liking.

Add **10 to 12 ounces shredded kale** to a large salad bowl. Pick out any big stems and discard. Sprinkle with a **big pinch of salt**, then use your hands to massage it, AKA scrunch it together in your fists, 8 to 10 times, until it feels a tiny bit wet in your hands.

Thinly slice **1 large Honeycrisp apple** into batons, finely chop **1/2 cup roasted, salted almonds**, and finely chop **4 ounces of Parmesan cheese**. Add them to the bowl along with **1/3 cup yellow raisins**.

Just before serving, shake the salad dressing to combine it again, then toss your desired amount into the salad.

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Roasted Mushrooms

Serves 6

Cook time: 45 minutes (5 minutes active, 40 minutes inactive)

Tools:

- Your largest [rimmed baking sheet](#)

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds of sliced mushrooms (buy them sliced)
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/4 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Sprinkle of chopped fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Toss **2 pounds sliced mushrooms, 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, 1 1/4 teaspoons garlic powder, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper** to your largest rimmed baking sheet and toss to evenly coat.

Roast for 40 minutes.

If you are cooking the tri-tip at the same time, stir several spoonfuls of those pan juices into the mushrooms at the end.

Transfer to a platter and sprinkle with a little **chopped parsley**.