

XCentric Ideas



1960's at a Chicago's Ambassador East Hotel. An unnamed celebrity got a Bloody Mary, but no swizzle stick. He grabbed a stalk of celery from the relish tray to stir his Bloody Mary and history was made.

Recipes from Internet
All photos my own

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by
ALMA PRETORIUS
alma@xcentricideas.co.za
www.xcentricideas.co.za



Grow Celery at Home

Take the base from a stalk of celery, rinse it off, and put it in a shallow cup of warm water on a window sill. Change the water daily and keep an eye on it to see if any regrowth begins. *Ours started to sprout leaves after 2 days ... the picture in centre was about 2 weeks.*

Fill a pot with potting soil and plant the celery stalk. Apparently it takes about 2 months for a mature celery to grow.



Celery Blue Cheese Dip

Celery Blue Cheese Dip

Bunch of celery stalks

50 g Cream cheese/smooth Cottage Cheese

Pepper

Fresh parsley

50 g Stilton/Blue Cheese*

1 tbsp Greek yoghurt

Fresh chives

Fresh thyme leaves

Mince the celery stalks in a food processor. Once you've minced the celery stalks, start by adding 50 g Stilton/blue cheese and 50 g cream/cottage cheese and yoghurt. Taste. You can decide if you want more Stilton/blue cheese and cream/cottage cheese or more celery. Add the rest of ingredients, refrigerate.

Use as a dip, as a paté on crackers, toast fingers. Would be perfect as a dressing for potato salad/rice salad, pasta salad or fresh sliced tomatoes!

**If you don't like a strong cheese like Stilton/Blue cheese, leave it out. Just use the cream cheese/cottage cheese.*



Celery, Pear and Cheese Spread

Recipe: adapted from www.food24.com

Celery, Pear and Cheese Spread

1 stalk celery, finely sliced
15 ml parsley, chopped
65 ml fat free smooth or crumbled cottage cheese/cream cheese*
1 small ripe pear, grated

Mix all the ingredients together lightly. Pile onto a halved muffin/toast/ciabatta slice and enjoy.

** You can also use flavored cottage/cream cheese.*

This is such a refreshing bite – I think it will also work lovely as a sandwich filling! Or on top of whole-wheat or rye bread.

If you're cutting out carbs, pile this mixture on top of cucumber slices or tomato slices.

Celery Salt



Celery Salt

Leaves from one bunch of celery

Flaky sea salt

Pick the leaves from each celery stalk, leaving the stems behind. The outer leaves tend to be dark green and hearty, the inner leaves pale green and tender. Use them all.

Rinse the leaves with cold water in a strainer, then shake off as much of the water as you can. At this point you want to dry the leaves as much as possible, so they toast (not steam) when you cook them. Gently pat them dry in a clean dish towel, or paper towels. Once dry you have two options for toasting the leaves.

- If you have a lot of leaves, arrange them in a single layer on a baking sheet, then bake in a 350F / 180C oven for about 5-7 minutes. Bake until dehydrated and crispy, but not browned.
- If you have fewer leaves, or just don't feel like heating the oven, I'll throw them in a large skillet. Single layer if possible, over medium-low heat. Again, you want to barely toast them, not brown the leaves much.

In either case, when you're done cooking, remove from heat and let the leaves cool completely. They'll crisp up even more at this point. When cool, use your fingers to crumble the leaves completely, discarding any leaves that aren't crispy.

Combine equal parts celery leaves and salt in a jar, and either stir or shake to distribute the celery leaves evenly throughout.

This is truly a lovely flavored salt and perfect for a gift.

Celery Pesto



Celery Pesto

50g fresh celery leaves, rinsed
50 g breadcrumbs
50g grated cheese (cheddar/parmesan)
2 tbsp sunflower seeds
2 tbsp oil
2 tbsp lemon juice
Salt, pepper to taste

Blend and serve.

The breadcrumbs is to 'fill up the pesto' so that you don't have to use a lot of oil. But you can leave out the crumbs.

This is truly a fabulous bite!! Use it as a spread on bread, crackers or cucumber slices. Or steam pasta and stir in this celery pesto. Add this pesto to mayonnaise for your potato salad – or spoon this pesto on top of cooked/boiled potatoes. Heck, spoon it on your fish, chicken or steak!

They only use the leaves for this pesto, not the stalks.



Marinated Celery

Marinated Celery

1 bunch celery stalks
2 tsp sugar
¼ cup white vinegar
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
¼ cup sunflower oil
1 tsp garlic, crushed

Cut the celery stalks on the bias. Mix everything together, cover and refrigerate for at least an hour.

This is a lovely crispy bite to use with any protein dish.

Celery and Cheese Gratin



Celery and Cheese Gratin

1 cup celery stalks, washed, cut into thick slices
½ cup boiling water
1 heaped tsp beef/veg/chicken stock granules
½ cup cheese sauce
Crumbled cheese biscuits (optional)
Breadcrumbs

In a dish with a lid, microwave the celery stalks in water and stock granules, for 3 min on High.

Leave in the stock water while you prepare your cheese sauce. Flavour your cheese sauce with pepper.

(If you don't have flour, use the same amount of Smash powder/dried potato flakes)

If you're using cheese biscuits, crumble finely, mix with breadcrumbs.

Drain the celery, spoon into a small oven dish. Spoon over the cheese sauce, or mix the celery in with the cheese sauce. Sprinkle over the cheese biscuit/breadcrumb mixture and bake in oven for 15 – 20 minutes, till crust is nice and golden.

Ingredients can easily be doubled or tripled.

Celery Risotto



Celery Risotto

1 cup raw white rice (*ordinary rice, nothing fancy*)
3 tablespoons butter/margarine
Grated ginger, to taste (optional)
Coarsely ground black pepper
Grated cheese (parmesan/cheddar)
2 cups celery stalks, sliced thinly
6 -7 teaspoons beef stock granules (or chicken/veg stock granules)

4 cups boiling water
Garlic, crushed, to taste
Pinch of salt
2 tablespoons oil (any kind)
Any other herbs and spices to your taste

Use a glass casserole dish with a lid that fits into your microwave. Add all the raw ingredients to your dish EXCEPT THE 2 TBSP OIL, CHEESE AND ¼ CUP CELERY STALKS*.

Stir the mixture so that the butter/margarine melts in the boiling water. Put the lid on, microwave on High for 10 minutes. Take out, stir, put lid on, microwave on High for 10 minutes.

Take out, stir, put lid on, microwave on High for 5 minutes. Taste to see if your rice is soft, but not mushy. If your liquid is gone and rice is still 'firm', add a bit more liquid and microwave for another 2 – 4 minutes on High.

Stir in the ¼ cup sliced celery stalks, oil, cheese and serve.

Perfect as a dish on its own – or divine as a side dish.

**You can add the 2 cups celery stalks in the beginning if you don't want raw celery at the end.*

Celery Tatin



Celery Tatin

1 onion, peeled, sliced into chunks
2 tbsp oil (any kind)
2 tsp brown/white sugar
2 tbsp tomato paste
Bunch fresh celery stalks, rinsed, sliced in thumb-size pieces

2 tbsp butter/margarine
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
Salt, pepper, chilli, spices (to your taste)
1 x Puff Pastry roll, defrosted

Preheat the oven to 200 oC. Use an *oven cast iron pan (a pan with no wooden handles). On the stove, melt butter & oil and fry onion, celery. Add the Worcestershire sauce, spices, tomato paste and let it simmer till celery is soft, but not mushy. Remove from stove and let it cool for a bit.

Roll out the pastry a bit thinner, cut in a circle/oval/square just a little bigger than your pan/dish. Place the pastry on top of the onion/celery mixture and tuck the edges of the pastry down the pan around the food.

Without a lid and on bottom oven rack, bake the tart for 20-25 minutes, until pastry is crisp. Cool the tart in the pan/dish for 5 minutes, then place a large plate over the pan/dish, invert the tart onto it. Serve warm or cold.

**If you don't have such a pan, fry everything in a normal pan on the stove and transfer it then to a greased square/round/oval oven dish. As long as the dish is not bigger than your rolled-out pastry.*

Celery and Apple Nutty Wheat Cake



Celery and Apple Nutty Wheat Cake

- 1 cup red apple, fresh, diced, not peeled
- 1 cup Granny Smith apple, fresh, diced, not peeled
- ½ cup fresh celery stalks, sliced thinly
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 ¾ cup brown sugar
- 3 cups Nutty Wheat flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp Pimento Allspice (optional)

Preheat oven to 180 oC. Beat eggs in mixing bowl. Add oil and sugar, mix well. Add apples and celery, blend. Add the dry ingredients to above mixture – mix just enough to blend it together. Pour into a greased cake pan lined with baking paper (my cake pan was square) and bake for 1 hour.

Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, carefully lift out the cake and cut into squares.

This cake is unbelievable!! One cannot taste the celery, so maybe its just there for a 'conversation topic.'