

# Oatmeal Banana Bread

**MAKES 1 LOAF, FEEDS 10**

There are more than eight million recipes for banana bread on the Interwebs. Most of them are insipid and mushy. Due to the inclusion of toasted oats, this one is definitely not. And it's darned nutritious to boot.

- 168 grams old-fashioned rolled oats
- 84 grams all-purpose flour
- 6 grams baking soda
- 1 gram baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 112 grams unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 224 grams sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 238 grams mashed very ripe bananas (2 to 3 bananas)\*

1. Heat the oven to 350°F.
2. Coat a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray and set aside.
3. Spread the oats in a thin layer on a half sheet pan and bake for 15 minutes, or until lightly toasted. Remove the pan and cool the oats for 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Grind the oats in a food processor until the consistency of whole wheat flour, about 3 minutes. Then pulse in the flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt.
5. Cream the butter and sugar in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on medium until pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
6. Drop the speed to low and add the eggs, one at a time, incorporating each fully before adding the next.\*\*
7. Follow with the vanilla and bananas, and beat on medium-low until incorporated. The batter will look kind of curdled, but that's okay.
8. Add the flour mixture and beat on low speed just until combined.
9. Transfer the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 50 to 55 minutes, until the internal temperature reaches 200° to 210°F.
10. Cool the pan on a rack for 15 minutes before turning the loaf out and cooling completely.

\* If your bananas aren't very ripe, roast them skin on in a 300°F oven for 40 minutes, until blackened and soft.  
\*\* Remember, a good batter is essentially an emulsion, so add those eggs slowly so that the water and fat phases have time to come together.

Donna



morning

coffee break

noon

afternoon



## Overnight Coconut Oats

FEEDS 1

75 grams coconut milk  
75 grams unsweetened almond milk  
12 grams maple syrup  
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract  
40 grams old-fashioned rolled oats  
30 grams dried fruit, such as  
cranberries, cherries or blueberries.

No raisins please.

2 grams chia seeds **P**

3 grams flaxseed meal **P**

Pinch of kosher salt

Pinch of cinnamon

13 grams toasted coconut flakes

This is one of those dishes that is so nutritiously sound, it oughta taste terrible. But, alas . . . it's pretty damned fantastic. I have to give some credit to Yvonne, the craft services lady on *Cutthroat Kitchen*, though. She serves up a version of this every morning, with oats and coconut soaked in almond milk. I think she would have given me her recipe had I not driven a tank into her station. It's a long story.

1. In a 16-ounce jar, stir the coconut milk and almond milk together with the maple syrup and vanilla.

2. Weigh the oats, dried fruit, chia seeds, flaxseed meal, salt and cinnamon onto a paper plate **H**. Mix around with a fork, then fold the plate into a *U* and pour into the jar.

3. Apply the lid and shake to combine. Refrigerate overnight.

4. Serve right in the jar, topped with the toasted coconut.







## Seedy Date Bars

**MAKES TWELVE 1-1/2 X 4-INCH BARS**

We all remember the line from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, right? “Bad dates.” Well, this date bar is never bad because it’s pretty much a superfoods convention. In case you doubt, I’ve included a few nutritional attributes to the right.

1. Line an 8 x 8-inch pan with parchment paper.\*
2. I have to warn you . . . things are going to be sticky. I usually spray the food processor work bowl and blade with a little nonstick cooking spray. Combine the dates, apricots, crystallized ginger, orange zest and salt in the bowl of a food processor and process for 1 minute, or until the mixture forms a thick paste, stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl one time.
3. Heat a 12-inch skillet and cook the pepitas over medium-low heat, tossing occasionally, for 1½ minutes, then add the sunflower seeds and continue toasting for another 5 minutes. Finally, add the coconut, chia seeds, flaxseeds and sesame seeds and toast for 3 minutes, or until the mixture is fragrant and the sunflower seeds and coconut are lightly browned.
4. Add the toasted seed mixture to the sticky stuff in the food processor and pulse 8 times, 3 seconds a pulse.
5. Scrape the mixture into the prepared pan and press into an even layer with a rubber spatula. Refrigerate for 2 hours, then cut into 12 bars with a pizza cutter. Store, separated with parchment, in an airtight container for up to 1 week.
6. Consume as a breakfast or any time a quick energy boost is required.

\* If you keep a spritz bottle of H<sub>2</sub>O around, give the baking pan a squirt before you put in the parchment paper to help hold the paper in place.



- 8 ounces pitted Medjool dates **P**  
FOR: fiber, potassium
- 4 ounces dried apricots  
FOR: vitamins A and C
- 1 ounce crystallized ginger **P**  
FOR: gingerol (anti-inflammatory)
- 1 tablespoon orange zest (from ½ orange)
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 ounces pepitas/green pumpkin seeds **P**  
FOR: magnesium, zinc
- 2½ ounces raw sunflower seeds  
FOR: selenium, copper
- ¼ ounce unsweetened coconut flakes  
FOR: vitamins A and E, polyphenols
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds **P**  
FOR: omega-3 fatty acids, fiber
- 1 tablespoon whole flaxseeds **P**  
FOR: omega-3s, manganese, vitamin B<sub>1</sub>
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds  
FOR: various minerals



## My Big Fat Greek Chicken Salad

FEEDS 4 TO 6

This is my favorite use of leftover grilled chicken, or my One Pot Chicken (page 134), though in a pinch a store-bought rotisserie bird will do. And I should add, this dish is just as good with turkey. But I wasn't sure about mixing Greece and Turkey in the same title since they don't always get along.

½ cup plain Greek yogurt (either whole or low-fat works here)

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

½ teaspoon kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 pound cooked chicken breasts or thighs, torn and roughly chopped

1 small cucumber, peeled, seeded, and chopped

1 Roma tomato, chopped

½ small red onion, finely chopped

½ cup crumbled feta cheese

¼ cup pitted kalamata olives, roughly chopped

1. Whisk the yogurt, lemon juice, parsley, salt and pepper to taste together in a medium bowl. Add the chicken, cucumber, tomato, red onion, feta and olives and stir.

2. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving nestled down in a warm pita. Will keep, covered, in the fridge for 3 days.





## Chicken Parmesan Balls

FEEDS 4

3 ounces panko bread crumbs  
4 ounces Parmesan cheese, grated  
1½ pounds ground chicken  
1 large egg, lightly beaten  
2 tablespoons herb oil (see page 139)  
1 tablespoon dried basil  
2 teaspoons garlic powder  
2 teaspoons dried parsley  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
Weeknight Spaghetti sauce (page 139)  
4 ounces low-moisture mozzarella  
cheese, grated

When you're in my line of work, personal cuisine can be born on the job. One day we were sitting around the lab and Sarah, my director of digital ops, says, "I want chicken Parmesan." Then I say, "Well, I want meatballs." Then my director of culinary ops looks up and says, "Chicken Parmesan Balls." Then there was a knock on the door, and it was humanity dropping by to say thanks.

1. Heat the oven to 400°F.
2. Mix together ½ ounce of the panko with 1 ounce of the Parmesan in a small bowl. Set aside.
3. Combine the chicken, egg, 1 tablespoon of the herb oil, the remaining 2½ ounces panko, the remaining 3 ounces Parmesan, the basil, garlic powder, parsley, oregano and salt in a large bowl. Using your hands, gently combine until just incorporated, trying not to overwork the meat.
4. Divide the meatball mixture into 28 golf ball-size rounds (1 ounce each) and roll them in the panko mixture.
5. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon herb oil over medium heat in a 12-inch oven-safe skillet. Brown the meatballs in the herb oil, about 30 seconds on each side, working in batches if needed to avoid crowding the pan. Remove the browned meatballs from the pan and make the spaghetti sauce beginning with step 1, but without cooking the spaghetti.
6. Add the meatballs back to the pan, cover with the grated mozzarella and bake until the meatballs are cooked through, about 10 minutes, and the cheese is melted. Serve over cooked pasta or on top of crispy bread.  
Game over, man . . . game over.







## Weeknight Spaghetti

FEEDS 2

I remember sneaking into the theater to see *The Godfather* when it first came out, and it taught me a few valuable lessons.

1. Horses are messy.
2. Whatever cannoli are, they're better than guns.
3. When you "go to the mattresses," the best spaghetti sauce you can make is built on canned tomatoes.

Well, I feel like I'm "going to the mattresses" just about every day, so I've Bobby Flay-ed<sup>\*</sup> my old recipe for quick assembly.

16 ounces extra-virgin olive oil  
6 large garlic cloves, crushed  
3 thyme sprigs  
2 rosemary sprigs  
10 basil leaves, plus more for serving  
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes **P**  
1 28-ounce can whole San Marzano tomatoes, drained  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 or 2 white anchovies **P**  
½ pound dry spaghetti  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
2 tablespoons (¼ stick) unsalted butter  
Parmesan cheese

1. Combine the olive oil, garlic, thyme, rosemary, basil and red pepper flakes in a narrow saucepan over medium heat. As the heat builds, there will be considerable bubbling as the water cooks out of the garlic and herbs. When this dies down and the basil and garlic turn brown, kill the heat and let the mixture steep until cool. Strain the oil into a jar and toss the solids. Use immediately or cover tightly and freeze for later use. <sup>\*\*\*</sup>

2. Heat 3 tablespoons of the herb oil in a wide sauté pan over medium heat. Add the tomatoes and salt to the pan, and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, breaking up the toma-

atoes as they soften, using a wooden spatula or an old school potato masher.

3. Reduce the heat, stir in the anchovies, and cook for another 5 minutes, or until the anchovies completely vanish from view.

4. Meanwhile, cook the pasta using the Cold Water Pasta Method **M**.

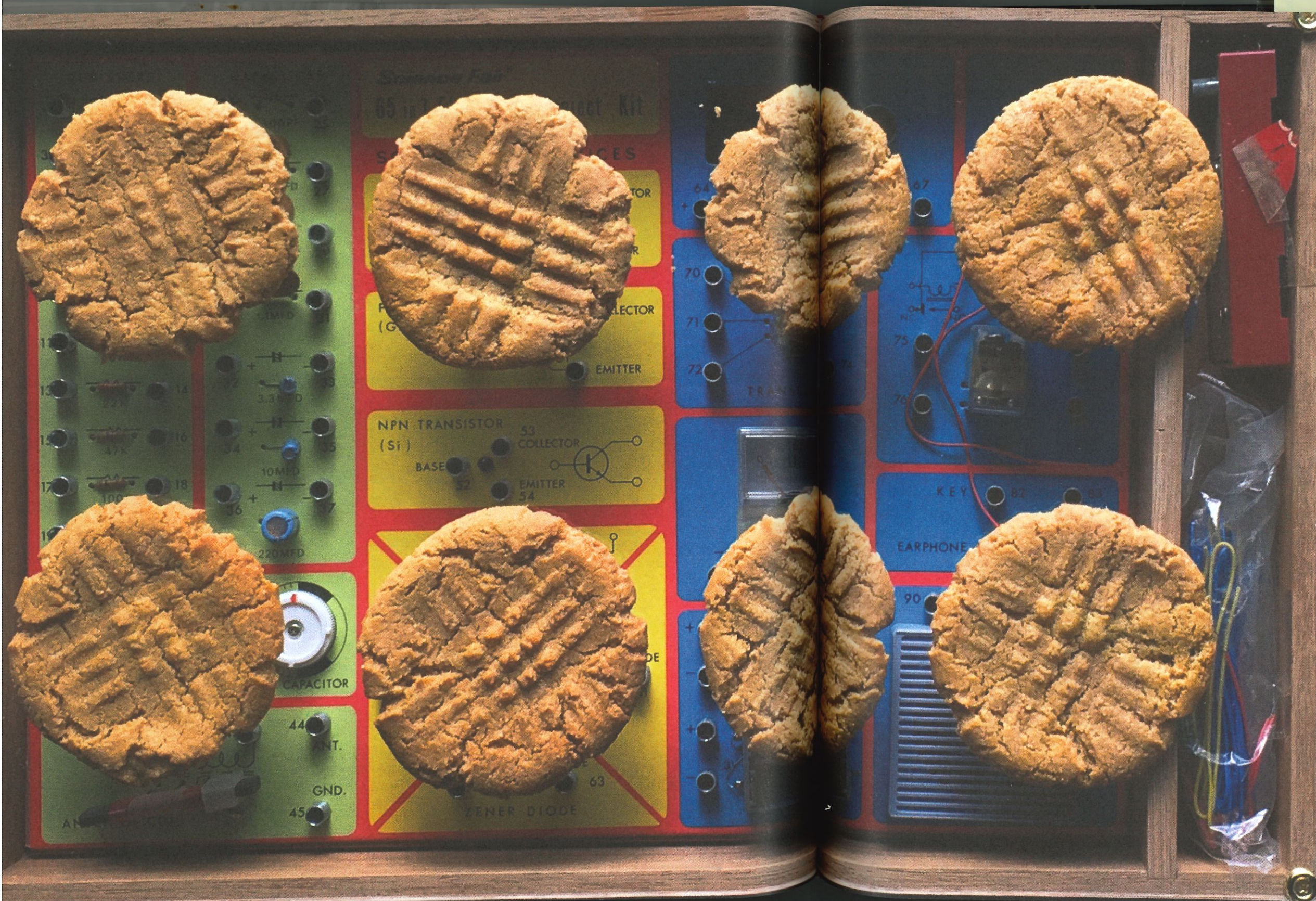
5. Fish the spaghetti out of the water with tongs **H** or a hand strainer, allowing most but not all the water to drain away. Stir the pasta into the sauce and cook on low for 5 minutes. Finish with the butter, Parmesan and fresh basil. If the sauce seems too dry, add ¼ cup of the pasta water and serve. <sup>\*\*\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> I served for several years as the culinary commentator on a TV program called *Iron Chef America*. One of the Iron Chefs, a guy named Bobby Flay, started pretty much every battle by having one of his sous-chefs make up batches of herb and chile oils. Smart move, because if you have a good flavored oil around, you can basically start a lot of dishes in medias res.

<sup>\*\*</sup> The U.S. government considers herbal oils, especially those containing garlic, to be potentially dangerous because the anaerobic environment provided can support the growth of the microbial nasty that causes botulism. The heat of cooking will kill the nasties, but any spores they produce are heat resistant. The freezer is your best bet for keeping the oil stable for up to 2 months.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Starchy pasta water is the perfect liquid for adjusting pasta sauces at the last minute. I don't know a single chef who throws this magical elixir down the drain until the night is over.





## Chewy Peanut Butter Cookie

**MAKES 16 COOKIES**

A one-bowl, no-mixer cookie that's also gluten free (bows deeply).\*

- 1 cup smooth peanut butter
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. Heat the oven to 350°F. Line two half sheet pans with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Beat together the peanut butter, brown sugar and granulated sugar until well combined with a wooden spoon in a large bowl. Add the egg, baking soda, vanilla and salt and beat until well combined.
3. Roll the dough into 1-ounce balls, place 8 per prepared sheet pan, then flatten with the tines of a fork. Bake for 10 minutes, or until the cookies look dry and are just lightly browned. Cool the cookies for 2 minutes on the sheet pans.

\* I honestly don't care about the gluten-free part. I'm just looking for excuses to eat cookies.





## Kimchi Crab Cakes *in*

**MAKES TWELVE 2-OUNCE CAKES, FEEDS 6**

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 lime, zested and then cut into 6 wedges
- 1 large egg
- 3 ounces kimchi, drained and finely chopped
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 ounces panko bread crumbs
- 8 ounces lump crabmeat (aka “backfin meat”)
- 8 ounces jumbo lump crabmeat (aka “the good stuff”)
- ¼ cup canola oil

Don't worry . . . you're not going to have to make spicy, fermented cabbage. Mind you, it's delicious and relatively simple to make, but the truth is, the kimchi I buy at my local Korean market is way better than any I've ever made. Even if you're not lucky enough to have a Korean market nearby, most decent megamarts carry it these days. And here's the shocker: Kimchi goes well with crab.

1. Set a cooling rack inside a half-sheet pan and set aside.
2. Whisk the mayonnaise, lime zest, egg, kimchi, pepper and salt together in a large bowl, then fold in 1½ ounces of the panko and the lump and jumbo lump crabmeat.
3. Fill a pie pan with the remaining 1½ ounces panko. Divide the crab mixture into twelve 2-ounce portions and shape into patties. Coat the crab cakes in the panko, then place on the prepared cooling rack. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
4. Heat the canola oil in a 12-inch sauté pan over medium heat. When the oil shimmers, cook the crab cakes, 4 at a time, for 3 minutes per side, or until golden brown. Remove to a clean cooling rack set over paper towels to drain. Repeat with the remaining crab cakes.
5. Serve immediately with the lime wedges. Sauce?!?! We don't need no stinkin' sauce!





## Cream Whipper Chocolate Mousse

FEEDS 4 AS DESSERT

8 ounces 54 percent bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped  
4 ounces strong coffee, at room temperature  
4 ounces water  
1½ ounces sugar

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

1 liter whipped cream siphon **H**  
One N<sub>2</sub>O charger cartridge

1. Combine a few handfuls of ice cubes with a couple quarts of water in a large bowl and set aside.
2. Add enough water to a 10-inch straight-sided sauté pan to come 1 inch up the side and bring to a bare simmer over medium heat. Combine the chocolate, coffee, water and sugar in a medium metal bowl

and set in the simmering water. \* Stir occasionally for 4 to 5 minutes, until the chocolate is almost completely melted and the sugar is dissolved.

3. Remove the bowl from the water and set on the ice bath. Whisk for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the mixture drops to 60°F and is the consistency of heavy cream.

4. Load the mixture into the whipper, being mindful of the maximum fill line. Screw on the lid and, following the manufacturer's instructions, charge with one N<sub>2</sub>O cartridge. After you hear the gas discharge, shake vertically 15 to 20 times, then set aside for 1 minute.

5. To serve (into cocktail glasses, of course), invert and slowly squeeze the trigger to dispense.

\* Chocolate is often melted in a double-boiler rig, that is, a bowl suspended over boiling water so that steam alone heats the bottom of the pan. This isn't one of those times. Since a considerable amount of liquid has already been added to the chocolate, you can be a bit more aggressive, thermally speaking, and let the bowl touch the water.