BY SUSAN PUCKETT RECIPES BY CHADWICK BOYD PHOTOS BLAINE MOATS FOOD STYLING GREG LUNA PROP STYLING SUE MITCHELL

SESAME-CRUSTED ROAST CHICKEN How to upgrade a classic: Grab your cast-iron skillet, sear a whole chicken in sizzling sesame oil, and bathe

it with Asian seasonings before popping it in the oven. New potatoes absorb tasty drippings as they roast alongside.

IN THE WORLD OF SKILLETS, SHINY AND NEW IS NO MATCH FOR **TRIED AND TRUE. THESE EIGHT RECIPES WILL MAKE HUMBLE CAST IRON** WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD.

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ardly any kitchen tool has withstood the test of time like a cast-iron skillet. Corn bread bakes up extra crispy. A steak won't get a better sear in any other pan. And, if properly seasoned, its glossy-black patina will become more nonstick with each use, extending its life for eons. Though slow to heat up, once it gets good and hot it holds its temperature so foods cook evenly. This is why that last piece of chicken you fry in it will be as juicy as the first. But don't stop with fried favorites, this is the pan that can braise a stove top-to-oven weeknight dish, add irresistible crusty crunch to vegetables, and bake up tender fluffy desserts. And that's barely scratching the surface.







1 A little olive oil and a smoking-hot skillet deliver deep-fried taste without excess fat in these buttermilk-marinated **CRUSTY FISH STICKS**.
Herb-redolent garlic mayo replaces the more predictable tartar sauce. 2 Talk about a 20-minute one-pan dinner. Skillet-toasted fennel seeds give **PAN PASTA WITH SAUSAGE** a flavor boost even before the sausage, orecchiette, and greens are thrown in. 3 If you fell in like with cauliflower after roasting it, then pan-searing **CAULIFLOWER STEAKS WITH HAZELNUTS AND BROWNED BUTTER** will have you falling in love.

GLAZED CELERY AND FENNEL

Cast iron's ability to conduct and hold heat brings out the best in these two vegetables. Their earthy flavors and licorice notes meld, and natural sugars caramelize as the cooking liquid evaporates.

RADISHES WITH CRISPY PROSCIUTTO

Spicy radishes soften and mellow to tender yumminess with a 10-minute dance in a hot skillet. Here they're tossed with their peppery green tops and sprinkled with salty bits of crisp prosciutto.



Baking cheesy biscuits flecked with colorful shredded vegetables on a hot iron surface produces golden crunchy bottoms while keeping them moist and fluffy inside.

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ORANGE CORNMEAL CAKE This rustic skillet

This rustic skillet dessert riffs on the ever-popular pineapple upside-down cake. Orange slices and fresh thyme leaves stand in for the pineapple rings and maraschino cherries. We LOVE the slightly bitter edge the orange peel gives the baked-in caramel glaze.

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