

## THE VAN HORN HOUSE AT LIONS RIDGE

### FROM SUSAN'S KITCHEN

Susan loves to cook. Come see her extensive collection of cookbooks (most of which are used on a fairly regular basis) - and get a taste of her creativity on the stove and in the oven as well.

Here are a few of Susan's favorites - not necessarily (but sometimes) for breakfast:

#### CARAMELIZED BACON

This is one of Susan's most requested recipes - taste it and you will understand why; it's a slight variation on a recipe from a B&B in New England:

12 ounces (12 slices - usually one package) *thick-cut* bacon  
½ cup packed brown sugar  
2 tablespoons water  
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (more or less to taste)

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Cut bacon slices in half crosswise. Line rimmed cookie sheet (or a sheet pan) with aluminum foil. Spray a wire rack with cooking spray and arrange the bacon in a single layer on the rack. Combine brown sugar, water and cayenne pepper in a small bowl; brush the mixture over the bacon. Bake in preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes, until crisped and brown; watch carefully after 20 minutes - the bacon can burn easily. Drain on paper towels. (Can be made up to three days in advance, refrigerated and reheated in the microwave at the last minute.)

**Be careful!** This bacon is absolutely addictive and may disappear before you are ready to serve it.

Yield: 24 pieces (8 servings, or less if the cook eats some before serving, as frequently happens in this house)

Notes: It is absolutely *imperative* that you use thick-cut bacon. Regular sliced bacon burns before the sugar caramelizes.

I find it works better to do this in 2 batches. None of my wire racks is large enough to hold all of the bacon at one time.

Unless you want a major mess on your hands, be sure to line your pan with aluminum foil. I let the bacon fat cool before trying to dispose of it.

## THE BEST BLUEBERRY COFFEE CAKE YOU EVER ATE

I wish I had a dollar for every blueberry coffee cake recipe I have tried over the years - I would be a wealthy woman - and I keep coming back to this one. I first tasted this back in Madison, Wisconsin (John was still at UW at that point - that might give you some idea of how many years ago that was) when a woman in the law office where I worked brought this in for nibbles one morning (such a Midwestern tradition). I begged her for the recipe for many months; she finally relented and gave it to me when I was leaving Madison to move to Pittsburgh (where we lived for 24 years). I hope you like it as much as our guests do (and as much as John and I do).

### **For topping:**

½ cup sugar  
1/3 cup flour  
1/4 cup soft unsalted butter  
½ teaspoon cinnamon

Mix together and set aside.

Preheat oven to 375E - grease and flour (or use cooking spray) a 9" square pan (I find that a glass pan works best).

### **For cake:**

¾ cup sugar  
¼ cup soft unsalted butter (half of a stick - and use the real stuff)  
1 egg  
1-¾ cup sifted flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
¾ to 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries (*do not thaw* if frozen - and don't hesitate to use frozen berries if no fresh ones are available - they work just as well)

Mix the sugar, butter and egg together thoroughly. Sift the flour, baking powder and salt together and stir into the butter mixture. Carefully fold in the blueberries. Spread the batter in the prepared pan. Sprinkle with topping. Bake about 45 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.