



crackers with Brie. Slightly less traditional and possibly a bit more challenging is Swisher's passion for combining sweet and savory flavors, like in her label's Sweet 'n Spicy Mountain Savory Trail Mix, which combines sweet brown sugar sauce, soy, and chili pepper for a bit of heat. Next, she hopes to develop savory cinnamon rolls: key ingredients could include pesto and cheese. When asked how she has found the time to build her career while raising two children, Swisher laughs, summing it up as 'chaotic.' In her world, anything is possible as long as you can multitask. Find Swisher's products locally at Porta Via Italian Foods in Pasadena and Savor the Flavor in Sierra Madre.

We asked Swisher to share some of her personal family favorite recipes:

Chicken or Pork Piccata

2 -to- 4 Chicken breasts, boneless, skinless, and pounded; or pork loin center chops

2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
 ¼ teaspoon Rosemary, dried and chopped
 ¼ teaspoon Thyme, dried
 Salt & pepper to taste
 1 Tbsp olive oil
 1-to- 1½ cups chicken broth
 Juice of 1 lemon
 2 teaspoons capers

DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine flour, dried herbs and salt and pepper.
2. Dredge chicken breasts or pork loin chops in flour mixture.
3. In a large skillet, heat olive oil to medium heat.
4. Add chicken or pork and sauté until lightly browned on both sides (2 -to- 4 minutes per side)
5. Add chicken broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until meat is done.
6. Add lemon juice and capers to skillet. Simmer an additional 3 to 5 minutes.

* Serve chicken or pork over buttered pasta with sauce from pan.

30-Minute Meals

Quick dishes for moms on the move or gals on the go

// STORY BY **ROMINA ROSENOW** // PHOTOS BY **ANDREA BRICCO**

↳ **NOT MANY WOMEN HAVE A LAB IN THEIR BASEMENTS**, BUT KAREN SWISHER, FOOD SCIENTIST, GOURMET FOODIE EXTRAORDINAIRE, AND MOTHER, DOES. SHE USES SCIENTIFIC TECHNIQUES (THINK FIDGETING WITH PH LEVELS) TO PERFECT FOOD PRODUCTS FOR SIERRA MADRE GROCERY COMPANY, WHICH SHE LAUNCHED IN EARLY 2010. THE COMPANY, WHICH IN SIMPLE TERMS INVOLVES

Swisher developing food concepts and scaling them to be sold in mass-produced-but-still-gourmet-quality quantities, has introduced six products to store shelves in the past year alone. She loves nothing more than dreaming up creative and fun food concepts that translate from her home kitchen to products any family can use in a variety of ways, such as the garlic salsa that she always makes around Christmas. After a trial run selling it at Savor the Flavor in Sierra Madre, the salsa was so well received

that she became motivated to sell it under her own label.

Swisher explains the practical side of cooking with some premade items, saying, "You can take a jar of my Roasted Garlic and Olive Bruschetta Salsa, and a pound of meat and some beef broth, put it in a crock pot and cook it all day. And you have dinner!" One of her recent products, a Caramelized Onion & Roasted Garlic Spread, resembles a savory sort of marmalade that's great on burgers or on



↑ Baked Halibut Puttanesca

In place of the prepared Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa, see Recipe Variation on page 75 for substitute ingredients and directions.

- 1 ½ lbs. Halibut steaks or another firm white fleshed fish, such as tilapia
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Prepared Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa
- 2 teaspoons capers

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. Season fish with salt and pepper.
3. Place fish in a baking dish.
4. Cover with Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa and top with capers.
5. Bake uncovered at 425 F for 12 to 14 minutes or until fish flakes when prodded in the center.



↙ Roasted Garlic & Olive Chicken Enchiladas

In place of the prepared Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa, see Recipe Variation on page 75 for substitute ingredients and directions.

- 3 cups chicken meat, cooked and shredded
- 1 cup Cheddar & Jack cheese blend, shredded
- ½ cup Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa
- 8 Corn tortillas

FOR TOPPING:

- 1 ½ cups Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa
- ½ cup Cheddar & Jack cheese blend, shredded
- Sour cream to garnish

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Pre-treat a baking dish with release cooking spray.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, combine shredded chicken, 1 cup shredded cheese and ½ cup Bruschetta Salsa. Mix until thoroughly incorporated.
3. Microwave corn tortillas on high for about 1 minute.

PREPARE:

1. Place ½ cup chicken mixture into each tortilla. Roll and place seam side down in baking dish.

TOPPING:

2. Evenly spread 1 ½ cups Bruschetta Salsa over the enchiladas. Evenly sprinkle cheese over salsa.
3. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Serve hot. Garnish with sour cream.



Breakfast for Dinner!!

↑ Roasted Garlic Salsa & Asparagus Frittata

In place of the prepared Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa, see Recipe Variation on page 75 for substitute ingredients and directions.

- 6 large eggs
- 2 Tbsp cream
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 6 oz. Asparagus, trimmed, cut into ¼" to ½" pieces
- 2 Roma tomatoes, seeded, chopped
- 4 oz. Fontina cheese, shredded
- ½ cup Roasted Garlic Olive Salsa
- Crème fraiche

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat broiler.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk eggs and cream with salt and pepper. Set aside.
3. Heat the olive oil and butter in a 9 ½" nonstick ovenproof skillet over medium heat.
4. Add asparagus and sauté until crisp tender (about 2 minutes).
5. Add tomatoes and cook for 3 minutes.
6. Pour egg mixture over the vegetable mixture and cook for a few minutes until the egg starts to set. Sprinkle with cheese.
7. Reduce heat to medium low and cook until frittata is almost set but the top is still runny, about 2 minutes.
8. Place skillet under the broiler. Broil until the top is lightly golden brown.
9. Remove from broiler and let set a few minutes. Remove frittata to serving platter.
10. Serve with Bruschetta Salsa and crème fraiche.



Recipe Variation for Roasted Garlic Olive Bruschetta Salsa:

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled, chopped
- 1 lb. Ripe Roma tomatoes, chopped
- 20 Kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 Tbsp Italian parsley, chopped

DIRECTIONS:

In a medium skillet, heat olive oil at medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, olives, crushed red pepper, and parsley. Simmer for 5 to 10 minutes.



↑ Caramelized Onion & Goat Cheese Pizza Pie

- 1 Prepared Pizza Crust or Pizza Dough, prebaked
- ¼ cup Prepared Pesto Sauce (or fig jam and toasted chopped walnuts)
- 1 cup Mozzarella Cheese, shredded (omit if using fig jam and walnuts)
- 1 cup Prepared Caramelized Onions (or see recipe below)
- ½ cup crumbled Goat Cheese

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 450F. Prebake pizza crust as directed.
2. Evenly spread pesto sauce over pizza crust.
3. Evenly sprinkle shredded mozzarella cheese over pizza crust.
4. Evenly top Caramelized Onions over cheese.
5. Sprinkle with crumbled goat cheese.
6. Place pizza on baking sheet pan or place on pizza stone in oven.
7. Bake for 8 to 12 minutes, or until toppings are warm and bubbly.
8. Slice and serve.

CARAMELIZED ONIONS:

Sauté 1 Sweet Onion, thinly sliced and quartered, in 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 teaspoon brown sugar until tender, about 45 minutes. ☺



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