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JON  BONNELL'S

TEXAS

Favorites

In *Jon Bonnell's Texas Favorites*, the owner/chef at Fort Worth's premier restaurant bearing his name shares his favorite dishes for parties and family gatherings.

Holding back no secrets, Bonnell gives easy-to-follow directions on how to make Tex-Mex essentials like tortillas, salsas galore, guacamole and tamales. His recipes for family-style fiestas, Fort Worth fancy foods, seafood, and wild game are sure to please any size crowd. Fabulous ideas for tailgate parties will let you host with ease while making your tailgate the hottest one at the game. And then wind down any party with a variety of liquor-infused desserts or Sweet Biscuits with Cactus Jelly.

There's nothing intimidating about cooking with Chef Jon. From Texas-style ribs and potatoes to southwestern twists on fish, fresh veggie salads, and sweets, you'll be whipping up delicious meals for your family and friends—in the kitchen and on the barbecue!

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JON  BONNELL'S TEXAS Favorites


GIBBS
SMITH

Cookbook

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**"TEXAN STYLE
WITH A MODERN
TWIST."**

—Bobby Flay

Chef **Jon Bonnell** opened BONNELL'S Fine Texas Cuisine in 2001. It is the premier restaurant of both Fort Worth and Texas. He has cooked at the James Beard House on four separate occasions and has been featured on NBC's *Today*, the CBS *Early Show*, *Nightline*, ABC's *Good Morning America*, and the Food Network's *BBQ with Bobby Flay* and *Meat and Potatoes*. He is the author of *Jon Bonnell's Fine Texas Cuisine* and is a fourth-generation Texan, currently residing in Fort Worth.

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Fajitas for the Family

MARINADE

- 1/4 cup pineapple juice
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 lemon, juice only
- 2 chipotles (canned in adobo sauce)
- 6–8 sprigs cilantro
- 1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
- 4 large cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 ounces Shiner Bock beer*

Combine all ingredients, except beer, in a blender and puree until completely smooth. Mix the beer in last and pour over beef to marinate. Be sure to remove the center cap in the blender top and cover with a towel to keep the beer from blowing off the lid.

FAJITAS

- 2 pounds skirt or flank steak
- 1 tablespoon Texas Red Dirt Rub Southwestern Seasoning**
- 1 large sweet onion, sliced into thick rings
- 2 poblano peppers, seeds removed, cut into rings

**The rest of the bottle is for the cook.*

***This is my own special blend. Available at the restaurant or online.*

Trim the beef of all fat and silver skin. Place in a zipper lock bag and pour in the marinade. Seal and let marinate in the fridge for at least 3 hours or overnight. Remove the beef from the fridge and grill to desired temperature over a hardwood fire, dusting with Texas Red Dirt Rub on both sides. Once the beef is cooked, remove from heat and let rest for 5 minutes before cutting. Grill the onion rings and peppers over the fire until well caramelized, dusting lightly with the Red Dirt Rub. Scatter the onions and peppers on a large platter, slice the beef thinly across the grain of the meat, and then place the beef on top. Serve the platter in the middle of the table with warm flour tortillas and your favorite sides.

Serves 6–8



POPULAR SIDES FOR FAJITAS

- Guacamole
- Sprigs of fresh cilantro
- Pico de Gallo (see page 25)
- Salsa
- Shredded cheese
- Sour cream
- Chopped jalapeños

★ *A huge pile of freshly grilled fajita meat, served on a sizzling platter steaming with freshly squeezed lime juice is the heart and soul of most Mexican restaurants in Texas. You can hear your food coming all the way from the kitchen and the aroma fills the entire dining room. The word fajita comes from the Spanish word for belt, where the skirt steak comes from on a cow; so technically, there is no such thing as a chicken fajita or a mushroom fajita. That being said, this recipe is also great for chicken and is very commonly served (even though incorrectly) in most Mexican restaurants as an alternative to beef. A fresh hot flour tortilla slathered with guacamole, a few strips of grilled onion, 3–4 slices of fajita meat and a spoonful of pico is truly my number-one comfort food.*

Berry Bread Pudding with Bourbon Sauce

4 cups dry bread, cut into large cubes
(white French bread works well)
1/2 cup chopped pecans
1/4 cup raisins
1/2 cup dried cherries
1/4 cup dried blueberries
5 large eggs
2 1/4 cups half-and-half
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Butter a square nonstick baking dish and add in the cubes of bread. Sprinkle in the nuts and the fruits. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together all remaining ingredients and then pour over the bread and fruits. Allow the mixture to soak in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before baking.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Bake pudding in a water bath (optional) for 45–55 minutes. Check for doneness by jiggling the see if the center is cooked. When the center is cooked all the way through, remove from oven, scoop into bowls for serving, and top with warm Bourbon Sauce.

Serves 4-6

BOURBON SAUCE

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/3 cup bourbon
Pinch salt

Bring all ingredients to a light simmer, stir until the sugar is melted, and serve.

Makes 1 pint



Bread pudding is a great dessert to make for a large crowd since it takes a while to bake but can be served very quickly once done. It's incredibly rich and decadent, perfect for those special occasions when it's time to pull out the stops and have a great time. Though it works very well with just a heavy dose of the Bourbon Sauce, I sometimes add a scoop of rich vanilla ice cream as well.