

## **COOK'S CORNER** by Catherine Hannon

April means that spring, is arriving at last. My latest picks are just the food items to welcome Easter and Passover. **Asparagus can taste as bright and sunny as a spring afternoon.**

### **Asparagus Gratin, serves 8:**

2 pounds thin asparagus, 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups water, salt, pepper- 2 Tbs., unsalted butter-2 Tbs., all-purpose flour,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup grated Parmesan cheese, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese.

1. Adjust oven rack to upper middle position and heat broiler.
2. Trim 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches from stem end of asparagus.
3. Bring water to boil in large skillet over medium heat add salt and asparagus stalks to skillet, cover, and cook stirring occasionally, until nearly tender, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer asparagus to paper towel.
4. Melt butter in now-empty skillet over medium heat. Add flour and cook, stirring constantly until golden, about 1 minute. Whisk in water and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until thickened, 3-5 minutes. Off heat, Wisk in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Parmesan and Monterey Jack until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and let stand for 5 minutes.
5. Place asparagus in baking dish. Drizzle sauce over asparagus and top with remaining Parmesan. Broil until cheese is golden.

### **For Passover, a delicious Carrot-Raisin Salad. serves 6 to 8.**

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup extra- virgin olive oil, 6 tabs. Cider vinegar, 2 Tbs. Honey, 1 tabs. Dijon mustard, salt and pepper, 2 pounds carrots, peeled and shredded, 1 cup raisins, and 1(8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, drained.

1. Wisk oil, vinegar, honey, mustard,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teas. Salt,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teas. Pepper together in large bowl.
2. Add carrots, raisins, and pineapple and toss thoroughly to combine.
3. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours. Serve

### **Coconut-Macaroons Nests: Makes 36**

Vegetable-oil cooking spray, 4 large egg whites,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. coarse salt, 1 package(14ounces)sweetened flaked coconut.

1. Preheat oven to 330\*. Coat mini muffin tins with cooking spray
  2. In a bowl, stir together whites and salt with a folk; mix in coconut. Drop 2 Tbs. of mixture into each prepared tin.
  3. Lightly press mixture into bottom and up sides of each cup. Bake until golden on top. 28 to 30 minutes.
  4. Let cool in tins on a wire rack 10 minutes then run a thin metal spatula around sides to loosen. Lift out of cups; let cool completely.
- Fill the baskets with jelly beans, malted eggs, and or milk eggs.