

## Savory Bread Pudding

Steeped in Tradition | July/August 2005



- 1½ CUPS MILK
- 3 EARL GREY TEA BAGS OR 1 TBSP. EARL GREY TEA LEAVES
- 3 EGGS
- ½ TSP. SALT
- ¼ TSP. GROUND BLACK PEPPER
- 4 CUPS DRY FRENCH OR ITALIAN BREAD ROUGHLY TORN INTO 1½-INCH CUBES
- 1 TBSP. OLIVE OIL
- 1 LARGE ONION, DICED
- 6 OZ. BUTTON MUSHROOMS, SLICED (2 CUPS)
- 1 LARGE CLOVE GARLIC, MINCED
- 4 OZ. FETA CHEESE, CRUMBLED (1 CUP)
- 1 TBSP. FINELY SNIPPED FLAT-LEAF PARSLEY
- ½ CUP FINELY SHREDDED PARMIGIANO-REGGIANO CHEESE (2 OZ.)

Bring the milk just to simmering; remove from heat. Add the tea bags or loose tea and infuse for 5 minutes. Squeeze the bags or strain the tea, pressing to extract as much liquid as possible, and discard tea. In a large bowl lightly beat the eggs and gradually stir in the milk. Season with the salt and pepper. Stir in the bread cubes and let them stand for 15 minutes to absorb the liquid.

Butter a 2-quart square baking dish; set aside.

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté onion and mushrooms until the onion is lightly browned, about 5 minutes, stirring or shaking the pan occasionally. Stir in the garlic and cook 1 minute more. Gently fold mushroom mixture, feta cheese, and parsley into bread cubes. Do not overmix. Spoon into the prepared baking dish. Bake in a 325° oven 30 minutes or until center is set (160°). Sprinkle with Parmigiano-Reggiano; bake 5 minutes more or until melted. Remove; let stand 10 minutes before cutting. Makes 4 to 6 servings.