



## JESSICA SPORN'S SWEET NOODLE KUGEL RECIPE

*"This is a huge holiday  
favorite in my family  
- it's been passed down  
for many generations."*

### **Sweet Noodle Kugel**

Serves 10-15

1 cup raisins (optional) - you may substitute other fruits like raisins, dried chopped apricots, or chopped drained pineapple  
12 oz wide egg noodles  
6 large eggs  
1 lb sour cream (2 cups)  
8 oz cottage cheese (1 cup)  
8 oz cream cheese, softened - OR farmer's cheese, crumbled (1 cup)  
1 cup sugar  
1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted  
1/4 tsp salt  
Cinnamon and sugar for dusting  
Nonstick cooking oil spray

large pot, 9x13 baking dish

optional: food processor or blender

1. Place a rack in the middle of your oven and preheat to 350 degrees F. Cover the raisins with hot water and let them soak to plump while you prepare the other ingredients.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the noodles to the pot, bring back to a boil, and let them cook until tender (not overly soft), about 5 minutes. Drain and return the cooked noodles to the pot.
3. In a food processor or blender, blend together the eggs, sour cream, cottage cheese, cream cheese, sugar, melted butter, and salt.
4. Drain the raisins. Stir them into the noodles.
5. Spray a 9x13 inch baking dish with nonstick cooking oil. Pour the noodle mixture into the dish.

6. Top the kugel by sprinkling generously with sugar and lightly with cinnamon. Alternatively, you can use your favorite kugel topping (streusel, crushed graham crackers, cornflakes, etc.).
7. Bake the kugel for about 60 minutes, turning once halfway through cooking, till the center of the kugel is set and the tips of the noodles turn golden brown. Remove from the oven.
8. Let the kugel rest for 15-20 minutes before slicing. Kugel can be served warm or cold

#### History:

When the word kugel first appeared in Webster's Dictionary in the early twentieth century, it was defined as "a suet pudding," a characterization derived from similarities between kugel and British steamed puddings. Later, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary updated the definition to "a baked pudding." Baking, however, was actually a late step in the kugel's evolution. For the kugel's (*kuglen* plural) origin lay not in a casserole, but rather as bread dumplings in a stew pot.

By the 12th century, the concept of dumplings spread from China along the Silk Road to Italy then Germany, around the same time that cholent reached Germany from Spain by way of France. Within a century or so, German cooks began dropping a bread batter containing a little egg as a binder into the center of the Sabbath stew, the dumpling developing a rich flavor and texture as it simmered overnight and, after morning services, served warm alongside the stew for lunch.

Then emulating an emerging German practice of steaming puddings in a clay pot instead of in a stew or in intestines, Jewish housewives began cooking the dumpling in a *kugeltopf*--*kugel* was the Middle High German for "ball" and *topf* meant "jar/pot"-- a commonplace small rounded Teutonic earthenware jar. The *kugeltopf* was placed in the top of the stew, the steamy environment keeping the batter moist and preventing burning. This not only transformed the batter into a pudding with the potential for greater versatility, but also gave rise to a new name. In order to differentiate the pudding from the stew, people began calling it variously *weckschalet* (*weck* was German for "bread roll"), *semmelkugel* (*semmel/zemmel* was another Teutonic bread roll), and *schaletkugel*, a reference to the resulting round shape. In western Europe, these puddings are still called *schalet*, while in eastern Europe, kugel became the generic term for all these puddings. Whether pronounced *kugel* (by Poles and Lithuanians), *koogle* (by Germans), or *keegal* (by Galitzianers), this dish ranks high in the pantheon of Jewish foods.

