



America's Best Breakfasts: Favorite Local Recipes from Coast to Coast

By Lee Brian Schrager, Adeena Sussman

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Rise and dine! If there's one meal of the day to get passionate about—no matter where you're from in this great land—it's breakfast with all the fixings.

Featuring down-home diners, iconic establishments, and the newest local hot spots, *America's Best Breakfasts* is a celebration of two of this nation's honored traditions: hitting the open road and enjoying an endless variety of breakfasts. Even without a road trip, you can re-create favorites that will satisfy any time of day, including:

- Shrimp and Grits, Hominy Grill, Charleston
- Croque Monsieur Sandwiches, Tartine, San Francisco
- Kimchi Pancakes, Sunshine Tavern, Portland
- Filipino Steak with Garlic Fried Rice, Uncle Mike's, Chicago
- Cannoli French Toast, Café Lift, Philadelphia
- Brioche Cinnamon Buns, Honey Bee, Oxford
- Morning Glory Muffins, Panther Coffee, Miami

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- Sales Rank: #6848 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-04-05
- Released on: 2016-04-05
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

"Biscuits, grits, and migas all appear in this ode to great restaurant morning meals." —*Entertainment Weekly*

"I made the mistake of reading *America's Best Breakfasts* early one morning. The temptation was to board the subway and go straight to Russ & Daughters Cafe on Orchard Street. The book includes their recipe for potato latkes along with an appetizing photograph of the crisp latkes together with small bowl of pink salmon caviar pearls and creme fraiche. Indeed, I'm growing despondent with hunger just writing about the dish." —Ralph Gardner, Jr., *The Wall Street Journal*

"*America's Best Breakfasts* features the charming back stories of and recipes from some of the hottest and most iconic diners and eateries across the country." —*InStyle*

"Part guidebook, part cookbook, this tome highlights the best spots nationwide to indulge in the most important meal of the day." —*New York Post*

"Recipes, like for lobster scramble eggs from Connie and Ted's in West Hollywood, California, give practical advice for bringing the dishes from page to table." —*Miami Herald*

"They don't call it the most important meal of the day for nothing. This gorgeous book celebrates how our country wakes up—from shrimp and grits in Charleston, South Carolina, to croque monsieur sandwiches at San Francisco's Tartine bakery." —PureWow

"These books make you want to eat your way through the land of the free . . . Chefs are embracing the art of breakfast, and food festival founder Lee Schrager and writer Adeena Sussman tour the country for *America's Best Breakfasts*, detailing regional specialties and local hot spots." —*Tasting Table*

"Make the best breakfasts from diners and eateries all over the United States without the hassle of a road trip." —Chowhound

"*America's Best Breakfasts* was a huge success, you could tell by how tight my pants felt post morning session. I can only imagine if there were full size portions... I look forward to seeing what Lee Schrager does next!" —Little Moments of Happiness

About the Author

LEE BRIAN SCHRAGER is the founder and director of the Food Network & Cooking Channel South Beach and New York City Wine & Food Festivals. He is also the vice president of corporate communications and national events at Southern Wine & Spirits of America and the author of *Fried and True* and *The Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival Cookbook*. A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Lee has appeared on *Today* and *Rachael Ray*, and serves on the board of directors for the Food Bank of New York City. He lives in Miami and New York City.

ADEENA SUSSMAN is a cookbook writer and recipe authority. In addition to this book she also collaborated with Lee Schrager on *Fried and True*, and is the coauthor of many other cookbooks. Her work has also been published in *Food & Wine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Every Day*

with *Rachael Ray*, and on *Epicurious* and *Food Republic*.

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Chapter One?

The West Coast and Pacific Northwest

Best of the West

Touching down on the West Coast, we knew to expect one thing: the freshest ingredients, put to use in ways that would surprise, satisfy, and inspire. Our expectations were met—and exceeded—every stop along the way, beginning in Los Angeles, where a cool—but never cooler-than-thou—vibe ruled. From the hippie-chic offerings at Café Gratitude in Venice, where the blissed-out clientele served as the restaurant's most ringing endorsement, to the creamy avocado toast at Plow, we couldn't help but feel more relaxed after just a couple of sun-filled mornings.

Chef friends like Suzanne Goin, an expert practitioner of LA goodness, treated us to dish after dish that reminded us just how fresh and fulfilling breakfast can be. Up north, San Francisco lived up to its reputation as a dining destination equally influenced by its passion for hyper-locavorism and its exceedingly international citizenry. Produce sorcerer Amaryll Schwertner's colorful, thoughtful creations set the tone for a trip filled with great meals that included a visit to Vietnamese chef Charles Phan's home, where he taught us how to make authentic breakfast porridge that blew us away (see page 38). And Portland welcomed us with open arms, with breakfasts that were as comforting as they were thought-provoking. A chocolate doughnut whose main ingredient is mashed potatoes (see page 49)? A pancake packed with fiery kimchi (see page 54)? A broiled grapefruit gilded with emerald-green, basil-infused sugar (see page 53)? Yes, yes, and yes again.

Café Gratitude, Venice, CA?

Golden Turmeric Iced Latte Serves 1

Imagine a restaurant that's both completely otherworldly and entirely LA, and you've nailed the vibe at Café Gratitude in Venice Beach. Everyone seems a little more Zen here, from the servers and patrons to the dogs leashed on the curb. But really, what else would you expect from an establishment whose co-owner, Ryland Engelhart, calls himself the Chief Inspiration Officer? Even the plates encourage positivity, emblazoned with questions like, "What are you grateful for?" Los Angeles is also the locus of juicing culture; if you've never had an iced latte made with fresh turmeric juice, you may be surprised by how much you love it. It encapsulates a sunny SoCal beach day in a glass: the dusky, earthy flavor of the fresh turmeric, sweetened with honey and enriched with almond milk, is a revelation.

1 cup unsweetened, very lightly sweetened, or vanilla almond milk

1 tablespoon honey or agave

2 tablespoons fresh turmeric juice, juiced from 4 ounces fresh turmeric root

Steam the almond milk, or heat it gently in a small saucepan. Whisk in the honey to dissolve, and let the mixture cool slightly. Fill a tall glass with ice, add the turmeric juice, and top with the almond milk.

Cook's Note

Fresh turmeric is increasingly available at health food stores and upscale supermarkets. If you don't have a juicer, peel the turmeric and process in the small bowl of a food processor or a spice grinder. Place the pulp in a double layer of cheesecloth and squeeze the fresh juice into a bowl; discard the solids. Fresh turmeric juice can be replaced with $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon turmeric powder dissolved in 2 tablespoons water.

Connie and Ted's, west hollywood, CA?

Lobster Scrambled Eggs Serves 4

Few things are as delicious as soft-scrambled eggs, but this New England-style seafood house—incongruously set in West Hollywood—ups the ante by topping the eggs with lobster and enriching them with melted butter. The chefs cook the lobsters in-house, adding the cooked tomalley—the tasty green stuff you find in the lobster cavity—for extra luxury and flavor. In this recipe, we forgo the home-steamed crustacean, but if you have a good fishmonger, ask him to save you some tomalley for this dish.

$\frac{3}{4}$ pound good-quality picked lobster meat

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted

12 large eggs

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup crème fraîche

Lobster tomalley from 2 lobsters (optional; see headnote)

1 large lemon, for zesting

2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives, plus more for garnish

Pinch of espelette pepper or paprika (optional), for garnish

Buttered toast or grilled bread, for serving

In a small saucepan, gently warm the lobster meat and butter over the lowest heat (lobster will overcook if the flame is too high), 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and keep warm. In a mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and season with the salt.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the warmed butter from the lobster in a slope-sided nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add the eggs, and gently cook, whisking constantly, until they slowly start congealing into what looks like small, uniform cottage cheese curds, 15 minutes. Whisk in the crème fraîche and, if using, the lobster tomalley; the texture of the eggs will become a bit looser. Cook until the eggs tighten up slightly, 1 to 2 minutes. Using a Microplane, grate the lemon zest directly into the eggs, then stir in the chives, reserving some of the zest and chives for garnish. Remove the skillet from the heat.

Remove the lobster from the butter and divide it among 4 serving bowls, saving the prettiest and most

vibrantly colored pieces of meat for the top. Spoon the eggs over the lobster, garnish with the reserved lobster pieces, the rest of the chives, a pinch of espelette, and the rest of the lemon zest. Serve with toast.

Pizzeria Mozza, Los Angeles, CA?

Breakfast PizzaServes 3

Securing a seat at the counter at Nancy Silverton's pizza palace is a challenge, and for good reason. Pies, made to order, come out of the smoldering oven supported by the most masterful crust we've seen: pliant, puffy, crisp-edged, and slightly doughy—everything you could want and more. The revelation of breakfast pizza, which Silverton unearthed from her recipe archive for us, was the panna—salted whipped cream used to prime the dough's surface before topping it with a flurry of cheeses, meats, and potatoes. The instructions may seem exacting, but following them to a T will make you the most experienced pizzaiolo for miles around. Of course, store-bought pizza dough is an option if you're pressed for time or looking for a shortcut when entertaining.

½ cup heavy cream

⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

Semolina or cornmeal, for dusting the pizza peel (optional)

Pizza Dough (recipe follows)

All-purpose flour, for dusting the work surface

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt

6 ounces low-moisture mozzarella, cut into ½-inch cubes (1½ cups)

9 ounces Sottocenere al tartufo or other truffle cheese, shredded

3 ounces Fontina, cut into ½-inch cubes (¾ cup)

12 scallions, white and green parts included, thinly sliced on an extreme bias

3 small Yukon Gold potatoes, steamed, cooled, peeled, and cut into ¼-inch-thick rounds

6 thick slices applewood-smoked bacon

2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves

3 large eggs

Maldon or other flaky sea salt, such as fleur de sel

Whip the cream and salt in a stand mixer, or with a hand mixer, on medium speed until it reaches soft peaks

just stiff enough to spread. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Remove the racks from the oven and place a pizza stone or a heavy duty baking sheet, underside facing up, on the oven floor. Preheat the oven and stone to 500°F for at least 1 hour. Dust a pizza peel with semolina or cover with a 10 × 10-inch piece of parchment paper. (If you don't have a peel, use a flat cookie sheet.)

Place 1 round of dough on a generously floured work surface and dust it lightly with flour. Using your fingertips as though you were tapping on piano keys, gently tap the center of the dough to flatten it slightly, leaving a 1-inch rim untouched. Pick up the dough, ball both your fists, and with your fists facing your body, place the top edge of the dough on your fists so the round stretches downward against the backs of your hands, away from them. Move the circle of dough around your fists like the hands of a clock so the dough continues to stretch downward into a circle. When the dough has stretched to about 10 inches in diameter, lay it on the prepared peel or baking sheet.

Brush the rim of the dough with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and season the entire surface with kosher salt. Brush the surface with 1/4 cup of the whipped panna. Scatter one-third of the cheeses over the surface of the pizza. Scatter one-third of the scallions over the cheeses, arrange one-third of the sliced potatoes on top of the scallions, and sprinkle the potato slices with kosher salt. Cut 2 of the bacon slices in half crosswise and lay 1 piece on each quadrant of the pizza. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the thyme leaves over the pizza.

Place the pizza in the oven by sliding it with one decisive push from the pizza peel onto the stone or sliding the pizza from the flat baking sheet onto the preheated baking sheet in the oven.) Bake for 5 minutes, or until the pizza is halfway cooked. Crack 1 egg into a small bowl, remove the pizza from the oven, and slide the egg onto the center of the pizza. Return the pizza to the oven until the crust is golden brown and the yolk is still slightly runny, 5 to 6 minutes.

Remove the pizza from the oven and cut it into quarters, stopping at the edge of the egg so it stays intact, and making sure that each slice of pizza gets a piece of bacon. Sprinkle the egg with the sea salt, sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon thyme leaves over the pizza, and serve immediately. Repeat the process with the remaining 2 dough balls.

Pizza Dough Makes 6 balls of dough

1½ cups warm tap water

1½ teaspoons compressed yeast, or ½ teaspoon active dry yeast

2½ cups plus 2 tablespoons unbleached bread flour, plus more as needed

1½ teaspoons dark or medium rye flour (optional)

1 teaspoon wheat germ

1 teaspoon mild honey, such as clover or wildflower

1½ teaspoons kosher salt

1 tablespoon olive oil, for greasing the bowl

Pour 1 cup of the water into the bowl of a stand mixer. Add the yeast and let the mixture activate for 5 to 8 minutes. Add 1 1/4 cups of the bread flour, the rye flour, and the wheat germ, and stir with a wooden spoon until combined. Wrap the bowl in plastic wrap and seal with another piece for an airtight seal. Let the dough rest at room temperature for 1 1/2 hours.

Uncover the bowl and add the remaining water, bread flour, and the honey. Fit the mixer with a dough hook and mix on low speed for 2 minutes. Add the salt and mix on medium speed until the dough starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl, 6 to 7 minutes (if the dough is too sticky and does not pull away from the sides at all, throw a small handful of flour into the bowl). While the dough is mixing, lightly grease a bowl large enough to hold the dough when it doubles in size. Turn the dough out into the oiled bowl; wrap the bowl with plastic wrap, using the same method as before; and rest at room temperature for 45 minutes.

Dust your work surface lightly with flour and turn the dough out onto the floured surface. Acting as if the round has 4 sides, fold the edges of the dough toward the center. Turn the dough over and return it, folded side down, to the bowl. Cover the bowl again with plastic wrap and set it aside for 45 minutes.

Dust your work surface again lightly with flour and turn the dough out onto the surface. Divide it into 6 equal parts. Tuck the edges of each dough round under itself. Cover the rounds with a clean dish towel and let them rest for 5 minutes. With lightly floured hands, gather each round into a taut ball.

Dust a baking sheet generously with flour and place the dough rounds on it. Cover with the dish towel and let the dough proof at room temperature for 1 hour. The dough is best when made into pizzas the same day.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kimberly Franks:

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Raymond Langford:

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Jesus Curry:

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