

# French Toast Strata with Apple Cider Syrup

from The Swan's Palette, by the Forward Arts Foundation of Atlanta

for the French toast:

- 1 pound French bread, cut into cubes
- 8 oz. cream cheese cut into small cubes
- 8 eggs
- 2 1/2 C. milk
- 6 T. butter or margarine, melted
- 1/4 C. maple syrup

Layer half of the bread in a greased 9 x 13 baking dish. Top with the cream cheese and remaining bread. Blend the eggs, milk, butter and maple syrup in a blender; pour over the bread and cheese. Press the layers down with a spatula. Refrigerate, covered, 2-24 hours, then bake, uncovered, at 325 for 35-40 min. or until center is set and edges are golden brown. Let stand for 10 min. before serving.

for the syrup:

- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 8 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 C. sugar
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 2 C. apple cider or juice (if cider is no longer in season)
- 4 T. butter or margarine

Combine the cinnamon, cornstarch and sugar in a small saucepan and mix well. Stir in the lemon juice and cider. Cook over medium heat until mixture thickens and boils, stirring constantly. Cook for 2 min. longer. Remove from heat and stir in the butter. Can be made 1 day ahead.

