

November 2013 Dinner Club

A Tour of Europe!

Stop 1: Fribourg, Switzerland

Prosciutto and Gruyère Pinwheels

Yield: Makes about 40 hors d'oeuvres

Can be prepared in 45 minutes or less.

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup finely grated Gruyère (about 3 ounces)
- 4 teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves
- 1 puff pastry sheet (from one 17 1/4-ounce package frozen puff pastry sheets), thawed
- 1 large egg, beaten lightly
- 2 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto

Preparation

In a bowl combine Gruyère and sage. On a lightly floured surface arrange pastry sheet with a short side facing you and cut in half crosswise. Arrange one half of sheet with a long side facing you and brush edge of far side with some egg. Arrange half of prosciutto evenly on top of pastry, avoiding egg-brushed edge, and top with half of Gruyère mixture. Starting with side nearest you, roll pastry jelly-roll fashion into a log and wrap in wax paper. make another log in same manner.

Chill pastry logs, seam sides down, until firm, at least 3 hours, and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 400°F. and lightly grease 2 large baking sheets. Cut logs crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick pinwheels and arrange, cut sides down, 1 inch apart on baking sheets.

Bake pinwheels in batches in middle of oven until golden, 14 to 16 minutes. Transfer pinwheels to a rack and cool slightly. Serve pinwheels warm.

Stop 2: Florence, Italy

Tuscan Bean Soup

Total Time: 1 hours 45 minutes

Yield:

3 1/2 quarts, 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup kidney beans soaked overnight or 1 (14-ounce) can store-bought beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 cup cannellini beans soaked overnight or 1 (14-ounce) can store-bought beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling on bread
- 1/2 pound diced pancetta
- 2 cups diced yellow onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (14-ounce) can chick peas, drained and rinsed
- 2 quarts chicken stock, plus extra water if needed
- 2 sprigs rosemary
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 1 sprig oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon red chili flakes
- 2 heads Lacinata kale, stems removed and cut into bite size pieces
- 1 loaf Italian peasant bread, cut into thick slices
- Parmigiano-Reggiano, grated, for serving

Directions

Place the kidney beans in a medium pot, add water to cover by 2-inches and bring to a boil. (If using canned kidney beans, skip this step.) Turn the heat down, let simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until just-tender. Use the same process for the cannellini beans.

In a large soup pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the pancetta, rendering the fat and cooking until slightly crispy about 3 minutes. Saute the onion, celery, carrot and garlic for 3 to 4 minutes. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste. Add the diced tomatoes, the cooked and drained kidney beans, cannellini beans, chick peas, and the chicken stock. Using kitchen twine, tie the herbs and the bay leaf into a bundle and add to the pot. Season with the red chili flakes, salt and pepper. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, then add the kale. Continue cooking until the beans are completely tender.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Drizzle olive oil over the slices of peasant bread, season with a little salt and pepper and toast in the oven. Serve the soup in large bowls with grated Parmesan and a slice of toast.

Stop 3: Frankfurt, Germany

Fried German Potato Salad

Total Time: 0 hours 35 minutes

Yield:

4 to 6 servings

Ingredients

- 6 Yukon gold potatoes, medium size, cut into large dice
- 8 ounces thick sliced bacon, cut into pieces
- Canola oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 red onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons capers, drained
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Directions

Put diced potatoes into a pot and fill with cold water (water should just cover the potatoes). Put pot on stove on medium flame and add salt. When water comes to a boil, and the potatoes are cooked, drain the potatoes and spread out on a side towel to dry. While potatoes are doing their thing, add bacon to a large saute pan and cook over a low/medium flame. When the bacon is cooked remove with a slotted spoon and drain the bacon fat, reserving some if you want to add it later. Wipe out the pan with a wad of paper towels (and crank up the heat), add a decent amount of a neutral oil, like canola, and heat it until you get some smoke. Once the oil is hot, carefully add the potatoes and shake the pan a couple of times to make sure nothing sticks. Lower the heat a little and let the potatoes brown. Season with salt and pepper. After a few minutes, shake the pan and get the other sides going. When the potatoes are almost completely cooked, add the red onion and let everything cook together. Once the onions are caramelized, add the capers, red wine vinegar and deglaze. When the vinegar is mostly evaporated, add the extra-virgin olive oil, mustard and bacon (and reserved bacon fat if you want), re-season with lots of cracked black pepper. Serve warm.

Stop 4: Pau, France

Asparagus Bearnaise

Yield: Serves 4-6.

Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

2 large bunches asparagus

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Classic Bearnaise Sauce:

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

1/4 cup fresh tarragon, minced and divided in half

6 black peppercorns, crushed

1 tablespoon minced shallot

4 teaspoons water

2 teaspoons lemon juice

1/2 teaspoon salt

3 large egg yolks

1 1/4 cups unsalted butter, melted

Directions:

For the Asparagus:

1. Snap off hard ends of asparagus and toss with olive oil, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes.
2. Lay out asparagus on a baking sheet and bake at 400 degrees Fahrenheit for 10-12 minutes until they are bright green, slightly crunchy still, but cooked through. Keep warm until serving.

For the Bearnaise sauce:

1. Combine vinegar, 2 tablespoons fresh minced tarragon, shallot, and crushed peppercorns in a small saucepan. Heat over medium heat until the mixture reduces by half.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together water, lemon juice, and salt. Strain in the vinegar mixture and use a spatula to press the liquid through the mesh strainer.
3. Whisk yolks into the mixture. Place yolk mixture over a double boiler (I just use a small pan with simmering water). Whisk the yolks constantly as they heat until the yolks are doubled in size and foaming. Be careful not to cook the eggs!
4. Once the yolks are foaming, start whisking in melted butter. Start with just a drop or two of butter and whisk it in. Once the emulsion starts to hold, you can whisk in the rest of the butter in a steady stream though. If it looks really thick at any point, whisk in a teaspoon of cold water.

Once the sauce is made, serve immediately or store the sauce with some plastic wrap on the surface for up to an hour or two.

Serve asparagus with the bearnaise sauce.

Stop 5: Seville, Spain

Spanish Crusted Roast Pork

Servings: 6-8

Ingredients

4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
3 garlic cloves, minced
3/4 cup panko bread crumbs (Japanese bread crumbs)
3/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted, cooled, and coarsely ground in a food processor
4 teaspoons finely chopped rosemary
2 1/2 teaspoons smoked paprika, divided
2 tablespoons madeira wine
2 (1 lb) pork tenderloin

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Heat 2 tablespoon oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then sauté garlic until pale golden, about 30 seconds.
3. Stir in panko, almonds, rosemary, 1/2 teaspoon pimentón, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper.
4. Transfer to a large plate.
5. Stir together Madeira, remaining 2 tablespoons oil and 2 teaspoons paprika, and 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper in a shallow dish.
6. Pat pork dry and rub all over with mixture.
7. Pat three fourths of crumbs all over pork, pressing gently to adhere, then sprinkle tops with remaining crumbs.
8. Roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted diagonally 2 inches into meat registers 145 to 150°F, about 20 minutes. (Check after 15 minutes to see if crumbs are getting too dark; if they are, tent loosely with foil.) Transfer pork to a cutting board.
9. Tent loosely with foil and let stand 10 minutes before slicing.

Stop 6: Bergen, Norway

Karamelpudding

Glaze:

1 ¼ cups granulated sugar

1 ½ cups water

Put sugar and water in an iron or other heavy skillet. Boil until it gets dry and starts to melt and become golden brown. Pour it immediately into a dry round or oblong mold and turn mold around quickly until glaze entirely covers the sides and bottom of the mold. Keep turning until glaze stiffens.

Custard:

5 egg yolks

3 egg whites

3 tablespoons sugar

1 pint half-and-half cream

½ cup milk

1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 325 F. Beat egg yolks and whites with the sugar until light and lemon-colored. In a small saucepan bring cream and milk to boil; remove from heat and add vanilla. Pour it slowly over the egg mixture, beating constantly. Cool completely and pour it into the mold.

Now, place the mold in a pan with water halfway up the mold's sides. Bake for 1 ½ hours. The water must be kept at the boiling point all the time. If it evaporates, add more boiling water to the pan. Take pudding out of the oven and let cool. When cold, invert the custard on a plate with an edge to keep the glaze from running off.

Serves 4 or 5.

Additional info from "Time-Honored Norwegian Recipes":

This dish is best made as much as a day ahead of time and kept chilled. You wouldn't be ashamed to serve it to a Queen or a President's wife.