

The Gourmet Cooking Club

October 12, 2012

Hosted by Sharon Winnike

with

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Fig, Manchengo & Prosciutto Crostini

Sourdough baguette cut into 1/2" slices

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

3 oz. Prosciutto

8 oz. Manchengo Cheese

8-10 Figs

3 Tbsp. Balsamic Vinegar

3 Tbsp. Fig Jam

Handful Basil Leaves

Slice figs lengthwise (should be 1/2" wide). Slice prosciutto lengthwise to strips of 1/2" X 3".

Cut Manchengo into chunks 1/2" thick. Rip basil leaves in half, set aside.

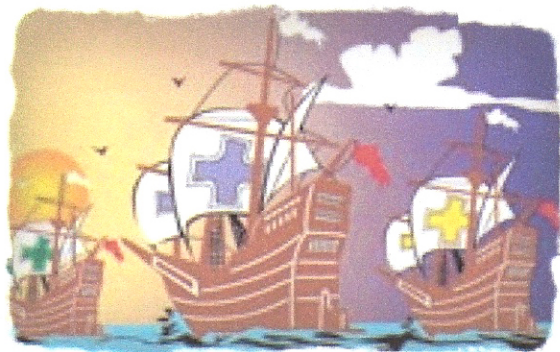
Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Brush tops of sliced sourdough with olive oil. Toast on a cookie sheet for 3-5 minutes until crispy.

Wrap prosciutto around Manchengo, set aside. Once crostini are toasted, brush with fig jam, layer with prosciutto and cheese, basil leaf, a slice of fig and a dab of balsamic vinegar.

Serve at room temperature.

Serves 10 to 12.



Bistro French Fries with Kalamata Olive Aioli Dip → serves 6 to 8

At Cafe Bistro we have mastered the art of making great french fries. The secret lies in taking a few extra, easy steps: using the best Idaho potatoes available, cooking the fries twice to guarantee proper crispness, flavoring them with a fresh herb toss, and serving them with a surprising and delicious aioli dip laced with olives.

KALAMATA OLIVE AIOLI DIP

- 1 clove garlic
- 1/2 cup kalamata olives, pitted
- 2 tablespoons roasted garlic (page 14)
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

BISTRO FRENCH FRIES

- About 6 cups canola oil for deep-frying
- Ice water
- 4 to 6 large Idaho potatoes, unpeeled and well scrubbed

BISTRO FRENCH-FRY HERBS

- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh chives

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

To make the dip, in a food processor fitted with the metal blade, process the garlic, olives, and roasted garlic and pulse until finely chopped. Add the mayonnaise and lemon juice and process until the mixture is well blended and light purple. Transfer to a serving dish, cover, and refrigerate.

To make the fries, pour the oil to a depth of at least 3 inches in a large, deep saucepan. Heat the oil to 300°F. Have ready a rimmed baking sheet covered with a double thickness of paper towels.

While the oil is heating, fill a large bowl with ice water. Cut the potatoes lengthwise into strips about 3/8 inch wide and place them into the ice water to prevent discoloring. When the oil is hot, drain the potatoes and dry them well.

Add the potatoes to the hot oil in small batches and fry until they float and begin to turn a pale gold, 10 to 12 minutes per batch. Using a slotted utensil, transfer the potatoes to the prepared baking sheet to drain. Skim the oil, removing small particles of potato, and set aside until ready to reheat.

Prepare the herbs. In a small bowl, stir together the rosemary, thyme, parsley, and chives.

About 15 minutes before serving, reheat the oil to 375°F. In small batches, fry the potatoes until they are light brown and crisp, 4 to 5 minutes per batch. Remove from the oil, drain on paper towels, and place in a bowl. Toss with the herb mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately with the Kalamata Olive Aioli Dip.



Pappa al Pomodoro



Ingredients

- 1/2 cup good olive oil
- 2 cups chopped yellow onion (2 [onions](#))
- 1 cup medium-diced carrots, unpeeled (3 [carrots](#))
- 1 fennel bulb, trimmed, cored, and medium-diced (1 1/2 cups)
- 4 teaspoons minced [garlic](#) (4 [cloves](#))
- 3 cups (1-inch) diced ciabatta cubes, crusts removed
- 2 (28-ounce) cans good [Italian plum tomatoes](#)
- 4 cups chicken stock, preferably homemade
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 1 cup chopped fresh basil leaves
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan

For the topping

- 3 cups (1-inch) diced ciabatta cubes
- 2 ounces thickly sliced pancetta, chopped
- 24 to 30 whole fresh basil leaves
- 3 tablespoons good olive oil, plus more for serving
- Salt and pepper

Directions

Heat the oil in a large stockpot over medium heat. Add the onions, carrots, [fennel](#), and garlic and cook over medium-low heat for 10 minutes, until tender. Add the ciabatta cubes and cook for 5 more minutes. Place the tomatoes in the bowl of a [food processor](#) fitted with the steel blade and process just until coarsely chopped. Add the tomatoes to the pot along with the [chicken stock](#), red wine, basil, 1 tablespoon salt, and 1 1/2 teaspoons pepper. Bring the soup to a boil, lower the heat, and allow to [simmer](#), partially covered, for 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

For the topping, place the [ciabatta](#) cubes, [pancetta](#), and basil on a [sheet pan](#) large enough to hold them in a single layer. [Drizzle](#) with [olive oil](#), sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss well. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 20 to 25 minutes, until all the ingredients are [crisp](#). The basil leaves will turn dark and crisp, which is perfectly fine. Reheat the soup, if necessary, beat with a wire whisk until the bread is broken up. Stir in the [Parmesan](#) and taste for seasoning. Serve hot sprinkled with the topping and drizzled with additional olive oil.

Italian braised rabbit

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 3 1/4-pound frozen rabbit, thawed, cut into 8 pieces
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound tomatoes, chopped, with seeds and juices (about 2 1/2 cups)
- 1 1/3 cups dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- Chopped Parsley for garnish

Heat oil in heavy large pot over high heat. Sprinkle rabbit with salt and pepper. Add rabbit to pot and sauté until browned on all sides, about 10 minutes. Add garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add tomatoes and wine. Bring to boil, scraping up any browned bits. Reduce heat to medium, cover and simmer until rabbit is cooked through, about 30 minutes.

Using tongs, transfer rabbit pieces to plate. Add herbs to sauce in pot. Simmer until slightly reduced, about 5 minutes. Return rabbit to pot. Stir until heated through, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, sprinkle with parsley and serve.

I brine the rabbit for a couple hours to make it more moist. I also brown mushrooms in the pan with the drippings or add dried porcini mushrooms. You really can add anything you like – for example, often green olives are included.



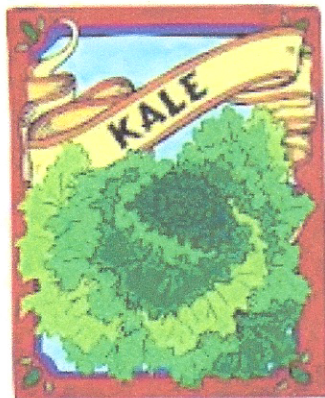
Sauteed Kale

- 1 pound kale, tough stems and center ribs discarded and leaves cut into 1-inch-wide strips (8 cups)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small red onion, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Pinch of dried hot red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar, or to taste
- 4 teaspoon salt

Cook kale in a 6-quart pot of [boiling salted water](#) , uncovered, stirring occasionally, until just tender, about 10 minutes, then drain in a colander.

Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then sauté onion, stirring occasionally, until softened, 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic and red pepper flakes and sauté, stirring, until garlic is fragrant, about 1 minute. Reduce heat to moderate, then add kale and cook, stirring occasionally, until heated through. Remove from heat and stir in vinegar and salt.

Cooks' note: Sautéed kale keeps, chilled in an airtight container, 3 days.



Frozen Italian Raspberry Delight

2 cups chocolate wafer cookies (crushed, one 9 oz pkg)

1/3 cup butter, melted

¼ cup sugar

16 ounces chocolate fudge sauce (slightly softened)

1 qt. vanilla ice cream

1 pint raspberry sherbet (slightly softened)

24 ounces raspberries (frozen, without syrup)

8 ounce carton cool whip

1. To make crust: in bowl, combine crushed chocolate wafers, butter and sugar; mix well.
2. Set aside ¼ cup of the crumb mixture and press remaining mixture onto bottom of 9x13 inch pan. Set in freezer for 15 minutes.
3. Carefully spread chocolate fudge sauce over crust, using tip of a rounded knife and being careful not to pull up crust.
4. Cut slightly softened ice cream into slices and place over the fudge, cutting pieces to fit.
5. Place spoonful of sherbet randomly over ice cream and gently swirl into the ice cream.
6. If the ice cream mixture starts to get too soft, set pan in freezer until it firms up slightly.
7. Top with raspberries, gently pressing them into the ice cream mixture, then cover with whipped topping, bringing it to the edges of the pan.
8. Sprinkle the reserved chocolate crumbs over the top, cover, freeze 6 hours or overnight.
9. Let stand at room temperature about 10 minutes before serving. Serves 20

