



Menu du Jour

08 May 06

Balsamic-Marinated Filet Mignon
Sauce Béarnaise
Grilled Sweet Onions
Baked Idaho Potato
Sautéed Sugar Snap Peas & Baby Carrots
(Serves two)

Balsamic-Marinated Filet Mignon

Filet mignon is sliced from the tenderloin (also called the chateaubriand) of the cow. The tenderloin is along the spine and at the back of the rib cage. Because the muscle is non-weight bearing and it receives very little exercise, it is very tender. The lack of connective tissue also means the meat has little flavor and needs to be marinated.

2 center-cut filet mignon steaks, about 6-ounces each
1 teaspoon Dijon or coarse-grained mustard
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoon olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced

Lightly pierce the filets all over with a sharp knife. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients and transfer to a large resealable food-grade bag. Add the steaks and seal, pressing out excess air. Marinate, refrigerated, at least 4 hours. Remove the steaks from the marinade and pat dry. Season with coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Prepare the grill for medium-high direct cooking.

Grill the steaks, turning once, about 6 to 8 minutes for medium-rare. Transfer to a cutting board and let stand for 5 minutes.



Sauce Béarnaise

Sauce Béarnaise is made in the same manner as hollandaise sauce except a reduction of wine, vinegar, shallots and tarragon replaces the lemon juice.

For the reduction:

2 medium shallots, minced
1/4 cup dry white wine
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
10 crushed black peppercorns
4 large sprigs fresh tarragon
Coarse kosher salt, to taste

For the sauce:

2 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
3 large egg yolks
Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

To make the reduction: Combine the shallots, wine, vinegar, peppercorns and tarragon in a heavy saucepan and simmer over medium high until reduced to 2 tablespoons. Strain and discard the solids.

To make the sauce: Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Simmer until the water evaporates and the milk solids congeal at the bottom of the pan. Remove from the heat and let sit for 5 minutes. Skim off the foam and carefully pour off the clarified butter leaving the milk solids behind.

In a double boiler, whisk the eggs until they thicken and slowly pour in the clarified butter while whisking constantly. Whisk in the wine reduction and season to taste with salt and pepper. Add 1 tablespoon of finely chopped fresh tarragon, if desired.

Yields: about 1 1/2 cups



Sautéed Sweet Onions

Sautéed onions bring a wonderful flavor to grilled meats and are also great with grilled sausages or hamburgers. Although these could be prepared in a skillet on the stovetop, I just toss them on the grill's skillet plate and cook them with the steaks.

3 cups sliced sweet onion
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Preheat the skillet plate to medium-low. Grease the skillet with the olive oil and butter. Place the onion slices on the skillet and cook slowly until nicely browned. Season with salt and pepper.

Sautéed Sugar Snap Peas & Baby Carrots

Sugar snap peas, a cross between Snow Peas and English Peas, are a crisp and flavorful side dish that goes well with almost any entrée. Carrots add another dimension of texture to the dish.

2 cups sugar snap peas, strings removed
1 cup baby carrots
1 tablespoon coarse kosher salt
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon dark sesame oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Using a crinkle-cutter or garnishing knife, cut the carrots in half lengthwise.

Half-fill a medium saucepan with water and bring to a boil. Add 1 tablespoon coarse kosher salt. Add the carrots and cook for 2 minutes. Add the snap peas and continue cooking another 2 minutes. Drain and shock the vegetables in an ice bath. Drain and reserve.

Heat a medium skillet over medium heat; add the butter and the oil. When the butter stops foaming, add the carrots, snap peas and garlic. Cook until the vegetables are warmed, about 3 to 4 minutes.



Baked Idaho Potatoes

Perfectly baked potatoes should be crisp on the outside and fluffy on the inside. Although restaurants will often wrap potatoes in foil, the end result is a steamed, not baked, potato.

2 U.S. No. 1 Russet Burbank potatoes, about 8-ounces each

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon Cajun seasoning

Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Wash the potatoes and scrub well with a vegetable brush. Pat dry with paper towels.

Prick the potatoes all over with a fork to allow steam to escape. Place the potatoes in a large mixing bowl; add the olive oil and Cajun seasoning. Season with salt and pepper. Toss the potatoes coating with the oil and seasonings.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Place the potatoes on a baking sheet and bake for about 1 hour, depending on size. When finished, the potatoes will be easily pierced by a fork or knife.

Cut the potatoes open with two forks and squeeze the ends. Serve with sour cream and chopped chives.



Cooking & Presentation



Filets On The Grill



Sautéed Sweet Onions



Grilled Filet Mignon, Sautéed Sweet Onions, Sauce Béarnaise and Sautéed Sugar Snap Peas with Baby Carrots