

Menu Du Jour

10 Jan 2004

Escargot En Cercueils
Peppercorn Filet Mignon
with Mushroom Sauce
Grilled Asparagus
with Lemon Aioli
Parmesan Garlic Roasted Potatoes
(Recipes serve two)

Escargot En Cercueils (Snails In Puff Pastry Shells)

While these snails could be prepared in the classic manner by stuffing them into shells, or by packaging them in puff pastry sheets, the puff pastry shells make for a nice presentation and gives your guests something to use for sopping up the delicious sauce.

12 escargot
1/4 cup unsalted butter
2 shallots, finely chopped
1 cup mushrooms (Portabello, morels, or chanterelles)
3/4 cup dry white wine
Kosher salt and black pepper to taste
3/4 cup veal stock
2 puff pastry shells, brushed with egg yolk

Place pastry shells on a cookie sheet and cook according to package directions.

Melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add shallots and cook until wilted, about five minutes. Add snails and mushrooms; cook for three minutes. Add wine, salt, and pepper; simmer for three minutes. Add veal stock; simmer for five minutes. Remove from heat.

Remove tops from pastry shells. Place six snails, along with mushrooms, shallots, and sauce in each pastry shell. Put filled shells and tops into oven until warmed, about three to four minutes. Serve hot.

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Peppercorn Filet Mignon

The combination of freshly cracked black pepper and unsalted butter with the marinated filet makes this a winning entrée. Serve the filet rare to medium-rare. Use an instant-read thermometer for perfectly cooked filets.



2 (6-ounce) filet mignons
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon minced garlic
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
Kosher salt to taste

In a small bowl, combine the balsamic vinegar, garlic, and olive oil. Mix together well.

Arrange the filets in a shallow casserole dish. Spread the marinade over the filets and marinate, refrigerated and covered, at least two hours, turning often. Remove filets from marinade and discard marinade.

Spread cracked black pepper onto a small plate and press filet into peppercorns, coating completely. Turn and repeat on second side. Season filet with salt to taste.

Preheat grill for medium high direct cooking and grill filets four to six minutes per side or to an internal temperature of 130° F. for medium-rare. Scrape excess pepper off the filets, tent with foil, and keep warm in a low oven until service.

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Mushroom Sauce

Any combination of mushrooms may be used for this sauce although Portabello mushrooms add a rich flavor and texture to the sauce.

3 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 Portobello mushrooms, cut into 3/8-inch dice
1 (16-ounce) can reduced sodium beef broth
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste

In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, reduce the beef stock by one-quarter. Remove from heat and reserve.

In a medium skillet over medium heat, melt two tablespoons of butter. Add the garlic and mushrooms and cook until softened.

Mix the cornstarch with one tablespoon of water. Add the sautéed mushrooms, crushed red pepper flakes, and cornstarch slurry to the broth, set the saucepan over low heat, and stir until the broth thickens. Whisk in the remaining butter just before serving.

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Grilled Asparagus

Grilling asparagus, instead of steaming, allows the sugars to caramelize giving the vegetable a rich, deep flavor. A sprinkling of sesame seeds adds a little crunch to the bite. When grilling asparagus, use the thicker stalks rather than the thin ones.



1/2 pound fresh asparagus (12 spears)
3 tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 1/2 teaspoons dill weed
Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds

Trim off the tough bottom of the spear by bending it gently until it snaps at its natural point of tenderness (about two-thirds of the way down the spear). Place trimmed asparagus in casserole dish.

In a mixing bowl, combine the lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, and dill weed. Pour over the asparagus and marinate at least one hour, turning often.

Grill over hot coals, turning often, until just crunchy, about five to seven minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

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Lemon Aioli

1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1/2 cup good-quality mayonnaise
1 clove garlic, minced
Pinch ground cayenne pepper
Kosher salt, to taste

In a small mixing bowl, combine all the ingredients. Refrigerate at least one hour before using.

Parmesan Garlic Roasted Potatoes

What could be better with a filet mignon than a baked potato? This method makes for a unique presentation that looks like a lot of work but really isn't.

2 large Russet potatoes
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 teaspoon sweet paprika
1 tablespoon roasted garlic purée
Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 425° F.

Peel the potatoes and cut a narrow slice from the bottom of each potato so that the potato will not roll. Place two long handled wooden spoons on each side of the potato lengthwise. Slice each potato crosswise, making 1/4-inch slices. As you peel the potatoes, drop them into the cold water to prevent discoloring.

(Potatoes may be prepared in advanced to this point and held in cold water to prevent discoloring until ready to bake. Completely dry potatoes before baking.)

In a small bowl, mix Parmesan cheese, bread crumbs, one tablespoon of olive oil, paprika, roasted garlic purée, salt, and black pepper. Brush potatoes with the remaining tablespoon of olive oil and pat the bread crumb mixture on top of each potato. Place potatoes in a lightly greased casserole dish; cover with foil, and bake 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake an additional 20 to 30 minutes or until tender. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with parsley.

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Plate Presentation



Serve escargot as an appetizer.

Drizzle mushroom sauce around plate. Place filet atop toast piece on service plate and nappe with sauce. Plate roasted potato and asparagus. Drizzle aioli onto asparagus. Garnish plate with chopped parsley and chopped fresh tarragon.
