



Menu du Jour

A Special Dinner For Two

Stuffed Artichoke Hearts

Thai Spring Rolls

Paired with Starry Night Russian River Chardonnay 2001

Hickory Smoked Cornish Hens

Paired with Trimbach Gewürztraminer 2001

Crawfish Maquechoux

Sautéed Green Beans and Baby Carrots

Caramel Walnut Chocolate Torte

Paired with Gold Digger Riesling Ice Wine 2001

Stuffed Artichoke Hearts

- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 large artichokes
- 2 tablespoons chopped prosciutto (about one ounce)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon-style mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Stir lemon juice into three cups of cold water in a medium bowl. Wash artichokes and trim until you reach the core of pale inner leaves. Cut off the sharp tips of the remaining leaves and slice off the stem near the base; reserve stem. Trim the sides and base of the artichoke and, using a grapefruit spoon, remove the choke. Place the artichoke bottoms into the lemon water to prevent discoloration.

Drain the artichoke bottoms. Bring water to boiling in medium saucepan. Add the artichoke bottoms. Reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 20 to 25 minutes or until the artichoke bottoms can be pierced easily with a fork. Remove artichokes from saucepan and drain on paper towels.

To prepare the filling, peel the reserved stems. Dip stems in lemon water, and then coarsely chop. Place the chopped artichoke stems, prosciutto, garlic, mustard, pepper, and olive oil in a small bowl and mix well to incorporate. Spoon about two tablespoons of filling onto each artichoke bottom, mounding the filling slightly. (Recipe may be prepared one day ahead and held, refrigerated and covered. Bring artichokes to room temperature before continuing.)



Preheat broiler. Transfer artichokes to a baking sheet. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Broil for two to three minutes or until the cheese is melted. Serve on chilled salad plate of mixed field greens.

Thai Spring Rolls

1 (2-ounce) package bean thread noodles
1/2 pound shrimp
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon chopped Shiitake mushroom
2 tablespoons fish sauce
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1 tablespoon coarsely chopped garlic
1/4 cup finely chopped shallots
1/2 pound ground pork
1 package spring roll wrappers
Mint leaves

Place the bean thread noodles in a large bowl, cover with boiling water and soak until softened, about 30 minutes. Peel, devein, and coarsely chop shrimp.

Coat a small skillet with a little oil and warm over medium heat. Pour in one fourth of the eggs, tipping pan to create a thin sheet, and cook until opaque. Repeat with remaining eggs in three batches. When sheets are cool, stack and slice into long shreds.

Drain the bean noodles and shape into a log. Cut into two-inch lengths. Combine the noodles and the egg shreds in a large mixing bowl.

Combine fish sauce, pepper, and sugar in a small bowl. Heat a wok or large sauté pan over medium heat, add one tablespoon of oil. When hot, add the garlic and stir-fry 15 seconds. Add the shallot and stir fry until wilted. Add the pork and cook until no longer pink, about three minutes. Add the shrimp and cook until opaque. Add the fish sauce mixture and mushrooms; mix well. Remove from heat, combine with eggs and bean noodles, cover with food film and chill mixture in the refrigerator at least 30 minutes.

Place a heaping tablespoon of filling the center of a spring roll wrapper and add two or three mint leaves. Roll wrapper tightly and seal with water. Continue rolling until all the filling is used. (Rolls may be prepared one day ahead and held, refrigerated and covered. Bring to room temperature before continuing.)

Pour cooking oil into a wok to a depth of three inches. Heat over medium heat to 375° F. Cook three spring rolls at a time, turning occasionally, and frying until golden brown, about four to five minutes. Remove and drain well. Repeat with remaining spring rolls. Garnish with mint



leaves and serve with sweet-hot garlic sauce. (This recipe makes 12 to 14 rolls that may be frozen for future use.)

Hickory Smoked Cornish Hens

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon crushed dried rosemary
1/2 teaspoon dried sage
2 Cornish game hens, giblets removed
1 teaspoon granulated garlic
Kosher salt
Cracked black pepper
16 whole sage leaves
1 1/2 cups hickory chips

Cover hickory chips with water in medium bowl; soak 30 minutes.

Prepare a compound butter by stirring together butter, rosemary, and sage in small bowl; set aside.

Gently loosen skin over breast of each game hen and rub about a tablespoon of the compound butter under skin. Reserve remaining butter for basting. Tie legs together. Season skin of game hens with granulated garlic, salt, and pepper.

Heat one side of gas grill to medium and place a drip pan on the opposite side or prepare Grill Dome for medium-high indirect cooking. Cover hot coals with drained hickory chips. (If using a gas grill, put chips in a smoker tray or an aluminum foil pouch with a few holes poked in it.)

Place game hens on grill over drip pan. Cook, covered, for 40 minutes. Baste with butter mixture. Continue smoking until juices run clear, another 30 to 40 minutes. (Hens are done when the thigh meat has an internal temperature of 175° F. and the breast has a 160° F. internal temperature.)

Remove hens from grill, tent with aluminum foil, and allow them to rest for ten minutes before serving.



Crawfish Maquechoux

2 very ripe tomatoes
1 jalapeno pepper
1 small yellow onion, diced
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
1 rib celery, diced
2 green onions, diced
1/2 cup sliced white button mushrooms
1 teaspoon minced garlic
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 pound crawfish tails
1 (15-ounce) can sweet corn
Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Blanch the tomatoes and chili pepper in hot water. Remove and cool. Peel, seed, and chop the tomatoes. Seed and chop the chili pepper. Combine the tomatoes, chili pepper, and onion in a bowl. Set aside.

Heat the butter in a large, heavy pot over medium heat. Add the tomatoes, chili pepper, and onion; cook for one minute. Add the bell pepper, celery, green onions, mushrooms, and garlic. Cook, stirring, until tender, about 10 minutes. Add the flour and whisk to blend. Cook, stirring, for about four minutes. Add the crawfish and cook for about five minutes. Add the corn and cook, stirring often, until the corn is tender, about 10 to 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and cayenne.



Sautéed Green Beans & Baby Carrots

1 cup peeled baby carrots
1 1/2 cups green beans
1 teaspoon unsalted butter
1/3 cup chicken stock
1 teaspoon cornstarch
Kosher salt
Cracked black pepper

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, cook carrots in boiling salted water for two minutes. Add green beans and cook until carrots and peas are crisp-tender, about another two minutes. Drain and shock in an ice bath to stop cooking and set color. (May be prepared one day ahead; cover and refrigerate.)

Over medium heat melt butter in a medium sauté pan. Add vegetables; sauté to coat. Mix broth and cornstarch in small bowl; add to skillet. Cook until vegetables are heated through and liquid thickens, about two minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Caramel-Walnut Chocolate Torte

3/4 cup unsalted butter
3 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup walnuts, coarsely chopped, divided
1/4 cup bottled caramel topping

In a medium saucepan, melt the butter and chocolate over low heat. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the sugar. Add the beaten eggs gradually, mixing well. Stir in the vanilla. Add the flour and 2/3 cup of the walnuts (reserving the remaining 1/3 cup) and mix well.

Spread the batter evenly into a generously buttered nine-inch springform pan. Sprinkle the reserved walnuts evenly over the top. Warm caramel sauce and pour ribbons of the caramel over the top.

Bake in a preheated 350° F. oven for about 35 minutes, or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean on the sides, but the torte is still slightly moist in the center.

Cool the torte for 20 minutes; then release the sides from the springform pan.