



July 29, 2015

Classic Appetizers with a Tasty Twist

Long summer nights are best spent outside in your backyard, laughing over drinks and small bites with good friends. Delight your guests with these simple appetizers that come with a delicious twist.

Bring a little Asian flair to your next wing night with our Five-Spice Chicken Wings. The wings are dressed in a sticky glaze made with soy sauce, sugar, ginger and Chinese five-spice powder, an aromatic blend of cinnamon, star anise, fennel seeds, orange peel and Sichuan peppercorn.

Instead of bruschetta, try our Grilled Artichoke Crostini. Marinated artichoke hearts, tomato, bell peppers and cheese are spooned on top of thick baguette slices before being quickly grilled or broiled, giving the crostini a slightly smoky and charred flavour.

Oysters are very popular these days, but can be a pain to shuck. Our Mussels with Garlic Butter, on the other hand, can be ready in less than 15 minutes. Serve with the same white wine in the garlic butter for a perfect pairing, or make some thick cut fries for the Belgian classic, moules et frites.

FIVE-SPICE CHICKEN WINGS

2 lb (1 kg) chicken wing drumettes
2/3 cup (150 mL) soy sauce
1/4 cup (50 mL) sugar
2 tbsp (25 mL) dry sherry
4 slices fresh ginger, minced
2 tsp (10 mL) Chinese five-spice powder

Place chicken in a large plastic bag. Combine remaining ingredients and pour over chicken; toss carefully. Refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. Bake at 425°F (220°C) on a rack in shallow pan for 30 - 40 minutes or until well browned and glazed. May be frozen for up to 6 weeks. Makes about 2 dozen pieces

GRILLED ARTICHOKE CROSTINI

1 baguette



1 jar (6 oz/170 mL) marinated artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
3/4 cup (175 mL) shredded mozzarella cheese
3 tbsp (40 mL) finely diced red bell pepper
1/4 cup (50 mL) diced seeded tomato
2 tbsp (25 mL) grated Parmesan cheese

Cut bread into 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) thick slices. Lightly toast 1 side of each slice over low heat on natural gas barbecue. Combine artichokes and next 3 ingredients. Top toasted side of each bread slice with some of the mixture. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Heat bread, cheese side up, over low heat on natural gas barbecue until underside of bread is toasted and cheese is melted. Makes approximately 1 1/2 dozen slices

MUSSELS WITH GARLIC BUTTER

3/4 cup (175 mL) butter
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1/3 cup (75 mL) chopped fresh parsley
2 tbsp (25 mL) dry white wine
1/4 tsp (1 mL) freshly ground pepper
4 dozen mussels, rinsed and scrubbed

On a side burner of natural gas barbecue or directly on grid, melt butter in a small saucepan. Add garlic and cook 2 minutes. Stir in parsley, wine and pepper; cook 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Place mussels, rounded side down, on a grill topper. With lid down, cook mussels over medium heat on natural gas barbecue until shells open, about 5 minutes. Discard any unopened mussels. Divide butter mixture among 4 ramekins or small bowls and serve with mussels. Serves 4.