



December 30, 2015

Ring in 2016 with an Elegant Dinner Party

What better way to give a proper send-off to 2015 than a quiet dinner with your closest family and friends before joining the crowds for the countdown?

Start off the meal with our Mushroom Panzanella Salad. Marble rye bread cubes add a little bit of fun to this simple dish, which is dressed with a luxurious dressing made with truffle oil, honey, garlic and lemon.

Roasted chestnuts combine with cinnamon and ginger spiced apples in our earthy and sweet Chestnut and Spiced Apple Soup, which is guaranteed to warm you and your guests inside and out.

For the main course and dessert, check out our new Holiday Collection cookbook, which is chock full of delicious ideas to tantalize your taste buds. Happy New Year!

MUSHROOM PANZANELLA SALAD

Ingredients:

4 cups marble rye bread cubes (1 inch)
2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
2 cups quartered mushrooms
1 cup cubed red onion (1 inch)
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp truffle oil
1 tbsp liquid honey
5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 cup shaved Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Combine bread cubes, tomatoes, mushrooms, red onion and olive oil in a bowl; toss until coated.
3. Place bread cube mixture in a single layer in a parchment paper-lined large rimmed baking sheet.
4. Bake for 15 minutes.
5. Cool bread cube mixture slightly in pan on a rack.
6. Meanwhile, to prepare dressing, whisk together lemon juice, truffle oil, honey and garlic until blended.
7. Combine warm bread cube mixture, Parmesan cheese and parsley in a bowl.
8. Add dressing and toss to combine. Serve immediately. *Serves 8.*

Cook's Note: Marble rye is a bread made by combining two different rye bread doughs. A light rye bread dough and a pumpernickel dough are often used. The bread has a marbled appearance due to the light and dark doughs. Look for it in the bakery section of large grocery stores and at specialty bakeries. If desired, any rye bread may be used instead.

CHESTNUT SOUP WITH SPICED APPLES

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup salted butter
- 3 cups vacuum-packed peeled roasted whole chestnuts
- 2 Gala apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 3/4 cup chopped celery
- 2/3 cup chopped carrot
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 6 cups no-salt-added chicken broth
- 2 cups whipping cream
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp liquid honey
- 1 tsp nutmeg

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1/2 tsp salt
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper

Method:

1. Melt butter in a non-reactive Dutch oven over medium heat. Add chestnuts, apples, onions, celery, carrot and garlic; sauté until vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes.
2. Increase heat to medium-high. Add wine and cook, stirring, until wine is reduced by half.
3. Add broth and stir to combine. Bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes.
5. Stir in cream and cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
6. Purée mixture in batches in a blender, filling blender no more than half full for each batch.
7. Add lemon juice, honey, nutmeg, salt and cayenne pepper; stir to combine.
8. Serve topped with Spiced Apples. *Serves 8 as a starter.*

Cook's Note: If vacuum-packed chestnuts are not available, drained canned peeled whole chestnuts may be used. Look for either of these products in specialty food stores.

You may also roast your own chestnuts. They are usually available in grocery stores during the holiday season. To roast chestnuts, use a sharp knife and score an "x" on the flat side of each chestnut. Place chestnuts in a baking pan and sprinkle them with water. Roast, covered, at 400°F for 15 minutes. Remove pan from oven and sprinkle chestnuts with additional water. Continue roasting, covered, for 15 minutes. Wrap chestnuts in a clean tea towel to steam. Peel chestnuts while they are still warm.