

“SPRING SPECIALS”

This week features some simply delicious recipes, some simply luxurious recipes, and some not-so-simple delicacies (like a dark and white chocolate mint cake!) Enjoy the fresher flavors of these early spring specials!



SIMPLE LOBSTER AND CRAB FEAST



CROSTINI WITH ROASTED GARLIC HUMMUS



BLACK AND WHITE CHOCOLATE MINT CAKE

WHAT'S FOR DINNER

- Fire Roasted Veggies and Shrimp
- Pan Seared Lemon Cayenne Chicken
- Roasted Cauliflower with Garlic and Thyme (side dish)
- Pan Seared Fish with Pine Nut and Mint Crust
- Broccoli and Cheddar Soup

EXTRAS

- Black and White Chocolate Mint Cake
- Simple Lobster and Crab Feast (in case you and your wallet are in the mood as the season ends)
- Crostini with Roasted Garlic Hummus

PLANNING NOTES

- Chicken stock is needed for Broccoli and Cheddar Soup, so plan ahead if you'd like to make homemade stock (recommended).
- Soak beans overnight for Roasted Garlic Hummus, unless you are planning to use canned beans.

FIRE ROASTED VEGGIES AND SHRIMP

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15-20 minutes

**This recipe required metal or bamboo skewers.*

Ingredients:

4 cloves of garlic

1/2 cup basil

Salt and Pepper

1/2 cup butter, at room temperature

1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

4 ears of corn

4 red bell peppers

1 pound raw shrimp, peeled and deveined

1 red onion, chopped into cubes

Preheat broil setting in oven or outdoor grill.

Place garlic, basil, salt and pepper, to taste, butter, and oil in mini food processor and pulse until smooth, pureed paste forms. Brush corn with garlic and herb glaze and place on a baking dish. Brush bell peppers with glaze and place on baking sheet or cook directly on grill if using outdoor grill. Place shrimp and onions on metal or bamboo skewers brush with garlic and herb glaze. Roast corn, peppers, shrimp, and onions for 15-20 minutes under broiler or on outdoor grill, until just beginning to blacken, then serve with remaining basil puree.

PAN-SEARED LEMON CAYENNE CHICKEN

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

6-8 boneless chicken thighs and/or breasts flattened to 1/4-inch thickness

Salt and Pepper

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1/4 cup lemon juice

1/4 cup dry white wine

1/4 cup butter

Heat oil in large skillet. Season both sides of chicken with salt and pepper, and sprinkle with cayenne pepper, according to spice level desired. Sear chicken in pan for 4-6 minutes per side, until thoroughly cooked and golden. Transfer chicken to serving dish. Stir lemon juice, wine, and butter into pan drippings and let simmer for 3 minutes. Pour butter sauce over chicken to serve.

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER WITH GARLIC AND THYME

Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

1 head of cauliflower
2-4 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Salt and Pepper
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
2 tablespoons thyme leaves, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons butter

Preheat oven to 375°

Place cauliflower in baking dish. Rub cauliflower evenly with oil and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Sprinkle garlic and thyme evenly over cauliflower and dot with butter. Bake for 30 minutes until soft and golden brown on edges and serve.

SIMPLE LOBSTER AND KING CRAB FEAST

Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 8-10 minutes

Ingredients:

1 cup dry white wine
1 cup water
1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2 lobsters and/or desired amount of King Crab legs
1/2 cup butter
2 lemons, cut into quarters

Bring wine, water, and oil to simmer in large, flat-sided saucepan. Place lobster and/or crab in pan and cover for 8-10 minutes until lobsters are bright red. You may also skip this step and place lobster and/or crab directly on an outdoor grill. Melt butter in serving dish and serve lobster with melted butter and fresh lemons.

PAN SEARED FISH WITH PINE NUT AND MINT CRUST

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10-14 minutes

Ingredients:

1 cup dry breadcrumbs
1/2 cup pine nuts
zest of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon mint, finely chopped
Salt and Pepper
2 eggs
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1-2 pounds white fish, such as sole, cod,
sea bass, halibut
1/4 cup butter

Place breadcrumbs, pine nuts, lemon zest, mint, and salt and pepper, to taste, in mini food processor and pulse until finely ground, then place in large deep dish. Whisk eggs and lemon juice with salt and pepper, to taste, in large bowl. Carefully dredge fish in egg mixture, shaking to remove excess. Coat fish with breadcrumb mixture, patting to coat well. Heat butter in large skillet. Fry fish for 5-7 minutes per side until fish is flaky and crust is golden.

BROCCOLI AND CHEDDAR SOUP WITH ROASTED RED PEPPERS

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Note: If you don't have an immersion blender, take a few cups of soup, puree in blender, then add back to soup.

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil, divided
2 red bell peppers
1/4 cup butter
1 medium onion, roughly chopped
1 cup celery, chopped
2 cups potatoes, skinned and chopped
2 cloves of garlic, minced
Salt and Pepper
Dash of Cayenne pepper
1/4 cup flour or arrowroot powder
6 cups chicken stock
3 cups broccoli, roughly chopped
2 cups cauliflower, chopped
1/4 cup basil, finely chopped, plus extra for garnish
1 tablespoon thyme, finely chopped, plus extra for garnish
3 cups white cheddar cheese, grated
1 cup cream

Preheat broiler setting in oven.

Rub bell peppers with 2 tablespoons oil and place in baking dish wrapped in foil. Place under broiler for 5-10 minutes, turning halfway, until skin is lightly blackened. Remove from oven and set aside.

Heat 2 tablespoons oil and butter in large stockpot or Dutch oven. Add onion and sauté for 3-5 minutes until translucent. Add celery, potatoes, garlic, salt and pepper, to taste, and cayenne pepper. Sauté for 8-10 minutes, until beginning to brown. Stir flour into mixture for 3 minutes, until flour is lightly toasted. Stir stock into mixture and bring to a simmer. Add broccoli, cauliflower, basil, cilantro, thyme, and rosemary and bring to a simmer for 6 minutes, until vegetables are soft. Reduce heat to low and stir in cheese and cream until melted. Use an immersion blender to blend 1/3 of the soup into a smooth puree. Continue to simmer for 10 minutes, stirring often until thick and creamy. Serve garnished with fresh herbs.

CROSTINI WITH ROASTED GARLIC HUMMUS

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

*If using dry beans, soak overnight before making recipe.

Ingredients:

2 whole heads of garlic
Salt and Pepper
6-8 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil, divided
1 cup (soaked overnight), or 1 can cannellini or white kidney beans
1/4 cup basil
1 French Baguette

Preheat oven to 375°

Slice tops off of garlic heads. Place garlic in foil and drizzle each head of garlic with 1 tablespoon Extra Virgin Olive Oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste. Cover garlic in a foil pouch and roast for 35-40 minutes until soft. Squeeze out garlic and place in mini food processor with beans, basil, salt and pepper, to taste, and pulse until pureed. Continue to pulse while adding 2-4 tablespoons oil until smooth and creamy.

Slice baguette on a diagonal into 1/2-inch thick slices. Place on baking sheet and lightly drizzle with oil and a little salt. Bake for 5-7 minutes until golden and crisp on edges. Serve crostini with garlic hummus.

BLACK AND WHITE CHOCOLATE MINT CAKE

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 20-25 minutes

Ingredients:

For Filling:

1/3 cup cream

8 oz. white chocolate

1/4 cup butter

1 teaspoon peppermint extract

For Cake:

8 oz. bittersweet chocolate

1/4 cup butter

5 egg yolks

5 egg whites

2/3 cup sugar, divided

For Frosting:

8 oz. bittersweet chocolate

1 cup cream

2 oz. white chocolate

1 tablespoon coconut oil

To prepare filling: Heat cream in saucepan, but do not let simmer. Stir chocolate, butter, and peppermint extract into cream until blended and smooth. Let chill in refrigerator for 20-30 minutes until thickened.

To prepare cake:

Preheat oven to 300°. Heat chocolate in double boiler set up (*place a glass bowl over simmering water without letting bowl touch water*). When chocolate is melted, stir in butter until smooth and melted. Beat egg yolks in large bowl with 1/3 cup sugar until light yellow and doubled in size. In a separate small bowl, beat egg whites with 1/3 cup sugar until soft peaks form. Alternately fold egg whites and chocolate in three parts into egg yolks until incorporated. Pour batter into 2, 8-10 inch cake pans. Bake for 20-25 minutes until completely cooked. Let cool. Meanwhile, prepare frosting.

To prepare frosting and frost cake:

Melt bittersweet chocolate in double boiler set up and stir in cream until smooth. Let chill for 5-10 minutes, until thickened enough so that it drizzles in ribbons when stirred. Melt white chocolate and whisk in oil until smooth. Place cakes on serving plate, spreading filling evenly between the two cakes. Evenly frost cake with bittersweet chocolate frosting. Decorate top of cake with white chocolate mixture. Let cake chill for 30 minutes before serving.