

Game plan

Up to 1 month ahead:

Prepare the soup (but don't add the cream) and freeze. Or make the soup up to 3 days ahead and refrigerate it.

Up to 2 days ahead:

Make the pork glaze.

Prepare the charlotte filling; refrigerate.

Up to 1 day ahead:

Slice the cabbage and bacon; wrap and refrigerate.

Assemble and bake the charlottes; cover and refrigerate.

Prepare the soup garnishes.

Toast the hazelnuts for the hors d'oeuvre.

Two hours before guests arrive:

Put the roast in the oven.

Make the cabbage; cover and set aside.

Prepare the potatoes for roasting.

One hour before:

Make the apple mixture for the hors d'oeuvre.

Put the potatoes in the oven.

Just before each course:

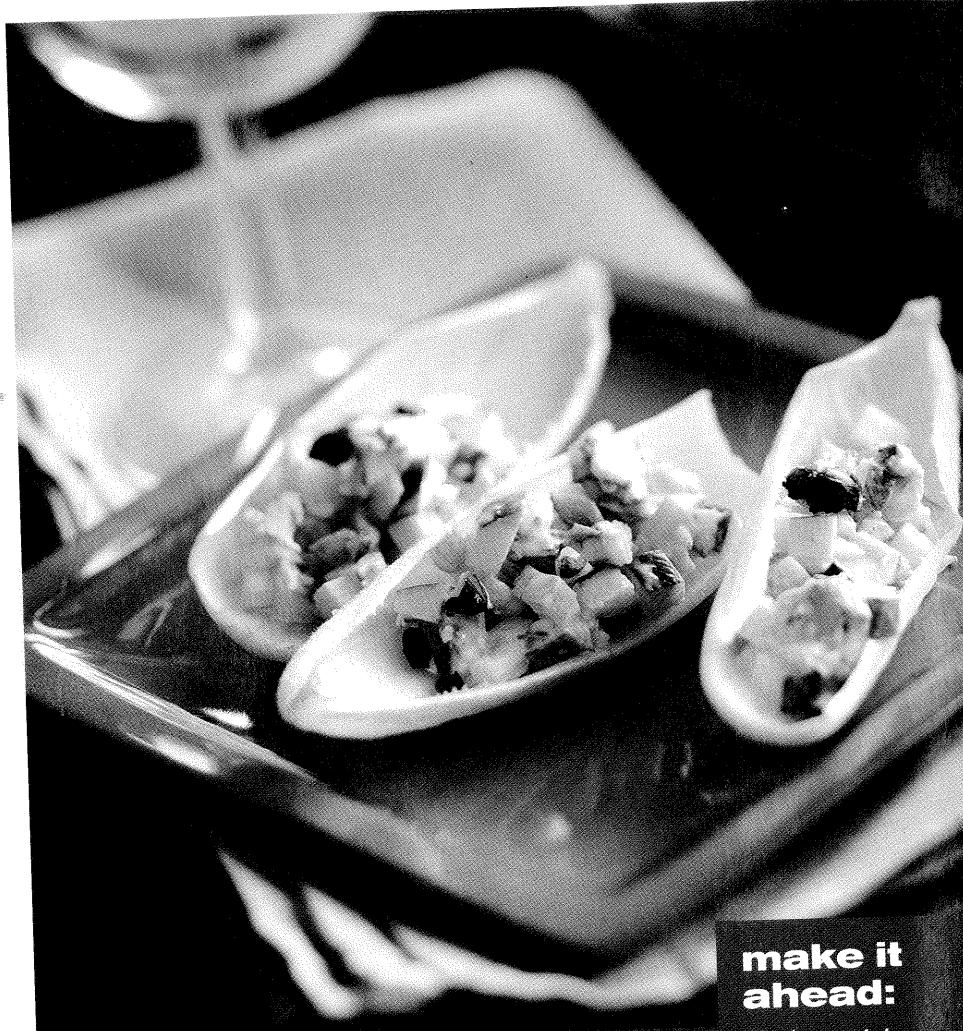
Assemble the hors d'oeuvre.

Reheat and finish the soup.

Pull the roast out and then the potatoes when done.

Gently reheat the cabbage.

Warm the charlottes and unmold when warm.



make it ahead:

The lemon juice in the apple filling slows down browning, so you can make the apple mixture ahead and then quickly assemble this nibble once guests have arrived.

Endive with Apple, Blue Cheese & Toasted Hazelnuts

Yields about 20 hors d'oeuvre.

Put these nibbles out as guests arrive so the endive is crisp and fresh.

1/2 large tart-sweet red apple, such as Braeburn or Gala, unpeeled and cut into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch dice

2/3 cup crumbled blue cheese (about 1 1/2 oz.)

2/3 cup finely chopped celery (1 large rib)

1 1/2 Tbs. mayonnaise

1 1/2 tsp. fresh lemon juice

Kosher salt

3 Belgian endives, leaves separated; smallest saved for another use

1/2 cup hazelnuts, toasted and coarsely chopped

In a medium bowl, combine the apple, blue cheese, celery, mayonnaise, and lemon juice. Stir gently to combine. Season to taste with salt.

To assemble, mound a small spoonful of the apple mixture onto each endive leaf. Sprinkle with the hazelnuts and serve.



make it ahead:

You can prepare the soup up to three days ahead (to just before you add the cream), or it can be frozen for up to a month. When ready to serve, heat the soup and add the heavy cream and garnishes.

Wild Rice & Mushroom Soup with Almonds

Yields 8½ to 9 cups soup; serves six generously.

If you can't find a ham hock, just leave it out—the soup will still taste terrific.

1 Tbs. olive oil

6 oz. bacon (about 7 slices), preferably applewood-smoked, thinly sliced crosswise

1 lb. button mushrooms, stems trimmed; wiped clean and quartered (about 5 cups)

1 large yellow onion, cut into medium dice (about 2 cups)

3 medium ribs celery, cut into medium dice (about 1 cup)

1 large carrot, cut into medium dice (about 1 cup)

½ cup wild rice

6 cups homemade or lower-salt chicken broth; more if needed

1 smoked ham hock (optional)

15 sprigs fresh thyme, 10 sprigs fresh flat-leaf parsley, 6 sprigs fresh sage, and 1 bay leaf, tied together with kitchen twine

5 Tbs. unsalted butter

½ cup unbleached all-purpose flour

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ cups heavy cream

FOR THE GARNISH:

2 oz. (½ cup) slivered almonds, toasted

¼ cup thinly sliced chives

Heat the oil in a heavy-based soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the bacon and cook, stirring occasionally, until the fat is rendered and the bacon is crisp, about 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms, stir well to coat in the bacon fat, and then spread out in an even layer. Brown the mushrooms on one side without disturbing them, 4 to 6 minutes. Stir in the onion, celery, and carrot; let cook until the onions are soft, about 5 minutes. Add the rice, stirring to coat. Stir in the chicken broth, ham hock (if using), and herb bundle. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook, uncovered, until the rice is tender but still firm, 30 to 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a

small heavy-based saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the flour and whisk constantly until the mixture, called a roux, darkens to a caramel color, 2 to 3 minutes. Set aside.

Once the rice is cooked, discard the herbs. If you've used a ham hock, fish it out, and when cool enough to handle, take the meat off and return the shredded meat to the soup. Discard the bone. Return the soup to a boil and thoroughly whisk in the roux a little at a time. This amount of roux should thicken the soup perfectly. You can adjust the amount to your taste if it's too thick or thin, but keep in mind that the cream you'll add later will thin the soup. Season with salt and pepper.

When ready to serve, heat the soup first and then add the cream. (If you like a lighter soup, you may not want to add all the cream.) Taste for seasoning and adjust if needed, and thin with broth, if you like. Garnish each serving with the toasted almonds and sliced chives.

Mustard, Sage & Maple Glaze

Yields about 1½ cups.

You could also use this glaze on pork tenderloin or even roast chicken; put it on chicken halfway through cooking.

- 1 Tbs. olive oil**
- 1 medium-small yellow onion (6 oz.), cut into medium dice (to yield 1 cup)**
- 4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped**
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh sage (about 1½ bunches)**
- ½ cup Dijon mustard**
- ½ cup pure maple syrup**
- 1 Tbs. soy sauce**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**
- Pinch freshly ground black pepper**

Heat the oil in a medium sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion softens, about 5 minutes. Set aside until cooled to room temperature. Purée the onion and garlic with all of the remaining ingredients in a blender or food processor until somewhat smooth. Keep covered in the refrigerator until ready to use on the pork roast.



make it ahead:

The glaze at left can be made up to two days ahead and refrigerated.

tip: When buying the pork, be sure the backbone (called the chine bone) has been removed, so you'll be able to slice the roast between the rib bones. If the butcher does it for you, ask that he or she not scrape the bones clean (this is called frenching) since most people love to chew the crusted meat and crackling pork fat off the rib bones.

Mustard, Sage & Maple-Glazed Pork Roast with Garlic-Roasted Potatoes

Serves six.

The glaze goes on after the roast has cooked for about an hour.

FOR THE PORK:
One 6-bone center-cut pork roast (about 5½ lb.), chine bone removed
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Mustard, Sage & Maple Glaze (recipe at left)

FOR THE POTATOES:
2 lb. medium red or yellow potatoes, rinsed
1 head garlic, cloves peeled
3 Tbs. olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 Tbs. unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
1 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Position racks in the center and bottom of the oven and heat the oven to 425°F. Let the roast sit at room temperature

The roast recipe is timed so that the potatoes can cook with the pork—one less thing to worry about.

while the oven heats. Season the meat generously with salt and pepper. Put the pork in a small roasting pan, bone side down, and roast on the center oven rack to an internal temperature of 115°F, 50 to 60 minutes. Remove the roast from the oven and let it rest for 20 minutes. (This rest will give the juiciest results.)

Meanwhile, shortly before the pork hits 115°F, cut the potatoes lengthwise into wedges about 1½ to 1¾ inches wide at their thickest part. In a medium bowl, toss the potatoes with the garlic cloves, olive oil, 1 tsp. salt, and several grinds of pepper. Arrange in a roasting pan or rimmed baking sheet, one cut side down, evenly spaced. Sprinkle with the pieces of butter. When you take the roast out of the oven, put the potatoes on the bottom rack and reduce the oven temperature to 350°F.

After 20 minutes of resting, cover the roast evenly with the mustard glaze and return it to the center oven rack. At this time, turn the potatoes with a metal spatula onto their other cut side. Roast the pork until the internal temperature is 140°F. Roast the potatoes until they're golden and crisp on the outside and fork-tender inside. Both should take about 30 minutes (check the potatoes at 20 minutes and, if necessary for even browning, flip them back to their other cut side). Transfer the roast to a carving board and tent with foil.

Let the pork rest for at least 20 minutes before carving. Set the potatoes aside in a warm place, uncovered (so they stay crisp and don't steam), until ready to serve. To serve, slice the roast between the bones into individual chops. Toss the potatoes with the chopped parsley. Arrange the meat and potatoes on a platter with the cabbage.

Sweet-Sour Red Cabbage

Yields 5 cups; serves six.

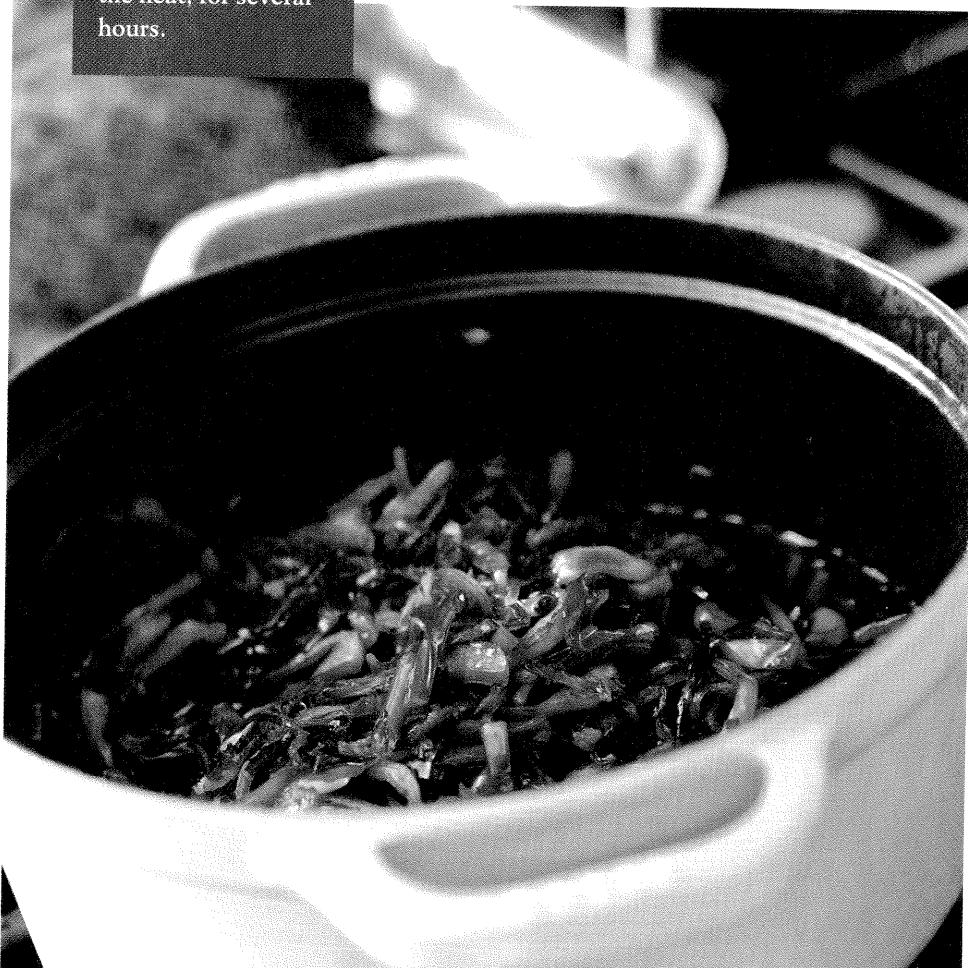
The sweet flavors of this side dish go so well with the pork; its sour-tangy element highlights the flavors in the glaze.

**1 Tbs. olive oil
6 oz. bacon, (about 7 slices) preferably applewood smoked, thinly cut crosswise
1 large yellow onion (12 oz.), thinly sliced (to yield 2 cups)
1 small head red cabbage (about 2 lb.), cored, cut into eighths, and thinly sliced crosswise (to yield about 8 cups)
1 cup dark brown sugar
¼ cup red-wine vinegar
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

In a 5- or 6-qt. Dutch oven, heat the oil over high heat, add the bacon, and cook, stirring occasionally, until its fat is rendered and the bacon is crisp, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until soft and lightly colored, about 3 minutes. Add the cabbage and cook, stirring regularly, until just wilted, about 5 minutes. Add the brown sugar and vinegar, stir well, and let cook until the cabbage is wilted but still has a bit of crunch left to it, about 5 minutes. Season with ¾ tsp. salt and several grinds of pepper. Adjust the acidity or sweetness with a touch more vinegar or sugar if you like, and add more salt and pepper if needed.

make it ahead:

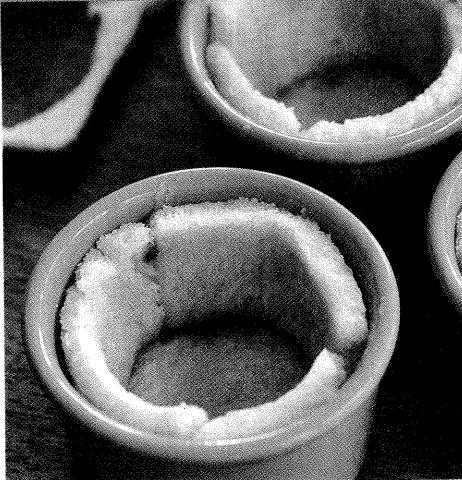
The cooked cabbage will hold well, in the covered pot off the heat, for several hours.





make it ahead:

You can prepare these completely ahead. Cover (still in the molds) with plastic and refrigerate. To reheat, let them warm at room temperature before heating at 350°F for about 12 minutes.



tip: For a perfect fit, trace around the ramekin bottom with a paring knife to cut a round of bread to line each ramekin. The bread on the sides needn't come all the way up to the top, but it should be close to the rim.

Individual Apple Charlottes

Serves eight.

This recipe yields more servings than the rest of the menu recipes do, but having a few extra of these delicious charlottes is never a bad thing.

FOR THE FILLING:

3 lb. Braeburn or Golden Delicious apples (6 or 7 apples)
1 lemon, rinsed
1 vanilla bean
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup raisins
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup golden raisins
2½ oz. (5 Tbs.) unsalted butter
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
1 Tbs. Calvados (or other apple brandy)

FOR THE CRUST:

1 loaf sliced white bread (Pepperidge Farm Classic White works well; you may want to buy an extra loaf just in case)
½ lb. (1 cup) unsalted butter
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar

Crème fraîche or vanilla ice cream for serving

Make the filling: Peel, core, and dice the apples into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces (you'll have about 6½ cups). Using a vegetable peeler, peel the zest off half of the lemon in long strips, taking care to avoid the bitter white pith (if necessary, remove any pith from the zest strips by scraping it off with a knife). Slice the vanilla bean in half lengthwise and scrape out the seeds with the back of a paring knife. In a large bowl, toss the apples, lemon zest, vanilla bean seeds and spent pod, raisins, and golden raisins.

In a 12-inch skillet or 5-qt. Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium-high heat and then add the sugar. When the sugar is fully moistened, add the apple mixture and cook, stirring almost constantly, until the apples start to release liquid and look soft on the outside (they'll still be a little crunchy inside), about 7 minutes (you want to just start the cooking process at this point while still leaving the apples crunchy). Set the mixture aside to cool slightly and then add the Calvados.

Prepare the crust: Position a rack in the middle of the oven and heat the oven to 475°F. Trim the bread crusts. Cut eight rounds to fit the bottoms of eight 8-oz. ramekins. Cut enough rectangles to line the sides. (The

bread should come to within at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of the ramekin's rim, if not the top.) Melt the butter in a medium skillet and put the sugar in a shallow dish. Brush the insides of the ramekins with butter. Generously dip both sides of each piece of bread in butter followed by sugar on one side. Lay one round in each ramekin, sugared side down. Nestle the rectangles, sugared side facing outward toward the ramekin, so they line the sides of each one.

Assemble and bake: Pick the lemon zest and vanilla bean halves out of the apple filling and fill each ramekin, pressing on the filling to get rid of air pockets. Be generous; the filling will cook down. Set the ramekins on a rimmed baking sheet (leaving a few inches between each) and cover snugly with one sheet of foil. Bake for 40 minutes. To see if the charlottes are done, run a paring knife around the side of one of the ramekins, knock on the bottom, and invert onto a plate to check the bottom; it should be nicely caramelized, and will have caramelized more than the sides. (Return it to the ramekin if not done.) If serving right away, unmold them and serve with a spoonful of crème fraîche or a scoop of vanilla ice cream on the side. If not, let them cool before covering them in plastic wrap (still in their molds) and refrigerating them. Reheat before serving in a 350°F oven until hot.

Shopping list

Fresh produce

3 large yellow onions
 2 heads garlic
 1 lb. button mushrooms
 2 lb. medium red or yellow potatoes
 3 Belgian endives
 1 small bunch celery
 1 large carrot
 1 small head red cabbage
 1 small bunch each: fresh thyme, parsley, chives
 2 bunches fresh sage
 3 lb. Braeburn or Golden Delicious apples (6 to 7)
 1 additional apple (Braeburn or Gala)
 2 lemons

Meat & dairy

One 6-bone center-cut pork roast (about 5½ lb.), chine bone removed
 12 oz. bacon, preferably applewood-smoked
 1 smoked ham hock (optional)
 2 oz. blue cheese
 1 lb. unsalted butter
 1½ cups heavy cream
Crème fraîche (or vanilla ice cream) to serve with dessert

Wine & spirits

Calvados or other apple brandy (1 Tbs.)

Other groceries

Hazelnuts ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
 Slivered almonds ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
 Raisins ($\frac{1}{3}$ cup regular and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup golden)
 2 loaves sliced white bread, preferably Pepperidge Farm Classic White
 Olive oil
 Mayonnaise
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup wild rice
 2 qt. homemade or lower-salt chicken broth
 Pure maple syrup
 Unbleached all-purpose flour
 Granulated sugar
 Dark brown sugar
 1 vanilla bean
 Soy sauce
 Red-wine vinegar
 Dijon mustard
 1 bay leaf
 Kosher salt and whole black peppercorns for grinding

What to drink

This rich and savory menu calls for deeply flavored wines that will match the intensity of the dishes. If you want to serve wine with the wild rice soup, a supple California Pinot Noir is a good choice. If you feel like spending a little more, look for a Châteauneuf-du-Pape from France. And a sweet, late-harvest Sémillon would be delicious with the charlottes.

Game plan

Up to 1 day ahead:

Make the topping for the crisp and refrigerate it.

Toast the bread for the crostini; let cool completely before storing airtight at room temperature.

A few hours ahead:

Prepare the fruit for the crisp and put it in its baking dish (or dishes); cover and refrigerate.

Peel the potatoes and cover with water in a pot.

About an hour before guests arrive:

Bake the crisps.

Combine the lemon zest and olive oil for the salmon.

Mince the shallots and combine with the lemon for the potatoes.

About 30 minutes before guests arrive:

Chop the parsley or chervil for the potatoes.

Make the mushroom crostini topping and keep in the pan on the stove off the heat.

Arrange the asparagus and salmon on the baking dish.

Just before each course:

Reheat the mushrooms and assemble the crostini.

Boil the potatoes.

Roast the salmon and asparagus.

Warm the crisp briefly in the oven, if needed.

Shaved Parmigiano not only looks great atop crostini, but it also adds a big flavor hit. Simply drag a vegetable peeler across a hunk of the cheese to get paper-thin slices.



Crostini with Sautéed Mushrooms, Mint & Parmigiano

Yields 16 crostini.

FOR THE CROSTINI:

16 baguette slices, between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick (from about half a baguette)
2 cloves garlic, cut in half
2 to 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt

FOR THE TOPPING:

2 scallions, trimmed
2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
12 oz. mixed fresh shiitake and oyster mushrooms, stemmed and thinly sliced
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice; more to taste
2 Tbs. chopped fresh mint
16 thin curls of Parmigiano-Reggiano (made with a vegetable peeler)

Make the crostini: Adjust an oven rack to 6 inches from the broiler and turn the broiler on to high. Rub one side of each bread slice with the garlic and set on a baking sheet lined with aluminum foil. Brush the garlic side with the oil and season with salt. Broil

until the bread is browned 1 to 2 minutes. Flip and broil the other side another minute. (If making ahead, let cool completely before storing airtight at room temperature.)

Make the topping:

Slice the scallions thinly, separating the green and white parts as you go. Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat for 30 seconds. Add the whites of the scallions and sauté for 30 seconds. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper, and sauté, stirring occasionally until they soften completely and brown in places, about 4 minutes. Stir in 1 tsp. lemon juice, the mint, and the scallion greens. Taste and add salt, pepper, and lemon juice as needed.

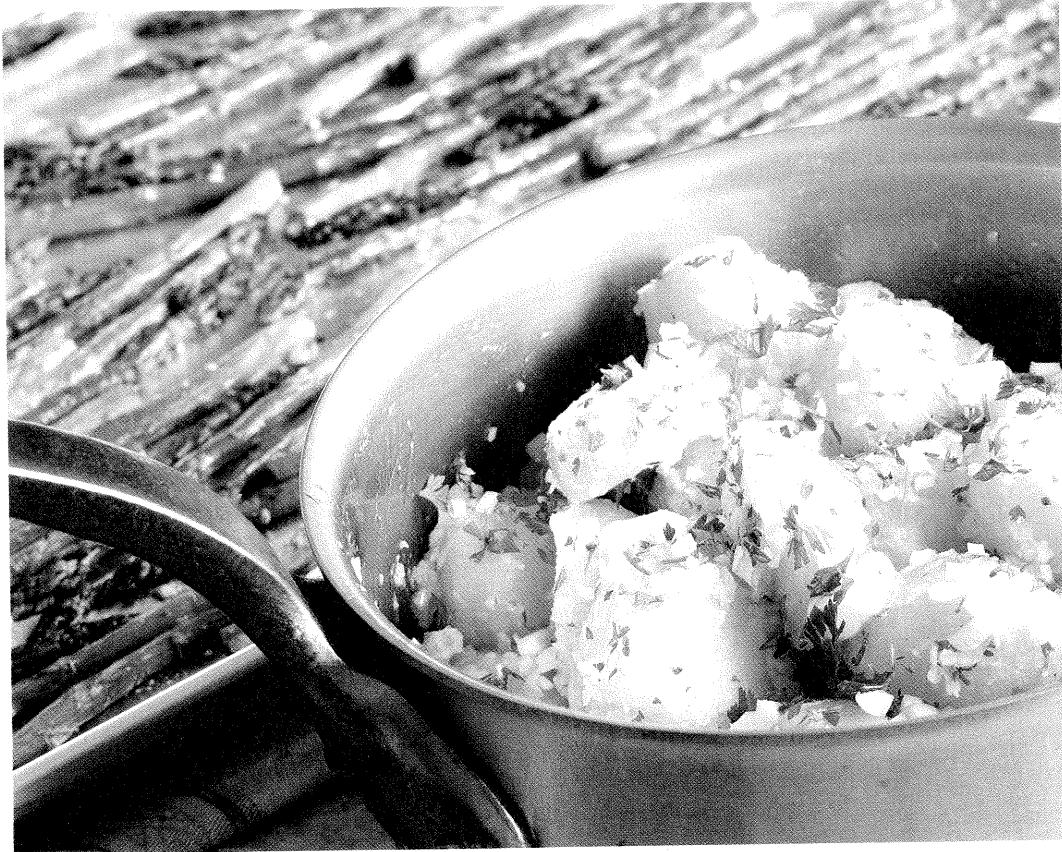
To assemble: Spoon the mushrooms onto the crostini, top with a Parmigiano curl, and serv-

What to drink

Jump start the night with a bright, fresh apéritif cocktail; a Bellini or a Pimm's Cup (recipes on p. 17) would set the right mood and be tasty with the mushroom crostini. For the main course, try a crisp, citrusy unoaked Chardonnay, such as Iron Horse from Sonoma County or Wishing Tree from Western Australia.

New Potatoes with Butter, Shallots & Chervil

Serves six.



2½ lb. small (2-inch) red or yellow new potatoes, peeled and halved lengthwise (about 14 potatoes)

Kosher salt

1 large shallot, minced (about ¼ cup)

2 tsp. fresh lemon juice

6 Tbs. unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces, softened to room temperature

2 Tbs. chopped fresh chervil or flat-leaf parsley

Freshly ground black pepper

Put the potatoes in a medium pot, add water to cover by 1 inch, and season generously with about 2 Tbs. salt (the water should taste almost as salty as sea water). Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer, and gently cook the potatoes until tender when pierced with a fork, 10 to 12 minutes. (You want them to maintain their shape, so be careful not to overcook them.)

Meanwhile, combine the shallot, lemon juice, and a pinch of salt in a small bowl, and let sit for at least 10 minutes and up to 2 hours.

Drain the potatoes and return them to the warm pot. Immediately add the shallot mixture, butter, and chervil or parsley and gently stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve.

Roasted Salmon & Asparagus with Lemon Oil

Serves four.

This recipe can easily be adjusted to serve six or even eight. You can use two baking sheets, if necessary, and separate the fish and asparagus.

1 large lemon

3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more for the pan

20 thin stalks asparagus (10 to 12 oz.), trimmed

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Four 6- to 8-oz. skin-on salmon fillets (preferably about 1 inch thick)

Set a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 450°F.

Finely grate the zest from the lemon, preferably with a rasp-style grater. In a small bowl, combine the zest with 2 Tbs. of the oil. Cut the lemon in half and set aside.

On one side of a heavy rimmed baking sheet, toss the asparagus with the

remaining 1 Tbs. of the oil, ¾ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper. Spread the asparagus in one layer. Lightly coat the other side of the baking sheet with oil, and arrange the salmon fillets, skin side down, on the oiled area. Sprinkle with 1 tsp. salt and ½ tsp. pepper. Roast until the asparagus is tender and the salmon is cooked to your liking (cut into a fillet with a paring knife to check), 10 to 13 minutes for medium. If the asparagus needs more time to cook, transfer the salmon to a platter, tent it loosely with foil, and return the asparagus to the oven until tender.

Arrange the salmon and asparagus on a platter and drizzle the lemon oil all over both. Squeeze a little juice from a lemon half over the salmon and serve immediately.



Peach & Raspberry Crisp

Serves six to eight.

Feel free to use different fruits in this crisp. Apples or pears are good in fall, while plums and apricots (or a mix) could easily swap in for the peaches. Adding the crumb topping in two stages makes it especially crisp with less of a gooey layer next to the fruit. If you are serving only four people, you will have leftover crisp; happily, it reheats well (and it's great for breakfast).

FOR THE TOPPING:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon or 1/8 tsp. ground or grated nutmeg (optional)
- 1/2 cup slightly softened unsalted butter, cut into pieces

FOR THE FILLING:

- 6 medium-size ripe peaches, pitted and cut into 3/4-inch slices
- 1 pint raspberries (or blackberries or blueberries)
- 2 Tbs. to 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. to 1 Tbs. cornstarch
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- Pinch of ground cinnamon or ground or grated nutmeg
- Vanilla ice cream for serving (optional)

Heat the oven to 375°F.

Make the topping: Combine the flour, both sugars, salt, and cinnamon or nutmeg, if using, in a medium bowl. Rub in the butter with your fingertips until it's well blended and the mixture crumbles coarsely; it should hold together when you pinch it. Chill until needed.

Make the filling: Put the fruit in a bowl, taste it, and add sugar as needed. (The sweeter your fruit, the less sugar you'll need.) In a small dish, dissolve the cornstarch in the lemon juice. (If your fruit is very juicy use the larger amount of cornstarch. For denser fruits like apples and pears, use the lesser amount.) Pour over the fruit. Add the lemon juice and cinnamon or nutmeg and gently toss to mix.

Bake the crisps: Pour the fruit mixture into an 8- or 9-inch-square (or similar-capacity) glass or ceramic baking dish or divide the fruit among six or eight (depending on size) individual ramekins. Set the pan or ramekins on a baking sheet to catch overflowing juices. Top the fruit with half of the topping (refrigerate the other half) and bake for 20 minutes.

Sprinkle the remaining topping over the crisp and continue baking until the fruit is tender when pierced with a knife, the topping is crisp, and the juices are bubbling, another 15 to 35 minutes, depending on the fruit (apples take more time; berries take less). Let cool for 20 to 30 minutes before serving warm, with ice cream if you like.

Shopping list

Fresh produce

- 1 large shallot
- 1 head garlic
- 2 scallions
- 12 oz. mixed fresh shiitake and oyster mushrooms
- 12 oz. thin asparagus
- 2 lemons
- 1 small bunch fresh mint
- 1 small bunch fresh chervil or flat-leaf parsley
- 2 1/4 lb. small new red or yellow potatoes
- 1 pint raspberries (or blackberries or blueberries)
- 6 medium-size ripe peaches

Fish

- Four 6- to 8-oz. skin-on salmon fillets (preferably about 1 inch thick)

Dairy

- 1/2 lb. unsalted butter
- Parmigiano-Reggiano (a chunk for shaving)

Bakery

- 1 baguette

Frozen foods

- Vanilla ice cream to serve with the crisp (optional)

Other groceries

- Extra-virgin olive oil
- All-purpose flour
- Granulated sugar
- Dark brown sugar
- Cornstarch
- Ground cinnamon or nutmeg
- Kosher salt and whole black peppercorns for grinding

Game plan

Up to 1 day ahead:

- Make the scallion vinaigrette.**
- Assemble the olive and pepper sticks.**
- Peel the shrimp, reserving the shells (put the shrimp in a paper-towel-lined bowl).**
- Make the broth for the paella.**
- Clean the clams.**
- Cut up the chocolate for the bread (keep covered at room temperature).**

A few hours ahead:

- Make the potato tortilla; keep it at room temperature.**
- Make the sofrito for the paella.**
- Keep it in the pan off the heat until ready to finish the paella.**
- Slice the bread and store it airtight.**

Up to 1 hour ahead:

- Drizzle the vinaigrette over the olive and pepper sticks and set out.**
- Cut the mushrooms and chop the garlic and parsley for them.**

About 15 minutes before guests arrive:

- Reheat the broth for the paella.**
- Just before serving:**
- Cook the mushrooms and serve hot.**
- Set out the tortilla.**
- Finish making the paella while guests are there.**
- Make the chocolate bread toasts and pour more sherry.**



Tortilla Española (Spanish Potato Tortilla)

Serves twelve as an appetizer.

- 1 1/4 cups vegetable oil for frying**
- 1 1/4 lb. (about 5 medium) low- to medium-starch potatoes, like Yukon Golds, peeled and sliced $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick**
- Kosher salt**
- 12 to 14 oz. yellow onions (2 to 3 medium), diced**
- 5 medium cloves garlic, very coarsely chopped (optional)**
- 6 large eggs**
- 1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper**

In a 10-inch nonstick skillet that's at least 1 1/2 inches deep, heat the oil on medium high. Put the potatoes in a bowl and sprinkle on 2 tsp. salt, tossing to distribute well.

When the oil is very hot (a potato slice will sizzle vigorously around the edges without browning), gently slip the potatoes into the oil with a skimmer or slotted spoon. Fry, turning occasionally and adjusting the heat so the potatoes sizzle but don't brown. Set a sieve over a bowl. When the potatoes are tender, after 10 to 12 minutes, transfer them with the skimmer to the sieve.

Add the onions and garlic (if using) to the pan. Fry, stirring occasionally, until very soft and translucent but not browned (you might need to lower the heat), 7 to 9 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and, using the skimmer, transfer the onions and garlic to the sieve with the potatoes. Drain the oil from the pan, reserving at least 1 Tbs., and wipe the pan with a paper towel.

In a large bowl, beat the eggs, 1/4 tsp. salt, and pepper with a fork until blended. Add the drained potatoes, onions, and garlic. Mix gently to combine, trying not to break the potatoes.

Heat the skillet on medium high. Add the 1 Tbs. reserved oil. Let the pan and oil get very hot and then pour in the potato mixture, spreading it evenly. Cook for 1 minute and then lower the heat to medium low, cooking until the eggs are completely set at the edges, halfway set in the center, and the tortilla easily slips around in the pan when you give it a shake, 8 to 10 minutes. You may need to nudge the tortilla loose with a spatula.

Set a flat plate that's at least as wide as the skillet upside down over the pan. Lift the skillet off the burner and, with one hand against the plate and the other holding the skillet's handle, invert the skillet so the tortilla lands on the plate. Set the pan back on the heat and slide the tortilla into it, using the skimmer to push any stray potatoes back in under the eggs as the tortilla slides off the plate. Once the tortilla is back in the pan, tuck in the edges to neaten. Cook until a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, hot, and with no uncooked egg on it, 5 to 6 minutes.

Transfer the tortilla to a serving platter and let cool for at least 10 minutes. Serve warm, at room temperature, or slightly cool, cut into wedges or small squares.

Sautéed Mushrooms with Garlic & Parsley

Serves eight.

5 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil

1 lb. white or cremini mushrooms, washed well, trimmed, and cut into quarters (or sixths, if large)

Kosher salt

5 to 6 medium cloves garlic, minced (1½ Tbs.)

1 Tbs. sherry vinegar

2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over high heat until it's hot and shimmering. Add the mushrooms, season with ¾ tsp. kosher salt, stir to coat in the oil, then let the mushrooms cook undisturbed until the liquid released by the mushrooms evaporates and they're deep golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir and continue sautéing, stirring occasionally, until most sides are nicely browned, 3 to 5 minutes more.

Reduce the heat to medium, add the garlic, and cook just to soften it, 15 to 30 seconds. Add the vinegar and stir, scraping the bottom of the pan, until the vinegar evaporates, about 15 seconds. Remove the pan from the heat and toss in the parsley. Season to taste with more salt, if you like. Transfer to a dish and serve with toothpicks for spearing the mushrooms or a serving spoon for putting on individual plates.



Olives & Peppers on a Pick with Scallion Vinaigrette

Serves eight; yields about 40 skewers.

These little skewers are good with just olives and peppers, or you can add a third element, such as pickled onions or feta.

1 lemon

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 small scallion, white and light green parts very thinly sliced (to yield 1 Tbs.)

½ tsp. chopped fresh thyme leaves

½ tsp. seeded, minced red serrano chile or jalapeño

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

7 jarred piquillo peppers (for sources, see p. 119) or 2 jarred roasted red peppers

40 small pitted green olives (from about a 2½-oz. jar)

40 pickled sour cocktail onions (from about two 3½-fluid-oz. jars; optional)

12 oz. feta (creamy feta holds together better than dry, crumbly feta), cut into ½- to ¾-inch cubes (optional)

Finely grate enough of the lemon zest to get ¼ tsp. packed zest. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze to get 2 Tbs. of juice. Put the zest and juice in a small bowl. Whisk in the olive oil, scallion, thyme, chile, and salt and pepper to taste. Let the vinaigrette sit for at least 20 minutes (or up to 12 hours in the fridge; bring to room temperature before using) to meld the flavors and soften the scallion.

Cut the peppers lengthwise into ½-inch-wide strands, then cut the strands in half crosswise—you'll need 40 pieces of pepper. Fold a piece of pepper in half and thread it onto a toothpick. Spear an olive onto the pick. Then spear either an onion or a cube of feta on the end, if using. Set the pick in a shallow serving dish. Repeat with the remaining ingredients. If not serving right away, refrigerate.

About 30 minutes before serving, give the vinaigrette a good whisk to emulsify as best you can, then drizzle it over the olive picks.



Paella with Shrimp, Clams & Mussels

Serves four as a main course, six to eight as part of a tapas menu.

Spanish bomba rice absorbs more liquid than other rice varieties. If you use another medium-grain rice, such as Goya brand, add only 3½ cups of broth to the rice instead of 4¾ cups.

Large pinch saffron (about 30 threads)

1 cup bottled clam juice

½ lb. mussels, cleaned (about 20)

⅓ lb. large shrimp (about 12), peeled; shells reserved

Kosher salt

One-half medium yellow onion

1 large ripe tomato, halved horizontally

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

8 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

¼ tsp. pimentón (Spanish paprika, either sweet or hot; optional)

1½ cups Spanish bomba rice

8 medium clams, such as littlenecks (about 1 lb.), cleaned

2 lemons, cut in half, for serving

Make the broth: Put the saffron in a large mortar and grind to a powder with a pestle. Heat the clam juice to simmering in a saucepan or in a microwave. Pour it into the mortar (or a cup) with the saffron and set aside to infuse.

Find the eight prettiest mussels; reserve these in the refrigerator.

Put the shrimp shells in a large saucepan set over medium-high heat and cook, stirring, until they're dry and pink, 2 to 3 minutes. Add 5 cups of water and all the remaining mussels, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Strain the broth into a bowl, discarding the shrimp shells and the mussels. Wipe out the saucepan and pour the broth back into it. Add the saffron-infused clam juice to the broth and bring to a gentle simmer. Add ½ tsp. salt, taste, and add more if necessary; it should be quite well salted, but not salty. Cover and reduce the heat to very low. (If making ahead, let cool and refrigerate; reheat when ready to make the paella.)

Make the sofrito: Grate the onion half on the largest holes of a box grater to get about ¼ cup; set aside. Grate both tomato halves on the box grater all the way down to the skin. Discard the skin.

Put the oil in a 14-inch paella pan. Set over medium heat, add the grated onion, and cook until it softens and darkens slightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the grated tomato, chopped garlic, pimentón, and ¼ tsp. salt; cook gently in the center of the pan, stirring frequently, until the mixture, called a

sofrito, becomes dark red and is a very thick purée, 20 to 30 minutes. Cook it as long as you can, being careful not to let it burn. As it thickens, lower the heat, and if it starts sticking to the pan stir in a little water. (At this point you can take the pan off the heat and leave at room temperature until ready to finish the paella.)

Finish the paella: When the sofrito is done, add the rice to the hot pan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly for 2 minutes. Increase the heat to high and pour 4¾ cups of the hot broth (if you don't have enough, supplement with water) into the paella pan. Use a spoon to spread the rice evenly, but don't stir for the remainder of the cooking. Adjust the heat to get a vigorous simmer, repositioning the pan to get bubbles all the way to the perimeter.

Arrange the clams in the pan, pushing them into the rice. When the rice just begins to appear at the level of the broth, after 8 to 10 minutes, arrange the reserved mussels in the pan. Lower the heat so the broth simmers very gently throughout the pan. After another 5 minutes, arrange the shrimp in the pan. Continue cooking until the liquid is absorbed, the shrimp are pink the shellfish are open, and the rice is tender but still firm (taste a few grains below the top layer), about another 5 minutes. (If it seems like the broth is evaporating too quickly, drizzle some more broth or water on top. If the rice isn't cooking evenly, lay a sheet of foil loosely over the pan to trap the heat.)

Check for socarrat (the delicious browned rice that has stuck to the bottom of the pan) by using a spoon to feel for resistance on the bottom of the pan. Check in various spots. If there is none, increase the heat to medium high and carefully cook, moving the pan around, until you hear crackling and feel resistance, 1 to 2 minutes; if you smell any burning, remove the pan from the heat.

Remove the pan from the heat and cover tightly with foil. Let the paella rest for 5 to 10 minutes. Put the pan on the table and remove the foil, and invite everyone to squeeze lemon over his or her portion.





Shopping list

Fresh produce

- 4 medium yellow onions
- 1 3/4 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes (5 to 6)
- 3 heads garlic
- 1 large ripe tomato
- 1 lb. fresh button or cremini mushrooms
- 1 bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 small bunch fresh thyme
- 1 small fresh red jalapeño or serrano
- 1 scallion
- 3 lemons

Shellfish

- 1/2 lb. mussels
- 1/3 lb. large (21-25 per lb.) shell-on shrimp
- 8 littleneck clams

Bakery

- 1 loaf rustic peasant bread or real baguette

Dairy

- 6 large eggs
- 3/4 lb. unsalted butter
- 12 oz. creamy feta (in a block; optional)

Other groceries

- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Vegetable oil
- Sherry vinegar
- 1 jar piquillo peppers (see Sources, p. 119) or roasted red peppers
- One 2 1/2-oz. jar pitted green olives
- Two 3 1/2-oz. jars pickled cocktail onions (optional)
- Bottled clam juice (1 cup)
- Pimentón (Spanish paprika; see Sources, p. 119)
- Saffron
- Sea salt (optional)
- Kosher salt and whole black peppercorns for grinding
- Spanish bomba rice (see Sources, p. 119) or other medium-grain rice, such as Goya brand (1 1/2 cups)
- 1/4 lb. best-quality bittersweet chocolate

Toasted Bread with Chocolate

Serves eight.

Bread and chocolate is a popular snack for kids in Spain. Adding a drizzle of olive oil and a pinch of salt adds a sophisticated touch.

Eight 1 1/2-inch-thick slices good bread, such as a rustic peasant bread or a real baguette

Best-quality extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling

1/4 lb. best-quality bittersweet chocolate, very coarsely chopped (scant 1 cup)

Sea salt, kosher salt, or any specialty salt

Position a rack 4 inches from the broiler element and heat to high. Put the bread on a baking sheet and toast until light golden on both sides, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Drizzle the bread with olive oil. Distribute the chocolate evenly on top of the bread. Turn off the broiler and return the bread to the oven until the residual heat melts the chocolate, about 1 minute. Smooth the chocolate with a table knife, if you want. Sprinkle a pinch of salt on each slice and serve.

What to drink

The nutty, briny qualities of a fino or manzanilla sherry match perfectly with the tangy, salty, and savory flavors in the tapas. Offer guests a small glass of chilled sherry to sip as they begin to enjoy the spread. Look for a crisp dry white with citrus and mineral notes to serve with the paella. A ruby port would be delicious with the chocolate-topped toasts.

Winter Greens with Black Olive Vinaigrette & Warm Goat Cheese Croutons

Serves six to eight.

Since this menu serves six, you will have a couple of extra croutons for your guests to fight over.

**2 logs (1/4 lb. each) fresh goat cheese
1/4 cup plus 2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves, lightly chopped
Freshly ground black pepper
8 slices (1/2-inch thick) baguette or thin Italian loaf, cut on the diagonal
1 large clove garlic, cut in half lengthwise
6 lightly packed cups of bite-size chicory and escarole (or other winter greens)
1 large Belgian endive (about 1/2 lb.)
Black Olive Vinaigrette (recipe at right)
Sea salt or kosher salt**

At least 2 hours and up to a week ahead: Cut each goat cheese log into four equal rounds, using a thin, sharp knife dipped in hot water. Arrange the rounds in one layer in a nonreactive container. Pour 1/4 cup of the olive oil evenly over the cheese. Sprinkle with the thyme and grind some pepper over the cheese. Cover and marinate for at least 2 hours (or up to one week) in the refrigerator. Remove the cheese from the refrigerator 30 minutes before tossing the salad.

Up to 2 days ahead: Heat the oven to 350°F. Rub the sliced bread all over with the cut sides of the garlic clove. Spread the bread slices on a heavy baking sheet and drizzle with the remaining 2 tsp. olive oil. Put the sheet in the oven and toast the bread (without turning) until the edges are lightly golden and the bread is crisp, 10 to 12 minutes. Let the croutons cool on a rack. (When completely cool, store in a plastic bag at room temperature.)

Wash and dry the chicory and escarole. Store, covered with a slightly damp towel, in the refrigerator.



Just before serving: Trim off the brown root end from the endive and cut the endive crosswise into 1-inch-thick crescents. Use your fingers to separate the leaves. Discard the firm rounds of core. Toss the endive with the chicory and escarole.

Heat the oven to 400°F. Put the croutons on a rimmed baking sheet and lay one round of cheese on each crouton. Use a knife to spread the cheese so that it completely covers the crouton and drizzle the olive oil marinade over the croutons. Put the baking sheet in the oven for 5 minutes to heat the goat cheese.

While the croutons are warming, set aside about 2 1/2 Tbs. of the vinaigrette and toss the salad with the remaining vinaigrette. Season the salad with salt and pepper to taste.

Remove the croutons from the oven and dab a bit of the reserved vinaigrette on top of each. Serve the salad on individual plates with one crouton alongside.

Black Olive Vinaigrette

Yields scant 1 cup.

Because of the saltiness of the anchovies and olives, no other salt is necessary in this vinaigrette. The vinaigrette tastes best when prepared at least one day in advance.

**3 anchovy fillets, rinsed, patted dry, and finely chopped
2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
1 Tbs. red-wine vinegar
2 tsp. minced shallots
1 tsp. minced garlic
Freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup pitted Niçoise or Kalamata olives, finely chopped
2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil**

In a small bowl, whisk the anchovies with the lemon juice, vinegar, shallots, and garlic; season with pepper. Let the mixture sit for 10 minutes and then add the olives and parsley and whisk in the olive oil. Store in the refrigerator overnight. Before using, bring the vinaigrette to room temperature and whisk again.

from Risotto

is six.

To be tight and dense or soft
loose, depending on your taste.
looser texture, just add more
at the end without letting it com-
y evaporate.

cups homemade or lower-salt

chicken broth

extra-virgin olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped medium-
ly to yield about 2 cups

or salt

saffron threads

1 cup short-grain rice, such as
arbori or arborio

dry white wine

2 Tbs. unsalted butter

finely grated Parmigiano-
Reggiano

1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
(optional)

In a large pot, bring the chicken broth
to a boil. Reduce the heat to
medium; the liquid should stay hot but
not simmer.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat
in a heavy-duty 3- to 4-qt. straight-
sauté pan at least 10 inches
in diameter or in a similar size Dutch oven,
saute the onion and 1/2 tsp. salt and
pepper, stirring frequently with
a wooden spoon until softened, 8 to
10 minutes.

Add 1 1/2 cup water, lower the heat
and turn low, and continue cooking
until the water is gone and the
onion is soft and glistening but not
brown, 5 to 10 minutes more.
Meanwhile, soak the saffron in
hot water for at least 5 minutes.
Add the rice to the pan and raise
the heat to medium. Cook, stirring
frequently, to coat the rice with the oil,
about 1 minute. Toasted rice should
be white and glistening, but you
will hear a clicking sound when you

Turn the heat off and add the wine and cook, stirring
frequently, until it's mostly absorbed.
Add the saffron and its soaking
water. Add 1 1/2 to 2 cups of the hot
water, just barely cover the rice and stir
frequently. Add another 1/2 tsp. salt,
turn the heat to a gentle simmer, and
stirring. When all of the liquid
is absorbed and the rice is dry

enough that your spoon leaves a trail
showing the bottom of the pot, ladle
in another cup of liquid, again stirring
until it is absorbed. Continue adding
the liquid in 1-cup increments, always
stirring, until the rice is al dente and
pleasantly creamy; this is usually 16 to
20 minutes after the first addition of
liquid and after at least 5 cups of liquid
have been added. If it is, remove it
from the heat immediately. Otherwise,
let it cook a little longer, incorporating
more broth up to a total of 7 cups.

Stir in the broth and cheese and
season to taste with more salt, if
needed, and pepper if you like.

Add liquid slowly for the perfect risotto



Everyone knows that regular stirring makes
great risotto, but it's also important to add
the liquid in stages. You'll know it's time for
more when your spoon leaves a trail that
shows the bottom of the pot.

Game plan

Up to 1 week ahead:

Marinate the goat cheese.

Up to 2 days ahead:

**Make the osso buco up to the
point of adding the gremolata.**

**Make the vinaigrette for the salad
(it tastes best made ahead).**

Toast the croutons for the salad.

**Wash the chicory and escarole
for the salad.**

Up 1 day ahead:

Bake the crust for the tart.

At least 6 hours ahead:

**Make the filling for the tart, bake,
and chill well.**

Up to 2 hours ahead:

**Parcook the risotto (see Test
Kitchen, p. 116, for directions).**

An hour ahead:

**Bring the vinaigrette and cheese
to room temperature.**

**Heat the oven and then gently
reheat the osso buco.**

Just before serving:

**Trim the endive, warm the
croutons, and toss the salad.**

**Make the gremolata and finish
the sauce for the osso buco.**

Finish cooking the risotto.

Saffron Risotto

Serves six.

Risotto can be tight and dense or soft and loose, depending on your taste. For a looser texture, just add more broth at the end without letting it completely evaporate.

5 to 7 cups homemade or lower-salt chicken broth

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 medium onions, chopped medium-finely to yield about 2 cups

Kosher salt

½ tsp. saffron threads

2 cups short-grain rice, such as carnaroli or arborio

1 cup dry white wine

2 to 3 Tbs. unsalted butter

1 cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

Freshly ground black pepper (optional)

In a large pot, bring the chicken broth almost to a boil. Reduce the heat to very low; the liquid should stay hot but not simmer.

Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a heavy-duty 3- to 4-qt. straight-sided sauté pan at least 10 inches wide or in a similar size Dutch oven. Add the onion and ½ tsp. salt and cook slowly, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon until softened, 8 to 10 minutes.

Add ½ cup water, lower the heat to medium low, and continue cooking until all of the water is gone and the onion is soft and glistening but not browned, 5 to 10 minutes more.

Meanwhile, soak the saffron in ½ cup hot water for at least 5 minutes.

Add the rice to the pan and raise the heat to medium. Cook, stirring constantly, to coat the rice with the oil, about 3 minutes. Toasted rice should still be white and glistening, but you should hear a clicking sound when you stir it.

Pour in the wine and cook, stirring constantly, until it's mostly absorbed. Stir in the saffron and its soaking liquid. Ladle 1 ½ to 2 cups of the hot broth to barely cover the rice and stir constantly. Add another ½ tsp. salt, adjust the heat to a gentle simmer, and keep stirring. When all of the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is dry enough that your spoon leaves a trail showing the bottom of the pot, ladle in another cup of liquid, again stirring until it is absorbed. Continue adding the liquid in 1-cup increments, always stirring, until the rice is al dente and pleasantly creamy; this is usually 16 to 20 minutes after the first addition of liquid and after at least 5 cups of liquid have been added. If it is, remove it from the heat immediately.

Otherwise, let it cook a little longer, incorporating more broth up to a total of 7 cups.

Stir in the broth and cheese and season to taste with more salt, if needed, and pepper if you like.

Osso Buco

Serves six.

For best results, choose thick veal shanks (at least 1 1/4 inches) so that the meat will stay moist during the long cooking.

Six 1 1/4-inch-thick veal shanks
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup all-purpose flour for dredging
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbs. unsalted butter
3 cups finely diced yellow onion (about 2 medium onions)
1 cup finely diced celery (about 2 ribs)
3/4 cup finely diced carrot (about 2 small carrots)
1 tsp. dried oregano
3/4 cup dry white wine
2 Tbs. tomato paste
One 28-oz. can Italian plum tomatoes, drained and chopped, juices reserved
1 cup homemade or lower-salt chicken broth; more if needed
1 large sprig fresh thyme

1 bay leaf

1 Tbs. arrowroot mixed with 2 tsp. broth or water (look for arrowroot in the spice section of your grocery store)

FOR THE GREMOLATA:

3 Tbs. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 large cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbs. finely grated lemon zest
2 anchovy fillets, minced

Heat the oven to 350°F.

Tie the veal shanks around the middle with kitchen twine (if they're not tied already) and season them with salt and pepper. Put the flour in a dish. Dredge the shanks very lightly in flour, thoroughly shaking off the excess.

Have ready a roasting pan or baking dish large enough to hold the shanks in a single layer (9x13-inch works well). In a large heavy skillet, heat 3 Tbs. of the oil over medium-high heat. Put three veal shanks in the pan and sear until nicely browned on both sides, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Move the shanks

to the roasting pan. Repeat with the remaining three shanks.

Carefully pour off the fat in the pan and wipe it out with paper towels (it's fine if the browned bits remain in the pan bottom; just wipe away the used oil). Return the pan to medium heat and add the butter and remaining 1 Tbs. oil. When the butter is melted, add the onion, celery, carrot, oregano, and 1 tsp. salt. Cook the vegetables, stirring occasionally, until soft and lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes. Increase the heat to medium high, add the wine, and cook, scraping up any browned bits with a wooden spoon, until the wine is reduced to about 1/4 cup, about 3 minutes.

Stir in the tomato paste. Add the tomatoes with their juices, the broth, thyme, bay leaf, 1/2 tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Bring to a boil, and pour the contents of the pan over the shanks. Cover tightly with heavy-duty aluminum foil.

Braise the veal in the oven until fork-tender, 1 1/2 to 2 hours, checking the liquid occasionally. If it has cooked down, add enough broth to keep the level about halfway up the shanks. To check for doneness, pierce a shank with a fork. The meat should pull apart easily. Taste a morsel—it should feel soft and tender. Don't overcook or the veal will fall apart.

Gently brush most of the vegetable bits off the shanks. With a wide, flat metal spatula, carefully transfer the veal shanks to a dish. Strain the pan juices through a medium-mesh sieve into a saucepan, pressing hard on the solids with a spatula to extract as much sauce as you can. Bring the sauce to a simmer. Whisk in the arrowroot mixture and cool briefly to thicken. (If making ahead, return the shanks to the pan they braised in and pour the sauce over them. Let cool at room temperature for an hour, cover well, and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Reheat at 325°F until hot, about 30 minutes. Transfer the shanks to a dish and continue with recipe.)

Make the gremolata and serve: Just before finishing the sauce and serving, combine the parsley, garlic, lemon zest, and anchovies. Add 2 Tbs. of the gremolata to the sauce. Remove the twine from the shanks. Serve the osso buco topped with the sauce and a small sprinkling of the remaining gremolata.



Creamy Orange Ricotta Tart

Yields one 9 ½-inch tart; serves twelve.

FOR THE CRUST:

- 1 cup finely ground vanilla wafers (such as Nilla Vanilla Wafers, about 35; ground in a food processor)**
- 2 Tbs. granulated sugar**
- 1 ½ oz. (3 Tbs.) unsalted butter, melted**

FOR THE FILLING:

- One 15-oz. container whole-milk ricotta (about 1 ½ cups)**
- 3 oz. cream cheese, at room temperature**
- ¾ cup granulated sugar**
- 2 Tbs. unbleached all-purpose flour**
- ¼ tsp. table salt**
- 3 large egg yolks**
- 1 Tbs. finely grated orange zest**
- 1 Tbs. orange-flavored liqueur (such as Grand Marnier or Cointreau) or orange juice**
- Strips of orange zest or segments of blood orange, for garnish (optional)**

Make the crust: Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350 deg. F. Have ready an ungreased 9 ½-inch fluted tart pan with a removable bottom.

In a medium bowl, mix the cookie crumbs and sugar with a fork until well blended. Drizzle the melted butter over the crumbs and mix with the fork or your fingers until the crumbs are evenly moistened. Put the crumbs in the tart pan and use your hands to spread the crumbs so that they coat the bottom of the pan and start to climb the sides. Use your fingers to pinch and press some of the crumbs around the inside edge of the pan to cover the sides evenly and create a wall about a scant ¼ inch thick. Redistribute the remaining crumbs evenly over the bottom of the pan and press firmly to make a compact layer (a metal measuring cup with straight sides and a flat base is good for this).

Bake the crust until it smells nutty and fragrant and is lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Set the baked crust on a rack and let cool. The crust can be made up to one day ahead and stored at room temperature, wrapped well in plastic.

Make the filling and bake the tart: Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350 deg. F. In a medium bowl, combine the ricotta and cream cheese. Using an electric mixer, beat on medium speed until well blended and no lumps remain, about 3 minutes. Add the sugar, flour, and salt and continue beating until well blended, about 1 minute. Add the egg yolks, orange zest, and orange liqueur. Beat until just incorporated. Use a rubber spatula to scrape the filling into the crust and spread the filling evenly.

Bake the tart until the filling just barely jiggles when the pan is nudged, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool completely on a rack. Refrigerate the tart in the pan until chilled and firm, 2 to 3 hours. Serve garnished with strips of orange zest or blood orange segments, if you like.



Shopping list

Fresh produce

- 3 medium onions
- 1 head garlic
- 2 shallots
- 2 carrots
- 2 ribs celery
- Chicory, escarole, or other winter greens (about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.)
- 1 large Belgian endive
- 1 bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 bunch fresh thyme
- 1 lemon
- 1 orange
- 1 blood orange (optional)

Meat & dairy

- 6 veal shanks, cut osso buco style (at least $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. unsalted butter
- 2 logs ($\frac{1}{4}$ lb. each) fresh goat cheese
- Parmigiano-Reggiano
- One 15-oz. container fresh whole milk ricotta
- 3 oz. cream cheese
- 3 large eggs

Wine & spirits

- 1 bottle dry white wine
- 1 Tbs. Grand Marnier or Cointreau (or orange juice)

Bakery

- 1 small baguette

Other groceries

- 2 cups arborio or carnaroli rice
- One 28-oz. can Italian plum tomatoes
- Tomato paste
- Anchovy fillets
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pitted Niçoise or Kalamata olives
- 2 qt. homemade or lower-salt chicken broth
- Saffron ($\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. threads)
- Dried oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- Arrowroot (1 Tbs.; look for it near spices)
- Kosher salt and whole black peppercorns for grinding
- Table salt
- Sea salt (optional)
- All-purpose flour
- Granulated sugar
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Red-wine vinegar
- Nilla Wafers

Creamy Orange Ricotta Tart

Yields one 9½-inch tart; serves twelve.

FOR THE CRUST:

cup finely ground vanilla wafers
(such as Nilla Vanilla Wafers, about 35; ground in a food processor)
Tbs. granulated sugar
½ oz. (3 Tbs.) unsalted butter, melted

FOR THE FILLING:

one 15-oz. container whole-milk ricotta (about 1½ cups)
oz. cream cheese, at room temperature
cup granulated sugar
Tbs. unbleached all-purpose flour
tsp. table salt
large egg yolks
Tbs. finely grated orange zest
Tbs. orange-flavored liqueur (such as Grand Marnier or Cointreau) or orange juice
strips of orange zest or segments of blood orange, for garnish (optional)

MAKE THE CRUST: Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Have ready an ungreased 9½-inch fluted tart pan with a removable bottom.

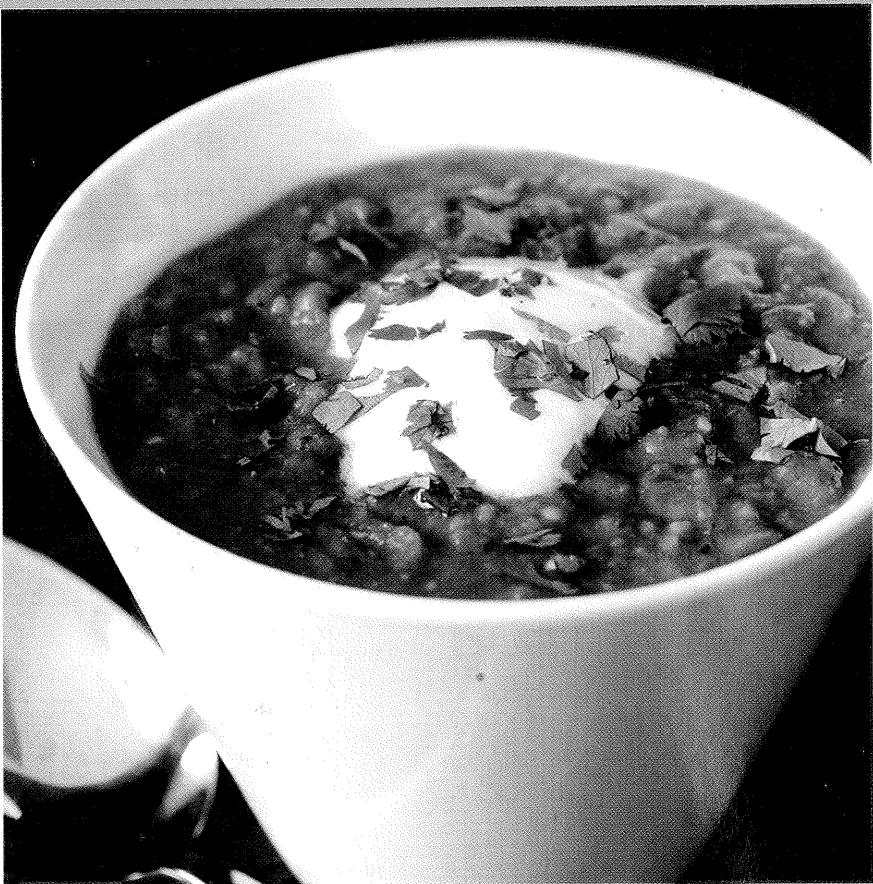
In a medium bowl, mix the cookie crumbs and sugar with a fork until well blended. Drizzle the melted butter over the crumbs and mix with the fork or your fingers until the crumbs are evenly moistened. Put the crumbs in the tart pan and use your hands to spread the crumbs so that they coat the bottom of the pan and start to climb the sides. Use your fingers to pinch and press some of the crumbs around the side edge of the pan to cover the sides evenly and create a wall about scant ¼ inch thick. Redistribute the remaining crumbs evenly over the

bottom of the pan and press firmly to make a compact layer (a metal measuring cup with straight sides and a flat base is good for this).

Bake the crust until it smells nutty and fragrant and is lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Set the baked crust on a rack and let cool. The crust can be made up to one day ahead and stored at room temperature, wrapped well in plastic.

MAKE THE FILLING AND BAKE THE TART: Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl, combine the ricotta and cream cheese. Using an electric mixer, beat on medium speed until well blended and no lumps remain, about 3 minutes. Add the sugar, flour, and salt and continue beating until well blended, about 1 minute. Add the egg yolks, orange zest, and orange liqueur. Beat until just incorporated. Use a rubber spatula to scrape the filling into the crust and spread the filling evenly.

Bake the tart until the filling just barely jiggles when the pan is nudged, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool completely on a rack. Refrigerate the tart in the pan until chilled and firm, 2 to 3 hours. Serve garnished with strips of orange zest or blood orange segments, if you like.



Curried Lentil Soup

Serves four to six.

A small cup of this flavorful but thick and hearty soup is all this menu needs.

1 large clove garlic
1 piece ($\frac{1}{3}$ inch long) peeled fresh ginger
One-half small bulb fennel, cored and cut into large chunks
1 small carrot, peeled and cut into large chunks
1 small parsnip, peeled and cut into large chunks
1 large shallot, cut in half
3 Tbs. unsalted butter
2 tsp. curry powder
1 cup brown lentils, picked over and rinsed
1 qt. homemade or lower-salt chicken or vegetable broth
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Whole-milk yogurt for garnish (optional)
Chopped fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)

Pulse the garlic and ginger in a food processor until chopped. Add the fennel, carrot, parsnip, and shallot

and pulse until coarsely chopped.

Melt 2 Tbs. of the butter in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the chopped vegetables and cook, stirring, until softened, about 3 minutes. Add the curry powder and cook, stirring, until the curry powder is fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the lentils, broth, 1/4 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Bring the soup to a boil over high heat, reduce the heat to maintain a brisk simmer, cover, and cook until the lentils are tender, 25 to 30 minutes.

Transfer 1 1/2 cups of the soup to a blender or a food processor and purée until smooth. Stir the purée back into the soup, along with the remaining 1 Tbs. butter. Season to taste with salt and pepper and adjust the consistency with water, if you like. Portion the soup into cups or small bowls and garnish with a little yogurt and cilantro.

Game plan

Up to 3 days ahead (and at least 4 hours ahead):

Make the tandoori chicken.

Up to 2 days head:

Finish making the tikka masala, cool, and refrigerate.

Toast the pistachios for the lassi; store airtight at room temperature once cooled.

Up to 4 hours ahead:

Marinate the mango for the lassi.

Up to 2 hours ahead:

Make the lentil soup; hold at room temperature and reheat gently to serve.

1 hour before serving:

Soak the basmati rice.

Cut, chop, and mince ingredients for cauliflower stir-fry.

1/2 hour before serving:

Start cooking the rice (it can hold off the heat for 20 minutes or so).

Gently reheat the tikka masala.

Make the cauliflower stir-fry.

Before each course:

Garnish the soup.

Fluff the rice and garnish with the almonds and shallots if using.

Garnish the tikka masala.

Whip the cream for the lassi.

What to drink

Either wine and beer would work well with the flavors in this menu. For wine, try a slightly sweet Riesling (always good with spicy foods), such as the Mönchhof Estate from the Mosel Valley in Germany. For beer, try crisp, hoppy India Pale Ale, such as Samuel Adams IPA. Bonny Doon's Muscat Vin de Glacière would be simply delicious with the mango lassi.

it, sauté, and simmer for deep flavor



the tandoori chicken for the tikka masala little more than hands-off time: cook in a flavorful yogurt marinade for less than an hour in the oven.

The tandoori chicken, bones removed, is transformed after a quick sauté in butter and some time spent simmering in a fragrant, slightly tangy tomato-cream sauce.

Roasted Tandoori Chicken

Serves six.

Roasting the chicken on the bone keeps the meat moist and gives it better flavor. Restaurants use food coloring to give this chicken its traditional red color, but this ingredient is optional.

12 bone-in chicken thighs
1 cup plain nonfat yogurt
½ cup fresh lemon juice (from about 2 medium lemons)
1 Tbs. peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger
1 Tbs. finely chopped garlic
2 tsp. ground coriander
2 tsp. ground cumin
2 tsp. garam masala
1½ tsp. kosher salt
½ tsp. cayenne
Few drops of red and yellow food coloring (optional)
1 lemon, cut in half

Marinate the chicken: Remove the skin and trim any excess fat from the chicken. With a sharp chef's knife, cut three or four long, diagonal slits on each thigh against the grain, almost to the bone.

In a large, shallow bowl, mix the yogurt, lemon juice, ginger, garlic, coriander, cumin, garam masala, salt, and cayenne. Stir in the food coloring, if using. Add the chicken, turning to coat and making sure that the marinade gets into all of the slits in the chicken. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator, at least 2 hours and up to 12 hours.

Roast the chicken: Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with foil. Transfer the chicken from the marinade to the baking sheet, spacing the thighs evenly. Discard any remaining marinade. Roast until the juices run clear when the chicken is pierced and an instant-read thermometer in a meaty part of a thigh registers 170°F, about 45 minutes.

Squeeze the lemon halves over the chicken. Let it cool before using in the Chicken Tikka Masala recipe at right. Refrigerate if making ahead.

Chicken Tikka Masala

Serves six to eight.

Garam masala, an Indian spice mix, is becoming more widely available; see Sources, p. 119, if you can't find it.

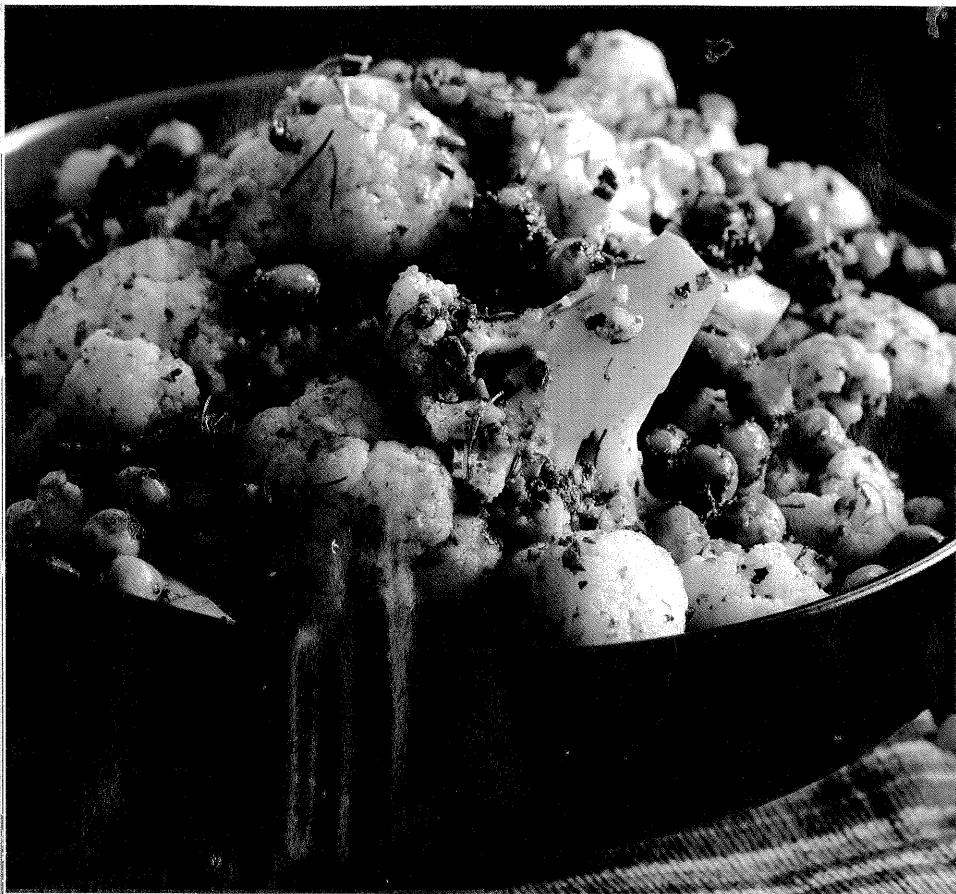
One 2-inch-long hot green chile (preferably serrano), stemmed but not seeded, chopped
One 1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
One 28-oz. can whole tomatoes
8 Tbs. unsalted butter
1 recipe Roasted Tandoori Chicken (left), meat removed from the bones in large pieces; try not to shred
2 tsp. sweet paprika
2 Tbs. cumin seeds, toasted in a dry skillet until fragrant, then ground
1 cup heavy cream
Kosher salt
2 tsp. garam masala
¾ cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro

In a food processor, pulse the chile and ginger until very finely chopped. Add the canned tomatoes with their juices and process until the mixture is puréed. Set aside.

Melt 6 Tbs. of the butter in a 6- to 8-qt. Dutch oven over medium heat. When the foam subsides, add about a third of the chicken pieces and cook, stirring frequently, until the chicken absorbs some of the butter and begins to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the chicken to a plate. Repeat with the remaining two batches of chicken.

Add the remaining 2 Tbs. butter to the pan. When melted, add the paprika and 4 tsp. of the cumin; stir until the spices just begin to darken, 10 to 15 seconds. Immediately add the tomato mixture. Simmer vigorously, uncovered, stirring frequently, until the sauce has thickened slightly, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the cream and 1 tsp. salt and stir well.

Add the chicken and stir gently. Reduce the heat to medium low and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes. Stir in the garam masala and the remaining cumin. Remove from the heat, cover, and let rest for 15 minutes. Taste and add more salt if necessary. Transfer to a serving bowl, garnish with the cilantro, and serve.



Stir-Fried Cauliflower with Green Peas & Ginger

Serves six.

Freshly ground coriander seeds have a beautiful citrusy essence and really make a difference in this dish. Grind the whole seeds in a spice grinder or mortar and pestle right before cooking.

- 3 Tbs. canola oil**
- 1/4 cup dried fenugreek leaves or
1/2 cup fresh fenugreek leaves,
chopped (optional; see Test Kitchen,
p. 118)**
- 1 to 3 small dried whole red chiles
(optional)**
- 1 Tbs. ground coriander, preferably
freshly ground**
- 1 tsp. cumin seeds**
- 3 Tbs. minced fresh ginger**
- 1 medium-size fresh jalapeño, finely
chopped (leave the ribs and seeds
in if you want it hot)**
- One 2 1/2- to 3-lb. head cauliflower, cut
into medium florets (6 to 8 cups)**
- 2 cups (about 10 oz.) frozen green
peas (don't thaw)**
- Kosher salt**
- 1/4 tsp. garam masala (optional)**

In a large wok or 12-inch skillet, heat the oil with the fenugreek leaves, chiles (if using), coriander, and cumin seeds over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the cumin browns and becomes fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the ginger and jalapeño and cook, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan to keep the ginger from burning, until the ginger is fragrant and sizzling, 30 seconds to 1 minute.

Add the cauliflower and stir to coat with the spices. Cover and reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 5 minutes and then stir in the frozen peas and 2 tsp. salt. Cover and cook until the cauliflower is tender and the peas are very tender, another 5 to 8 minutes. Uncover the pan, increase the heat to high and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes. Add the garam masala (if using) and, if necessary, cook until any remaining liquid in the pan evaporates, another 1 to 2 minutes. Taste and add more salt if needed before serving.



Boiled Basmati Rice

Serves six.

Serve the rice plain or garnished with toasted almonds and thinly sliced shallots slowly pan-fried in oil until nicely browned.

- 2 cups basmati rice, well rinsed**
- Kosher salt (optional)**

Put the rice in a large saucepan. Cover it with fresh, cool water by 1 to 2 inches and let soak for at least 30 minutes.

Put the pan over high heat and bring to a boil. Add 1 tsp. salt to the water, if you like. When the water comes to a boil, start timing. At 3 minutes, fish out a few grains with a fork and taste them. Like pasta, they should be cooked through but still a little firm to the bite. If not, continue boiling and tasting every 30 seconds. It may take up to 5 minutes total to reach the right texture but be careful not to overcook or the rice will get mushy.

Drain the rice and put it back in the pan. Put the pan over very low heat, cover tightly, and cook for 5 minutes to allow the rice to absorb any residual water and get drier. Take the pan off the heat and let it sit, covered, for 3 minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork and serve.



Mango Lassi Parfait

Serves six.

A lassi is a refreshing Indian yogurt drink; this parfait tastes like a lassi but has a more festive presentation.

1/2 cup shelled pistachios
1 cup granulated sugar
3 Tbs. green cardamom pods
2 ripe mangos, peeled, pitted, and cut into 3/4-inch cubes (to yield about 3 cups)
1 cup whipping cream
1 Tbs. confectioners' sugar
1 cup whole-milk Greek yogurt, such as Fage Total brand

Heat the oven to 325°F. Spread the pistachios on a baking sheet and bake until fragrant and golden, 7 to 10 minutes. Let cool, then chop.

In a small saucepan, combine the granulated sugar with 1 cup water and the cardamom pods; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer. Stir until the sugar dissolves and then simmer until syrupy and slightly thickened, about 8 minutes.

Remove from the heat and let the syrup cool to about room temperature. Strain the syrup into a bowl and add the mango. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes and up to 4 hours.

With an electric mixer, whip the cream and confectioners' sugar to soft peaks. Put the yogurt in a medium bowl and whip lightly with a hand whisk. Fold a spoonful of the whipped cream into the yogurt to lighten it. Fold in the remaining whipped cream. Whisk in 2 Tbs. of the mango-cardamom syrup (just the syrup, no mango cubes).

Using a slotted spoon, portion about half of the mango cubes into six parfait glasses. Portion half of the yogurt mixture among the glasses, layering it on top of the mango. Drizzle about 1 tsp. of the mango-cardamom syrup into each glass. Repeat the layering with the remaining mango and yogurt. Finish with another drizzle of syrup, sprinkle with the pistachios, and serve.

Shopping list

Fresh produce

- 1 head garlic
- 2 large shallots
- 1 fresh serrano chile
- 1 fresh jalapeño
- 1 to 3 small dried red chiles (optional)
- 1 large bunch cilantro
- 2 large pieces fresh ginger (6 inches total)
- 1 small fennel bulb
- 1 head cauliflower
- 1 small carrot
- 1 small parsnip
- 3 lemons
- 2 ripe mangos

Meat & dairy

- 12 bone-in chicken thighs
- 1/2 lb. unsalted butter
- 1 cup plain nonfat yogurt
- 1 cup whole-milk Greek yogurt (like Fage Total brand); more for garnishing the soup
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup whipping cream

Frozen foods

- 10 oz. frozen green peas

Other groceries

- Canola oil
- Basmati rice (2 cups)
- Brown lentils (1 cup)
- Sliced almonds (1/2 cup; optional)
- Shelled pistachios (1/3 cup)
- 1 qt. homemade or lower-salt chicken broth
- One 28-oz. can whole tomatoes
- Green cardamom pods
- Cayenne
- Curry powder
- Dried or fresh fenugreek leaves (optional; see Test Kitchen, p. 118)
- Ground coriander
- Whole coriander seeds
- Ground cumin
- Whole cumin seeds
- Garam masala (available in most spice sections)
- Sweet paprika
- Kosher salt and whole black peppercorns for grinding
- Red and yellow food coloring (optional)
- Granulated sugar
- Confectioners' sugar

brown. This isn't as tricky as it sounds, however; just use a low flame and stir constantly, being careful to scrape the bottom and sides of the pot (see the photos on p. 98). The longer the roux cooks, the deeper its flavor will be.

Cooking a roux until brown adds a lot of flavor but destroys its ability to thicken liquid. This means finding another method for thickening gumbo. Some cooks use okra and others filé powder—a rich, brown powder ground from sassafras leaves—which is added at the end. (No self-respecting gumbo cook would ever use the two together.) This gumbo uses filé powder, which gives it a slightly sweet, almost woodsy flavor. If you can't find filé powder at the grocery store, you can mail-order it (see Sources, p. 119).

What to drink

Gumbo's deep, dark spiciness needs quenching from a cold beer. Try a light-colored brew with the shrimp remoulade. Look for blonde, golden, or wheat beer (the Germans call it "Weizen"), or pale ale. With the gumbo's deep, rich roux and smoky sausage flavors, you'll want a darker brew, often dubbed amber, brown, or the German "Dunkel," meaning dark.

Game plan

Up to 2 days ahead:

Cut up the bread and let it dry out.
Make the bourbon sauce.
Cook the gumbo up to but not including the rice and scallions.
Cool it quickly and refrigerate it. Remove any hardened fat before reheating it gently.

Up to 1 day ahead:

Make the remoulade sauce.
Soak the bread in the custard for the bread pudding. If serving it cold, you can bake it and chill it.

Up to 2 hours ahead:

Cook, cool, drain, and refrigerate the shrimp.
Shred the lettuce for serving the shrimp; keep it refrigerated.
Cook the rice for the gumbo. (Spread it out on a large rimmed baking sheet so it doesn't overcook.)
Bake the bread pudding if you haven't done so already.

Just before each course:

Dip each shrimp in the remoulade and present each serving on a bed of lettuce.
Reheat the gumbo if necessary. Serve it over the rice and sprinkle with the scallions.
Reheat the bourbon sauce for the bread pudding if necessary.

Shrimp Rémoulade

Serves eight as an appetizer; yields 1 1/3 cups sauce.

The sauce can be made a day ahead, but it's best to cook the shrimp no more than an hour or two before serving.

FOR THE REMOULADE SAUCE:

1 Tbs. white-wine vinegar
1 Tbs. prepared yellow mustard
2 Tbs. Creole or country-style Dijon mustard
2 tsp. tomato paste
1 small clove garlic
Dash of Tabasco sauce
1/2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1 large egg
1/4 tsp. paprika
1/2 cup vegetable oil
3 Tbs. chopped scallions (white and pale green parts from 2 scallions)
3 Tbs. chopped celery
2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
Kosher salt

FOR THE SHRIMP:

1/3 cup kosher salt
1 Tbs. cayenne
2 Tbs. whole black peppercorns
2 lemons, cut in quarters
1 large clove garlic
4 bay leaves
1 medium onion, diced
1 1/2 lb. large (21-25 per lb.) shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails left on
Tender leafy lettuce (such as bibb or Boston), cut into strips

Make the sauce: In a food processor, combine the vinegar, mustards, tomato paste, garlic, Tabasco, lemon juice, egg, and paprika. Pulse to mix. With the processor running, slowly add the oil in a steady stream. Add the scallions, celery, parsley, and salt to taste; pulse briefly to combine. Overprocessing may cause separation. Chill.

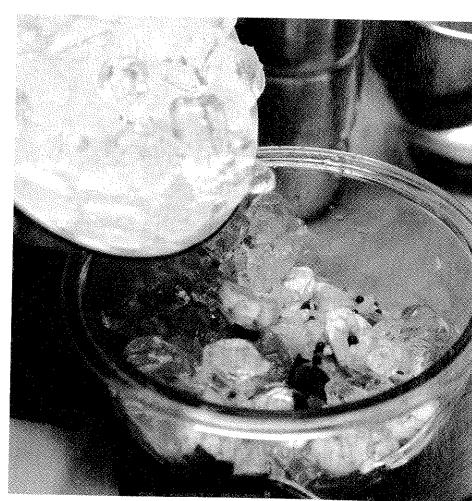
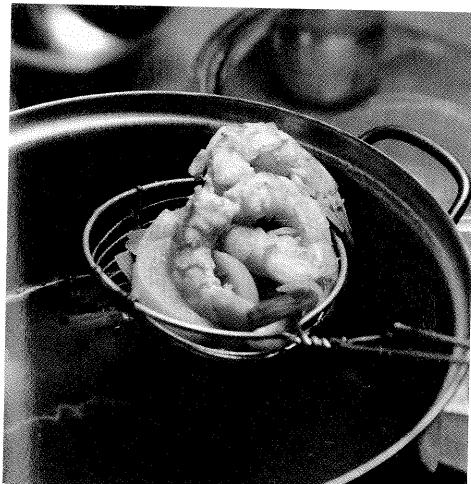
Prepare the shrimp: In a 6- to 8-qt. pan, combine 1 gallon water with 1/4 cup of the salt, the cayenne, pepper corns, lemon, garlic, bay leaves, and onion. Bring to a boil and then simmer for 15 minutes. Add the shrimp and cook until they're pink and just barely opaque through the center, about 3 minutes. Pull the shrimp from the boil and put them in a large bowl. Cover with ice and then add 2 cups of the boil liquid to the iced shrimp. Soak for 5 minutes. Add the remaining salt. When the shrimp are well chilled, drain.

Before serving, dip each shrimp in the remoulade sauce to coat and arrange on a bed of the lettuce.



The cool, fresh, briny flavors of boiled shrimp dressed in a creamy remoulade sauce provide a good balance to the hearty gumbo.

How to cook flavorful and tender shrimp



A spicy "boil" gives shrimp more flavor. Cook them until they're just barely opaque through the center; overcooking makes shrimp tough.

An ice bath stops the cooking. A quick soak in a little of the cooled boil boosts the flavor.

Chicken & Sausage Gumbo Ya Ya

Serves eight as a main course or twelve as an appetizer.

Bone-in chicken gives the stew more flavor; the meat becomes so tender that it falls from the bone. If, however, you don't feel like fishing out the bones later, you can use the same amount of boneless thighs; they will likely take less time to cook, so check for tenderness sooner.

3 Tbs. plus ¾ cup vegetable oil
**2½ lb. skinless chicken thighs,
preferably bone-in**
**Kosher salt and freshly ground
black pepper**
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 medium bunch celery, thinly sliced
4 large onions, diced
4 green or red bell peppers, diced
2 Tbs. minced garlic
**½ to 1 tsp. cayenne or 5 fresh cayenne
peppers, diced**
¾ tsp. dried oregano
¾ tsp. dried basil
¾ tsp. dried thyme
4 bay leaves
**8 cups homemade or lower-salt
chicken broth or water**
**1½ lb. andouille sausage or other
spicy smoked sausage, cut into
½-inch chunks**

1 Tbs. filé powder
6 cups cooked white rice
Chopped scallions for garnish
**Tabasco or other Louisiana-style hot
sauce (see Test Kitchen, p. 116)**

In a heavy-based soup pot, heat 3 Tbs. of the oil over high heat until almost smoking. While the oil is heating, season the chicken generously with salt and pepper, dust it with ¼ cup of the flour, and shake off the excess. Sear the chicken in the hot oil until golden brown, turning once to brown both sides, 4 minutes on each side. Remove the chicken and set aside.

Let the oil reheat for a minute and then reduce the heat to medium high and add the celery, onions, and peppers and cook until soft, 10 to 12 minutes, stirring to prevent scorching. Remove the vegetables and any liquid from the pan and set aside. Add ¾ cup oil to the pot and let it heat up for a minute over medium heat. Slowly add the remaining flour to the pan and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture is the color of chocolate, 10 to 20 minutes. Stir carefully, being sure to scrape the sides and bottom of the pot to prevent scorching. Pay

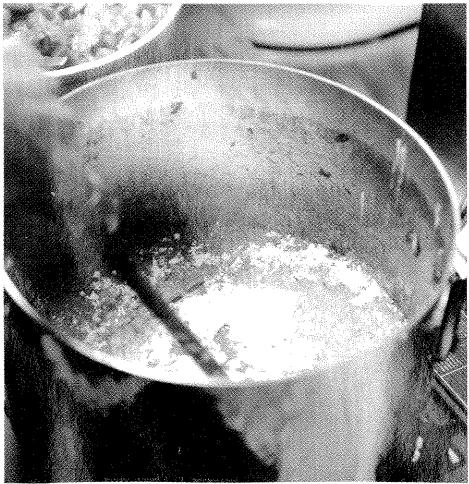
attention not to burn the roux; if you do burn it, you'll have to start over.

When the roux has reached a good mahogany brown, return the cooked vegetables to the pot, along with the garlic, cayenne, oregano, basil, thyme, and bay leaves. Stir to scrape the bottom of the pot and cook until well combined, 3 to 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

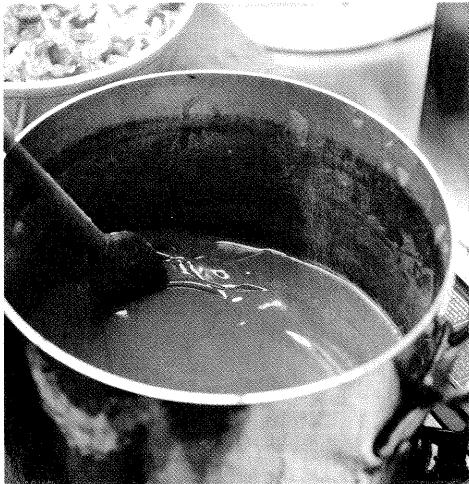
Slowly add the broth while stirring until smoothly blended. Add the chicken and the sausage. Bring to a simmer and skim off excess fat. Simmer uncovered, skimming any foam or fat that rises to the surface, until the chicken meat is so tender that it falls easily from the bones, about 2 hours (begin checking earlier). Remove the bones from the pot and discard.

Return the soup to a boil and stir in the filé powder, stirring vigorously to avoid clumping, until the filé powder is dissolved. Taste for seasoning, adding salt and pepper as necessary. Serve the gumbo in bowls over the cooked white rice with chopped scallions and Tabasco to taste.

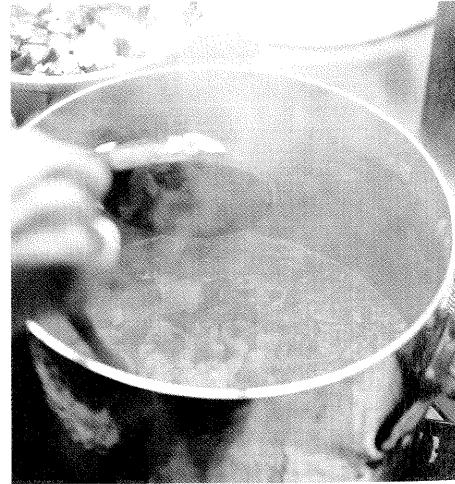
The makings of a good gumbo



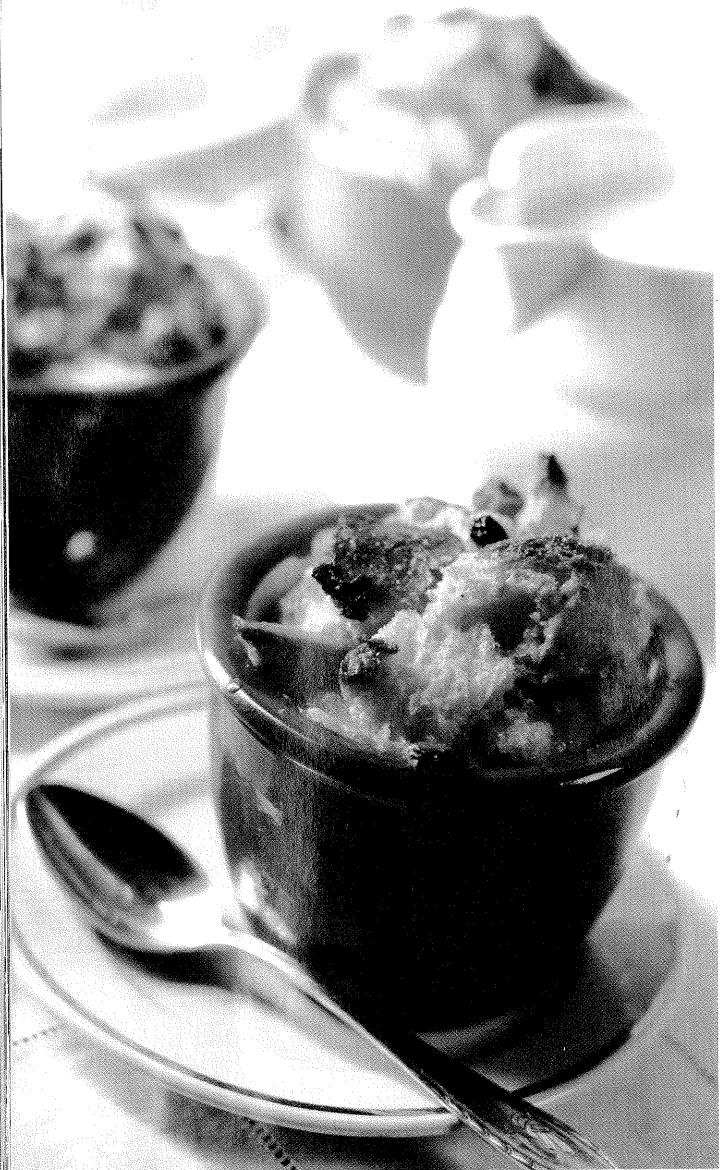
Make the roux in the same pot the chicken cooked in. Start with approximately equal weights of oil and flour. Use a heavy-based pan, stir with a wooden spoon, and go slow.



Cook the roux until it's glossy and a rich, dark brown. It should smell toasty and nutty, not burnt.



Add the cooked vegetables back to the roux carefully; brown roux is extremely hot. The "holy trinity"—celery, onion, and bell pepper—gives the gumbo a true Creole flavor.



Bread Pudding with Bourbon Sauce

Serves eight; yields about 1 cup sauce.

To bake this in one large dish instead of individual custard cups, simply add 10 minutes to the cooking time.

FOR THE BREAD PUDDING:

- 1/2 cup golden raisins**
- 3 Tbs. bourbon**
- 5 large eggs**
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar**
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg**
- Pinch of salt**
- 3 cups heavy cream**
- 1/2 lb. stale white bread with crusts, preferably Italian or French, torn into 1-inch pieces**

FOR THE SAUCE:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream**
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar**
- 3 Tbs. bourbon**
- 1/8 tsp. ground cinnamon**

So New Orleans (and so easy), bread pudding is the perfect foil for spicy gumbo. A bourbon sauce lifts this version a notch above homey.

Make the bread pudding: In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, combine the raisins and bourbon and heat gently until the liquid is evaporated and the raisins are plump, about 7 minutes.

In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs with the sugar, vanilla, spices, and salt. Stir in the cream until well blended. Toss in the torn bread and plumped raisins and stir. Let the mixture stand for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, to allow the bread to soak up the liquid. The pudding may be made ahead until this point and refrigerated for up to 4 hours until you're ready to bake.

Heat the oven to 350°F. Butter eight 6-oz. custard cups or ramekins. Portion the bread mixture into the cups and pour any remaining custard over the top of each. Set the cups in a baking pan or shallow roasting pan and add enough water to the pan to come halfway up the sides of the cups. Bake until the puddings are browned on top and a knife inserted in the center comes out barely clean, about 50 minutes. Let the puddings cool on a rack and serve warm, at room temperature, or chilled.

Make the sauce: In a small saucepan, combine the cream and sugar. Dissolve the sugar over medium heat and let the mixture come slowly to a boil. Cook, boiling gently, until the sauce is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, 5 to 7 minutes (235°F on a candy thermometer). Remove from the heat and stir in the bourbon and cinnamon. Serve the sauce warm on the side.

Shopping list

Fresh produce

- 5 large yellow onions**
- 4 green or red bell peppers**
- 1 head garlic**
- 1 bunch celery**
- 1 bunch scallions**
- Small head Boston or bibb lettuce**
- 1 bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- 3 lemons**

Shellfish

- 1 1/2 lb. large (21-25 per lb.) shrimp (easy-peel is fine)**

Meat, poultry & dairy

- 2 1/2 lb. bone-in, skinless chicken thighs**
- 1 1/2 lb. andouille or other spicy smoked sausage**
- 6 large eggs**
- Heavy cream (4 1/2 cups)**

Wines & spirits

- Bourbon**

Other groceries

- French or Italian bread (1/2 lb.)**
- Vegetable oil**
- White-wine vinegar**
- Prepared yellow mustard**
- Creole-style or country-style Dijon mustard**
- Tabasco or other hot sauce**
- Tomato paste**
- Paprika**
- Cayenne**
- Dried oregano**
- Dried thyme**
- Dried basil**
- Ground cinnamon**
- Ground nutmeg**
- Filé powder**
- Bay leaves (8)**
- Kosher salt**
- Whole black peppercorns**
- Homemade or lower-salt chicken broth (8 cups)**
- White rice**
- Golden raisins (1/2 cup)**
- All-purpose flour**
- Granulated sugar**
- Pure vanilla extract**

A trick for making risotto ahead

If you've read over the risotto recipe on p. 85, you know that a fresh batch of risotto takes at least 30 minutes to prepare. How then, you might wonder, does your favorite Italian restaurant manage to serve you a hot dish of perfectly cooked risotto in about 10 minutes? The answer is parcooking. If you try to make risotto ahead completely and then reheat it, it will be overcooked and mushy. Instead you can cook it until it's about halfway done – the rice should still be rather firm inside – and then spread it out on a baking sheet to stop cooking and cool. Cover the rice and set it aside at room temperature for up to two hours. When you're ready to serve the risotto, return it to the pot and resume adding hot liquid until it's perfectly al dente, a few minutes later.

Why bake custards in a water bath?

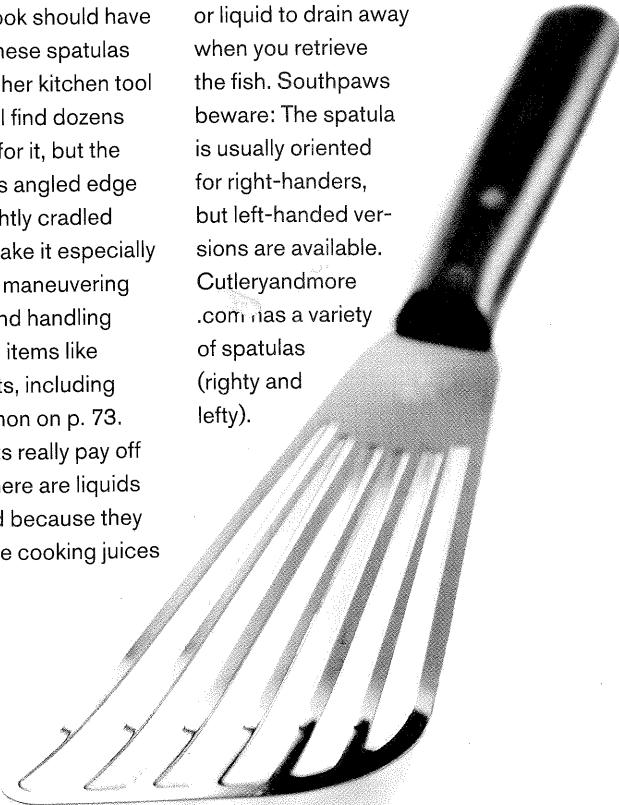
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rink, causing your
ard to crack or

separate into curdled
egg and liquid. A water
bath insulates custards
from the direct heat of
the oven because, unlike
the air in the oven,
the water can't exceed
212°F. Without the bath,
the outside of your des-
sert would overcook
before the center is
done. And direct heat
could take small custards
from cooked to
cracked within a minute.
But if they're in a water
bath, you have more
time to catch them at
the perfect degree of
doneness.

The slotted spatula

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ed because they
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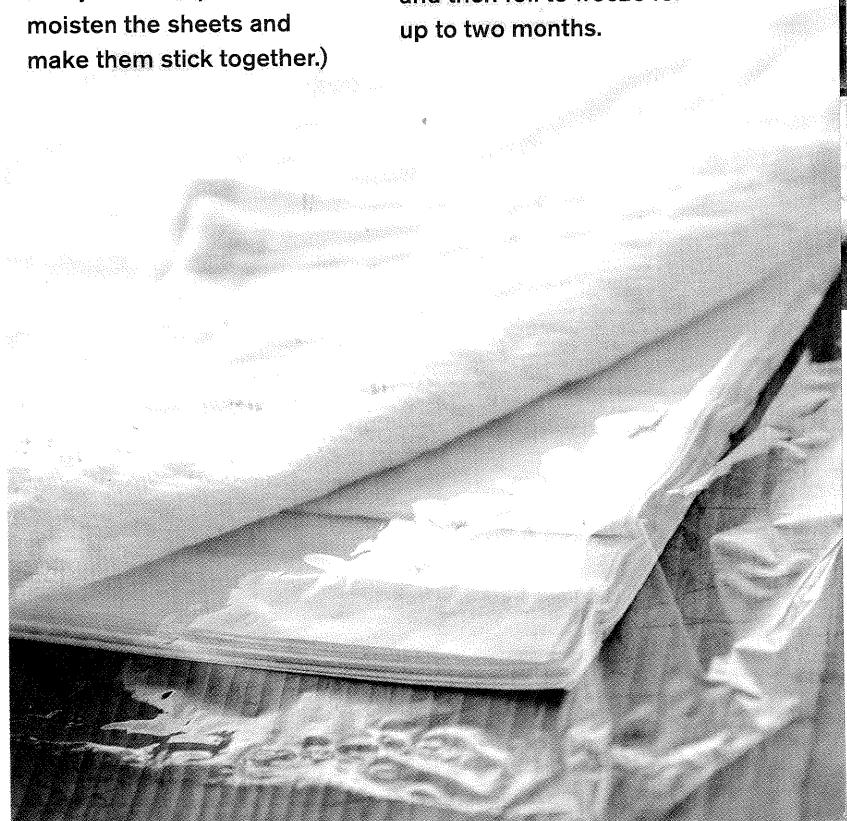
or liquid to drain away
when you retrieve
the fish. Southpaws
beware: The spatula
is usually oriented
for right-handers,
but left-handed ver-
sions are available.
[Cutleryandmore](http://Cutleryandmore.com)
.com has a variety
of spatulas
(righty and
lefty).



Tips for working with phyllo dough

Tissue-thin sheets of phyllo dough can be frustrating to work with because they can dry out quickly and tear. Here are some tips for making your phyllo experience a happy one.

- ❖ Phyllo sheets thaw more evenly and are less likely to stick together if you let the unopened package thaw in the refrigerator overnight. You can keep unopened, thawed phyllo in the fridge for up to a month.
- ❖ Don't open the phyllo package until you have all the other ingredients prepared and you're ready to work.
- ❖ Unroll the phyllo sheets and lay them flat on a dry surface. Immediately cover with plastic wrap and then a damp towel. (Covering with just a damp towel will moisten the sheets and make them stick together.)
- ❖ Keep the phyllo covered when not working with it, and don't leave it uncovered for more than a minute at a time.
- ❖ Work as fast as you can.
- ❖ Use a soft-bristle pastry brush to lightly coat the sheets with melted butter or oil. Start at the edges (to keep them from cracking) and work in toward the center.
- ❖ Roll up any unused sheets, wrap well in plastic, and refrigerate for up to two weeks. Or, wrap in plastic and then foil to freeze for up to two months.





Fenugreek leaves

Both the leaves and the seeds of the fenugreek (FEN-yoo-greek) plant are used in Indian cooking. Fresh fenugreek leaves are eaten as a vegetable in India. The dried leaves, called *kasuri methi*, are used to flavor savory dishes, like the cauliflower stir-fry on p. 92. Fresh leaves wrapped in dry paper towels in a zip-top bag will keep for about two weeks in the refrigerator. Store dried leaves in a sealed jar in a cool, dark cupboard; use within four months. For sources, see p. 119.

How much citrus juice will you get?

Lemon

1 medium (5-ounce) lemon yields
4 to 5 tablespoons unstrained juice

Lime

1 medium (4-ounce) lime yields 3 to 4 tablespoons unstrained juice

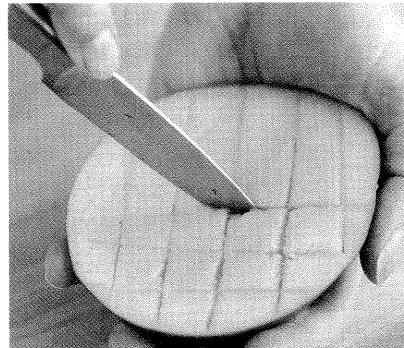
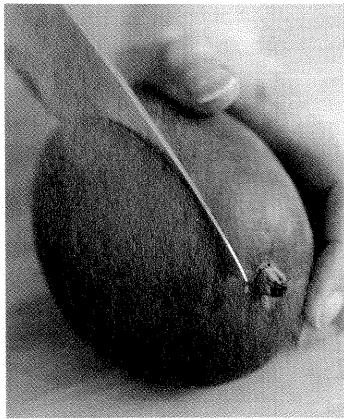
Orange

1 medium (10-ounce) navel orange yields 6 to 7 tablespoons unstrained juice

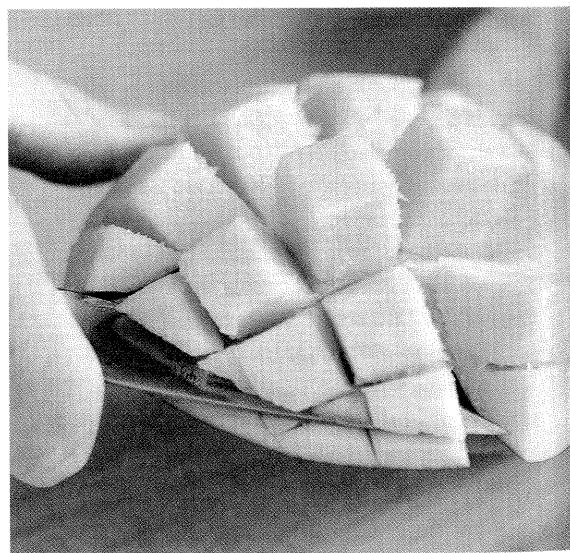
How to cut a mango

Mangos contain a large, flat seed that doesn't separate readily from the juicy flesh, so the flesh needs to be cut away from the seed. Mango flesh can be slippery, so leaving the skin on until you've dealt with the seed will help your grip.

Balance the mango on one of its narrow sides and then slice off one of the wide sides of the fruit. Try to cut as close to the seed as possible, usually about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the center. Repeat with the other wide side, and then slice off the remaining narrow pieces of fruit.



To dice the mango, cup one of the unpeeled pieces in your palm and use a paring knife to score the fruit into the size of dice you want. Be careful not to cut through the skin of the fruit (or into your hand).



Use your fingertips to pop the mango inside out, and then use the paring knife to slice the dice away from the skin.