

Title:

The Well-Stocked Kitchen Starts With Cutting-Edge Knives

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Summary:

Preparing meals that are a cut above the ordinary may be easier if you start with the right cutting tools.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Preparing meals that are a cut above the ordinary may be easier if you start with the right cutting tools.

Well-designed cutting tools are engineered with style, safety and performance in mind. A smartly constructed knife is fashioned of forged high-carbon stainless steel and chromium for optimum rust and stain resistance.

For example, Insignia2 cutlery has fully tapered blade edges that are engineered with Chicago Cutlery's signature Taper Grind®; Edge for extreme sharpness, performance, edge retention and resharpening ease.

When choosing a knife, look for heavy forged bolsters between the blade and the handle. These bolsters provide greater balance and safety by preventing fingers from riding up on the blade. A full tang blade, extending from the tip of the knife to the end of the handle, provides additional strength, balance and control.

A good knife collection features patented ergonomic polymer handles for exceptional durability and handling. Triple compression stainless steel rivets should secure the handles to the blades.

Available in 18-piece and 12-piece slanted hardwood block sets, the Insignia2 collection contains a four-piece forged steak knife set, a three-piece set with paring, utility and chef knives, and a two-piece Asian set featuring a seven-inch Granton-edge Santoku and a 3.5-inch paring knife.

A new concept in cutlery is the collection's Partoku®, a five-inch knife

that delivers the versatility of a Granton-edge Santoku with the convenience of an easy-handling paring knife. It's designed for chopping, dicing, slicing and mincing and works well as a cleaver, slicer and chef's knife. The five-inch version can accomplish kitchen tasks that would be unwieldy with a larger knife.

After stocking your kitchen with the best, most ergonomic knives, you may want to use them to reward yourself by preparing these delicious recipes:

Braised Chicken

in Wine Sauce

Serves 4

5 slices bacon, diced

1 cup onion, roughly chopped

1 3 1/2-lb. chicken, cut into eighths

1/4 lb. mushrooms, diced

8 small new potatoes, cut in large pieces

1 clove garlic, minced

salt and pepper to taste

1/2 tsp. dried thyme

1 cup chicken broth

3 cups Burgundy wine

Chopped parsley

With a Chicago Cutlery Insignia® Partoku, dice uncooked bacon and mushrooms; roughly chop onions and cut potatoes and chicken into pieces. In a large skillet, sauté diced bacon with half the onions until bacon is crisp. Remove and drain well. Add chicken pieces to skillet and brown on all sides. Remove chicken and set aside.

Put remaining onions, mushrooms, potatoes and minced garlic in skillet. Add

browned chicken pieces, bacon and onion mixture. Add salt and pepper, thyme and enough chicken broth and wine to nearly cover chicken. Cover and simmer on low heat for 45 minutes or until chicken is tender and juices run clear when pricked. Serve sprinkled with chopped parsley.

Easy Scalloped Eggplant

Serves 4

1 medium eggplant, peeled and cubed (about 3 cups)

1 Tbsp. parsley, finely chopped

12 ounces grated cheddar cheese; reserve a few tablespoons for topping

2 eggs

1 medium onion, chopped

1 cup cracker crumbs

Salt and pepper to taste

Butter

Peel and cube eggplant. In a medium saucepan, boil eggplant until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain well. In a lightly buttered baking dish, combine eggplant, parsley, cheese (reserve some for topping), eggs, onion and cracker crumbs. Sprinkle with remaining cheese, salt and pepper and dot with butter. Bake at 350° F for 25 minutes or until firm. Serve immediately.