

2011: A Fall Dinner Menu



Pumpkin Soup

- 6 cups chicken stock
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 4 cups pumpkin purée
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 clove garlic minced
- 4 whole black peppercorns
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream

Bring stock, salt, pumpkin purée, onion, ginger, brown sugar, thyme, garlic and peppercorns to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 20 minutes uncovered.

Purée the heated mixture, 1 cup at a time, in a blender or food processor. Return to pan, bring to a boil again, then reduce heat to low and simmer for another 20 minutes, uncovered. Stir in heavy cream. Pour soup into bowls and garnish with parsley or roasted nuts. Serves 4.

Couscous Salad

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1, 1-1/2 pound pumpkin, peeled, seeded and cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup Granny Smith apple, chopped
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1 cup Israeli couscous, cooked
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 4 small hollowed-out pumpkins

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a sauté pan over medium heat, add onion and 2 cups of chopped pumpkin pieces. Sauté until pumpkin begins to soften, about 5 to 7 minutes.

Add chopped apple and sauté for another 3 minutes. Add wine, cook for 2 minutes, then remove from heat and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the couscous, dried cranberries, olive oil thyme, salt and pepper. Add in the pumpkin-and apple mixture and toss completely.

Evenly fill the hollowed-out pumpkins with the mixture and place on a shallow baking dish. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 25 minutes. Remove foil and bake for 10 more minutes. Serve warm from the oven. Serves 4.

Filet Mignon

- 6 ounces olive oil
- 4 8-ounce filet mignons
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat a medium-sized sauté pan until hot, add olive oil and seasoned filets. Sear and turn until browned on both sides. Finish in a 425-degree oven until desired temperature. Serves 4.

Roasted Shallots

- 1 1/2 pounds large shallots (about 20), peeled
- 1/2 tablespoon salt
- 1/4 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange shallots in a shallow baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; drizzle with oil; add rosemary. Cover with foil and roast for 20 minutes. Remove foil and roast for 20 additional minutes. Increase oven temperature to 425 degrees and roast for 10 more minutes. Serve hot.

Pumpkin Mashed Potatoes

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 3 shallots, sliced
- 2 ounces fresh ginger, peeled
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 pounds pumpkin, peeled, seeded and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups milk
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon salt

Melt butter in a large deep pot set over medium heat. Add shallots, ginger, cinnamon stick, brown sugar and cook, stirring constantly until sugar melts, about 3 minutes. Add potatoes, pumpkin, chicken stock, milk and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until potatoes, pumpkin tender, about 25 minutes.

Drain the potatoes and pumpkin, reserving 1 cup of cooking liquid. Discard the ginger and cinnamon stick. Transfer potatoes and pumpkin to a large bowl and mash with a fork. Stir in

nutmeg and salt, adding 2 or 3 tablespoons of cooking liquid as needed to achieve proper consistency. Serve hot.

Green Beans

- 8 ounces fresh green beans
- Splash of olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wash and chill beans in a bowl of ice water. Bring a medium-sized pot of water to a boil, adding the chilled beans and cooking for 2 to 3 minutes.

Remove beans from pot, return to ice bath. Remove and dry beans. In a sauté pan at medium heat, add splash of oil and sauté beans with a touch of salt and pepper. Serve warm.



DESSERTS:

Warm Pumpkin Shooter

- 1 cup pumpkin purée
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 ounces Irish cream liqueur
- 2 ounces coffee-flavor liqueur
- 2 ounces light brown sugar
- Dash of nutmeg
- Dash of cinnamon
- Pinch of salt

Put all ingredients in a saucepot, bring to a boil. Wisk to a smooth consistency. Serve warm in a shot glass. Serves. 4.

Pumpkin Crème Brûlée

- 1 quart heavy cream
- 2 vanilla beans, split
- 5 ounces sugar
- 19 egg yolks, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon powdered ginger
- 1 pint pumpkin purée
- 1 additional pint sugar for topping

In a large pot, combine heavy cream, vanilla, 2 1/2 ounces sugar, and bring to a boil. In a bowl, combine egg yolks and remaining 2 1/2 ounces sugar. Add 1/3 of the hot liquid to the egg mixture to temper, stirring constantly. Add egg mixture to pot of hot cream, stirring constantly. Stir in cinnamon and ginger. Fold in pumpkin puree.

Fill buttered oval ramekins 3/4 full and place in a warm water bath. Oven-bake at 325 degrees until just barely set, remove, and cool for 30 minutes. Chill in refrigerator for 3 to 6 hours.

After set, cover surface of each custard with 1/8-inch layer of sugar, set ramekins on a baking sheet surrounded with ice. Caramelize sugar topping under the broiler or with a hand blow torch.

Pumpkin Whoopie Pies

- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 1/2 cups pumpkin purée
- 2 eggs yolks separated
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tablespoon ground ginger
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 2 cups confectioner's sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet. For dough: In a large bowl, combine the oil and brown sugar, mixing in pumpkin and egg yolks, beating well. Add flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract, cinnamon, ginger, and mix well.

Drop heaping tablespoon of dough onto baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool.

For filling: Beat egg whites, mix with milk, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 1 cup of confectioner's sugar. Mix well and add in remaining cup of confectioner's sugar. Beat until light and fluffy. Make sandwiches from two cookies filled with 1 tablespoon of filling. Serve.