

# PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



## July 2020 – Summer Nights

Summer is here and it's the perfect time for a cold beer. There are so many great summer foods that are delicious with beer. Beer is the quintessential partner for all things spicy or fatty because of its carbonation and, in general, lower alcohol level as compared to wine. Since alcohol increases the perception of spice, a high alcohol beverage makes spicy foods even spicier. The bubbles in beer are like a napkin for your tongue, cleansing your palate of fat and getting you ready for your next bite.

Just like wine, beer comes in many different styles and flavors. One reason beer is bitter because it is made with hops. Originally, hops were added to prevent bacterial contamination on long ship voyages. India Pale Ale (IPA) gets its name from its aggressive use of hops used to sustain the beer on long trips from England to India. Hops are now used primarily to provide fruity, floral flavors and provide the bitter bite that beer drinkers enjoy. If you like your beer a little less bitter, look for an "East Coast IPA." They tend to have a high malt ratio. On the other hand, West Coast IPAs have a higher hops ratio. Whichever you chose, either style works with this salad of spring greens with Irish cheddar, walnuts, cranberries, and apples. The sweet apple and cranberries offset the bitterness of the beer, and the bubbles cleanse the palate of the fat from the dressing and cheese.

If you are looking for even more bitterness, a Double or Imperial IPA is an IPA turned way up. It has classic fruit, citrus, pine, or floral qualities and even bolder malts for balance. This kind of bitterness makes it a good time to get out your sweet recipes. Try Sweet Pork Ribs rubbed with sugar and spices and slathered with a sweet, tangy sauce. Add Bacon

Wrapped Corn as a sweet, spicy side dish and you are all set.

It might seem strange, but beer goes well with some desserts because of its relatively low acidity and alcohol. By contrast, high acid wines taste sour and alcoholic with sweet desserts. Seek out a Scottish ale, a malt-forward beer with caramel flavors and a soft, chewy mouthfeel. An excellent choice for dessert is Coffee Bananas Foster. It includes coffee liqueur for a rich bitterness that echoes the bitterness of the beer. Likewise, the silky texture of the banana compliments the softness of the beer.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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## Irish Cheddar-Apple Salad

### INGREDIENTS

Salad:

- 4 cups of mixed salad greens
- Salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 1 medium pink lady apple, cored and chopped
- 2 Tablespoons dried cranberries
- 2 Tablespoons vinaigrette
- 1 ounce Irish Cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2 Tablespoons chopped toasted walnuts

### Dressing:

- 1/4 cup apple cider
- 2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon cider vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

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## DIRECTIONS

Put all dressing ingredients into a jar. Put the lid on and shake well.

Place the salad greens in a bowl and season lightly with salt and pepper. Add the chopped apple and dried cranberries. Drizzle with vinaigrette and toss well to combine.

Place in a serving dish and top with shredded cheddar cheese and toasted walnuts.

Yield: 2-4 servings

## Sweet Pork Ribs

### INGREDIENTS

Ribs:

- 3 pounds pork spareribs
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 Tablespoon packed dark brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

### BBQ Sauce:

- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup ketchup
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 Tablespoons whole grain mustard
- 1 Tablespoon molasses
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1½ teaspoons hot sauce
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

### DIRECTIONS

For the ribs: Place the ribs in a roasting pan, cutting the racks in half to fit if necessary. Combine the garlic, rosemary, brown sugar, balsamic vinegar, salt, and cayenne in a small bowl, and rub the mixture evenly all

over the ribs. Allow the ribs to marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour and up to 4 hours.

Place a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Pour 1/2 cup water into the roasting pan and cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil. Roast the ribs until the meat is very tender and separates easily from the bone, about 1 1/2 hours. While the ribs are roasting make the BBQ sauce.

**For the sauce:** Place the balsamic vinegar in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil then lower the heat to medium and cook the vinegar until it is reduced by a third, about 8 minutes. Whisk in the ketchup, apple cider vinegar, honey, mustard, molasses, Worcestershire, hot sauce, and salt. Bring the sauce back to a boil then lower the heat and simmer until thickened, 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. To finish, remove ribs from the oven and transfer to 2 aluminum foil lined baking sheets. Increase the oven temperature to 450 degrees F. Brush both sides of the ribs generously with the BBQ sauce and bake uncovered for 10 minutes, until the sauce is browned and sizzling. Allow the ribs to rest for 10 minutes before slicing.

Yield: 4-6 servings

## Bacon-Wrapped Corn

### INGREDIENTS

- 10 ears corn, husked and cleaned
- Cajun seasoning to taste
- Salt and black pepper to taste

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1 pound of raw sliced bacon

### **DIRECTIONS**

Preheat an outdoor grill for high heat. Sprinkle each ear of corn with Cajun seasoning, salt, and pepper, and wrap each ear with 2 slices of bacon, covering the ear as completely as possible. (A big ear might need 3 pieces of bacon.) Wrap the ears in aluminum foil, twisting the ends tightly to seal.

Place the wrapped corn on the preheated grill, and grill on high heat until the corn is hot, about 10 minutes per side. Turn the heat to low and grill the corn until the bacon is cooked and the corn is tender, about 45 minutes.

Yield: 10 ears

## **Coffee Bananas Foster**

### **INGREDIENTS**

1 banana, peeled and sliced lengthwise  
¼ cup coffee-flavored liqueur (such as Kahlua®)  
2 Tablespoons butter  
2 Tablespoons brown sugar  
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

### **DIRECTIONS**

Preheat grill for medium heat. Place banana, coffee-flavored liqueur, butter, brown sugar, and ground cinnamon on a large section of heavy aluminum foil.

Bring up 2 sides of foil to touch and fold down twice to seal. Double fold ends of packet to securely seal.

Place packet on preheated grill and cook until heated through, about 5 minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

Yield: 2 servings