

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



August 2012 – Kid's Favorites

Making a meal from recipes my kids love does not mean the adults won't like it. I look for recipes that can be made plain most of the way and hold back on some of the more "adult" ingredients to add later.

One of my kids loves baked potatoes with sour cream but doesn't like classic potato salad. Here is a potato salad recipe that uses all of the favorite toppings for a baked potato and can be served warm or cold. Got a vegetarian in the group? Serve the bacon bits in a small dish on the side. Another one hates onion? The onions make a great "optional" garnish.

Just about everybody likes grilled sausages. For more adventurous eaters, Beer-Braised Sausages are moist and infused with the flavors of garlic, onion and beer. If those flavors don't work for some of your diners, just leave those dogs out of the braise. For the non-sausage eaters, it's easy to cook a couple of standard hot dogs or even a veggie dog.

Grilled sausages and bacon-laden potatoes would be great with a meaty Syrah but this type of meal on a hot summer night calls out for a cold beer. Summer Ale is perfect. Crisp and light, the flavors are often enhanced with fresh lemon. Not too hoppy or bitter, ales are made with malted wheat and traditional top-fermenting "ale" yeast. The head is unusually abundant due to the natural protein deposits of wheat, with a thick consistency similar to meringue. Summer Ales generally have alcohol content of 5% and are a welcome reprieve from 14% alcohol wine.

Keeping things cool at the end of the meal, everyone will love Watermelon Sorbet. For those who like a twist, accompany the sorbet with a Basil Wine Gelée (full recipe at

www.LaSommeliere.com). Ice cold foods don't work with most alcoholic beverages. Instead, muddle orange slices with fresh basil and top with ice cold sparkling water. The flavors and temperatures will harmonize beautifully.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Loaded Potato Salad

INGREDIENTS

5 large rose potatoes
16 oz. sour cream
1 bunch chives
1 cup bacon bits
2 cups cheese
Salt and pepper, to taste
Parsley or dill, (optional) to taste

DIRECTIONS

Cut potatoes into small, bite size pieces. Boil in water for 10-15 minutes until very soft. Stir in remaining ingredients. Serve warm or cold.

Yield: 8 servings

Beer-braised Sausages

INGREDIENTS

3 beers, your choice of style
½ onion, rough chopped
5-6 garlic cloves, rough chopped
6 uncooked sausages

DIRECTIONS

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Bring the beer, onion and garlic to a low boil. Add sausages and cook for 15-20 minutes. Finish cooking on the grill to crisp casing.

Yield: 6 servings

(on website)

Watermelon Sorbet with Wine Basil Gelée

INGREDIENTS

For sorbet

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest
- 5 cups coarsely chopped seeded watermelon (from a 4-lb piece, rind discarded)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, or to taste

For gelée

- 1/4 cup packed fresh basil leaves
- 1 1/2 cups dry white wine
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons water
- 2 teaspoons unflavored gelatin (from 1 envelope)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, or to taste

DIRECTIONS

Make sorbet:

Bring sugar, water, and zest to a boil in a 2-quart heavy saucepan, stirring until sugar is dissolved, then reduce heat and simmer, without stirring, washing down any sugar crystals on side of pan with a pastry brush dipped in cold water, 2 minutes.

Put watermelon in a blender, then add syrup and lemon juice and blend until smooth. Pour through a fine-mesh sieve into a large

bowl, pressing on pulp and discarding any remaining solids.

Freeze in ice cream maker, then transfer to an airtight container and freeze until firm.

Make gelée while sorbet freezes:

Blanch basil in a 3-quart pot of boiling salted water 5 seconds, then drain and transfer to a bowl of ice and cold water to stop cooking. Drain basil and squeeze dry.

Bring wine, sugar, zest, and 1/2 cup water to a boil in cleaned 2-quart heavy saucepan, stirring until sugar is dissolved, then simmer 2 minutes.

While wine syrup simmers, sprinkle gelatin over remaining 2 tablespoons water in a large metal bowl and let soften 1 minute.

Pour about 1/2 cup wine syrup through a medium-mesh sieve lined with a dampened paper towel into gelatin mixture (reserve lined sieve), then stir until gelatin is dissolved.

Blend remaining syrup with basil and lemon juice in cleaned blender until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids), then pour through lined sieve into gelatin mixture. Set bowl in a larger bowl of ice and cold water and let stand, stirring occasionally, until cold, about 15 minutes, then chill in refrigerator, uncovered, until set, at least 2 hours.

Gently whisk gelée to break into small pieces and serve as a bed for scoops of sorbet.

Yield: 6-8 servings