

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



June 2015 – Bourbon Bonanza

Sometimes it's nice to forgo the meal and just snack your way through the evening. Bourbon is a good choice of beverage to accompany this kind of dining. It is a terrific sipping spirit that gets its name from the House of Bourbon, which ruled France in the 16th century. Bourbon whiskey is most often associated with the American South, and legally it can be made anywhere in the US. It must be made from 51% corn and aged in new, charred oak barrels for some period of time. The barrel-aging of bourbon gives it a smoky aroma and flavor.

Begin your sipping adventure with a Kentucky Apple Cocktail accompanied by Down South Bruschetta. The cocktail combines tart hard cider with sweet maple syrup. Both enhance the fruit and spice from the bourbon. Down South Bruschetta is crunchy with creamy, tangy cheese. The apple cider reduction will echo the flavors of the apple in the cider, and the sweet syrup will offset the acidity in the tomatoes and the cheese.

For your next bourbon beverage, try a quality straight bourbon to sip on the rocks and pair with some thin-sliced country ham. Make it into sandwiches or just eat it by the slice. A straight bourbon must be aged for more than two years, and it cannot have coloring, flavoring, or other spirits added. Ham and bourbon are known as "the perfect midnight snack" because the flavors of cinnamon and walnut in the bourbon complement the saltiness of the country ham which is smoked and salt-cured, not cooked.

To signal the end of the eating, bring out this Caramel Apple Pie sprinkled with Bourbon Smoked Sugar from Bourbon Barrel Foods (bourbonbarrelfoods.com). Choose a small batch bourbon made from a

blend of the finest bourbons the producer has to offer. Small batch bourbons are rich and smooth. You can serve them straight up or on the rocks if it is still warm outside. You'll love the brown sugar and caramel flavors that you'll find in both the pie and the beverage.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Kentucky Apple Cocktail

INGREDIENTS

1 ounce bourbon
1 teaspoon pure maple syrup
Dash Angostura bitters
4 ounces hard apple cider
Fresh apple slice

DIRECTIONS

Fill a tall glass with ice cubes. Add bourbon, maple syrup and bitters. Top with hard apple cider; stir gently. Garnish with a fresh apple slice.

Yield: 1 drink

Down South Bruschetta

INGREDIENTS

1 French baguette, sliced into thin rounds
4 oz. soft goat cheese
4-6 small-sized Campari or 2-3 medium-sized vine-ripened tomatoes, chopped ¼" dice
¼ cup fresh basil, chopped fine
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 cup apple cider
Olive oil and kosher salt

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DIRECTIONS

Simmer the cider in a small saucepan until it reduced to about 2 tablespoons; about 30 min. It will thicken a bit more as it cools. Note: the reduction goes from liquid to hard candy in minutes.

Drizzle bread with olive oil and sprinkle with kosher salt. Bake in 200° oven for 15 minutes or until crunchy.

Mix tomatoes, basil and garlic and drizzle with olive oil. Season to taste with kosher salt.

Spread goat cheese on cooled crostini and top tomato mixture. Drizzle with cider reduction.

Yield: about 16 crostini

(on website)

Caramel Apple Pie

INGREDIENTS

7 large Granny Smith or Pippin apples,
peeled and cored
1 cup sugar
3 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1 tablespoon heavy cream
1 large egg
Double crust for 10" pie

CARAMEL TOPPING

1/2 cup packed brown sugar
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons heavy cream
1/2 cup pecan halves

DIRECTIONS

Butter and flour a 10-inch glass pie plate. On a lightly floured surface roll the dough to a 12-inch round about 1/8-inch thick. Line the pie plate, being sure to press the dough into the bottom and up the sides without stretching. Chill 30 minutes.

Roughly chop the apples into small pieces, about the size of lima beans. (The apples should measure about 9 cups chopped.) Combine with the sugar, tapioca, cinnamon, salt and lemon juice in a large bowl. Set aside until the juices begin to run, about 10 - 15 minutes.

Beat together the cream and egg to make a glaze and brush over the edges and bottom of the crust. Mound the apple filling in the pie shell. It will be quite full. Roll out the remaining dough to a large round about 1/8" thick. Place over the filling a seal the edges together by gently pressing together. Trim any excess dough with scissors and flute the edges. Brush the top with the remaining egg glaze. Using a paring knife, cut out and remove a circle the size of a quarter from the center of the top crust. Cut 5 or 6 slits in a spoke pattern beginning 1/2-inch from the center hole and ending 1/2-inch from the outside edge. Chill for 30 minutes before baking.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place the pie plate on a cookie sheet and bake 10 - 15 minutes, or until the top is golden brown. Reduce the heat to 300 degrees and continue baking until the juice visible in the center becomes thick and bubbly, about 1 hour (if the edges are browning too quickly, cover with aluminum foil). Meanwhile prepare the caramel topping.

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In a small saucepan combine brown sugar, butter and cream. Bring to a boil and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the pecan halves.

Spoon the hot caramel over the top of the pie to coat and return to the oven. Bake 5 minutes longer, or until the caramel sets. Cool on a rack before serving.

Yield: (1) 10" pie