

Valentine's Day Dinner Menu 2

Artichokes with Mustard Aioli

Maple-Glazed Duck Breast with Gingered Cranberry Pear Chutney

Duet of Potatoes ~ Whipped Sweet Potatoes & Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Orange-Scented Sugar Snap Peas

Flourless Chocolate Cake



Wine: SPANISH RIOJA, SUCH AS MARQUES DE CACERES CRIANZA

Rioja is simply one of the best companions for duck. These recipes have some sweet, savory and delicate elements, and rioja will compliment all facets of these recipes.



~ Romantic Dinner for Two ~

Maple-Glazed Duck Breast with Gingered Cranberry Pear Chutney

2 (7.5-ounce)	Maple Leaf Farms Boneless Duck Breast Filets, thawed if frozen
1/4 teaspoon	salt
1/4 teaspoon	freshly ground black pepper
1-1/2 tablespoons	pure maple syrup
2/3 cup	Gingered Cranberry Pear Chutney (see recipe)
1 teaspoon	finely shredded fresh ginger root

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Score the skin of the duck breast taking care not to puncture the meat. Heat an oven-proof skillet over medium heat until hot. Place duck in skillet skin sides down. Sprinkle salt and pepper lightly over duck. Cook 8 to 9 minutes or until skin is crispy and golden brown. Turn duck; continue cooking 3 minutes. Transfer duck to a plate; set aside. Carefully pour off drippings from skillet into a jar with a tight fitting lid. Refrigerate duck drippings for another use. Spread syrup over seasoned meaty sides of duck and return to skillet skin side up. Transfer skillet to oven. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until internal temperature of duck reaches 155 degrees. Transfer duck to carving board; cover with foil and let stand 5 minutes. (Internal temperature of duck will rise to 160 degrees).

Carve duck crosswise into thin slices. Transfer to warm serving plates. Garnish with shredded gingerroot and serve with warmed or room temperature chutney.

Makes 2 servings.

Gingered Cranberry Pear Chutney

2 firm	red or green Bartlett pears	2 teaspoons	minced fresh ginger root
1/3 cup	dried cranberries	1/8 teaspoon	salt
2 tablespoons	brown sugar	1/8 teaspoon	ground allspice
1 tablespoon	cider vinegar		

Peel, core and coarsely chop pears. Combine pears, cranberries, brown sugar, vinegar, ginger, salt and allspice in a medium saucepan. Cover; bring to a simmer over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer covered until pears are tender, about 10 minutes. Uncover; simmer over medium-high heat until chutney thickens, 3 to 4 minutes. Chutney may be prepared up to 24 hours before serving. Cool, cover and chill until serving time. Serve the chutney at room temperature or reheat the chutney just before serving. Makes about 1-1/4 cups chutney.

Artichokes with Mustard Aioli

2	artichokes, stems trimmed	3 tablespoons	mayonnaise
1	lemon	2 tablespoons	stone-ground or coarse-grain mustard
1 tablespoon	olive oil	1/4 teaspoon	sugar
2-1/2 teaspoons	dried tarragon, divided	1 small	clove garlic, minced

Using kitchen shears, trim off and discard the sharp ends from artichoke leaves. Place artichokes in a large saucepan or Dutch oven. Finely shred 1 teaspoon lemon peel from lemon; place in a small bowl. Cut lemon in half; squeeze juice over artichokes in saucepan and add the lemon halves to the pan. Pour oil and sprinkle 2 teaspoons of the tarragon over artichokes. Add enough cold water to pan to cover artichokes. Cover; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat; simmer covered until artichokes are tender, 50 to 55 minutes.

Meanwhile for aioli, add mayonnaise, mustard, sugar, garlic and remaining 1/2 teaspoon tarragon to bowl with lemon peel; mix well. Drain artichokes; serve with aioli. Makes 2 servings.

~ Duet of Potatoes ~

After making both potato recipes below, place some whipped sweet potatoes into the right half of a pastry piping bag, then add some of the garlic mashed potatoes into the left half. Squeeze the potatoes out into a decorate shape showcasing the swirl of potatoes.

Whipped Sweet Potatoes

1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch chunks
1/4 cup heavy cream or half-and-half
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

Place potatoes in a medium saucepan; add enough water to pan to cover potatoes. Cover; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat; simmer covered until potatoes are very tender, about 12 minutes.

Drain potatoes in a colander. Add cream and butter to same saucepan; place over low heat and stir mixture until butter is melted. Return potatoes to pan; add salt and nutmeg. Using a potato masher or hand held blender, mash potatoes until light and fluffy. Makes about 2 cups.

Note: Potatoes may be prepared up to 24 hours before serving. Cool, cover and refrigerate potatoes before reheating. Chilled potatoes may be placed in a pastry bag fitted with a large star tip, piped attractively onto a microwave serving plate and heated in the microwave oven just before serving.

Garlic Mashed Potatoes

1 pound red potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch chunks
3 large garlic cloves, peeled
1/4 cup heavy cream or half and half
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon salt

Place potatoes and garlic cloves in a medium saucepan; add enough water to pan to cover potatoes. Cover; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat; simmer covered until potatoes are very tender, about 18 minutes.

Drain potatoes and garlic in a colander. Add cream and butter to same saucepan; place over low heat and stir mixture until butter is melted. Return potatoes and garlic to pan; add salt. Using a potato masher or hand held blender, mash potatoes until light and fluffy. Makes about 2 cups.

Note: Potatoes may be prepared up to 24 hours before serving. Cool, cover and refrigerate potatoes before reheating. Chilled potatoes may be placed in a pastry bag fitted with a large star tip, piped attractively onto a microwave serving plate and heated in the microwave oven just before serving.

Orange Scented Sugar Snap Peas

1-1/2 pounds	sugar snap peas
1/4 cup	butter
1 teaspoon	salt
1/2 teaspoon	freshly ground black pepper
2 teaspoons	finely shredded orange peel

In a large saucepan, cover sugar snap peas with cold water. Bring to a simmer over high heat. Reduce heat; simmer until crisp-tender, 5 to 6 minutes. Drain well and return to same pan. Add butter, salt and pepper. Cook over medium heat until butter melts, stirring frequently. Transfer to a serving bowl; top with orange peel. Makes 6 servings.

Flourless Chocolate Cake with Raspberry Sauce

2 (10-ounce)	packages frozen raspberries in light syrup, thawed
12 ounces	semi-sweet chocolate bars, finely chopped
4 ounces	unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped
2 cups	unsalted butter
1 cup	packed light brown sugar
8 large	eggs, beaten
Fresh raspberries	

For sauce, pureé raspberries with their liquid in a food processor. Strain puree; discard seeds. Cover and chill the sauce until serving time.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom of a 9-inch round cake pan with 2-inch sides with parchment paper. Combine semisweet and unsweetened chocolate in a large bowl. In a medium saucepan, combine butter and brown sugar. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring frequently. Pour mixture over chocolate; whisk until chocolate melts. Whisk in eggs.

Pour batter into prepared pan. Place pan in a roasting pan and pour water into roasting pan to come half way up sides of cake pan. Bake 1 hour or until center is set and wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool, cover and chill at least 8 hours or overnight.

Just before serving, use a sharp knife to cut around edges of cake. Place a serving plate over top of cake; invert cake and remove pan and parchment paper. Serve cake with sauce and garnish with fresh raspberries. Makes 8 to 10 servings.