

Simple Brined, Mushroom-Sage Extra Virgin Olive Oil Basted Turkey



1 Turkey about 12 pounds

For The Brine

1 1/2 cups kosher salt
2 1/2 gallons cold water

Roasting

3 tablespoons Mushroom Sage Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 tablespoon freshly ground pepper
1/2-3/4 cups chicken stock, as needed

Place Turkey and enough brine to cover in a large pot. Refrigerate for 12 to 24 hours. If turkey floats to top weigh down with a plate and cans to keep it submerged in brine. Preheat oven to 400° rub 2 tablespoons mushroom sage extra virgin olive oil over the skin of turkey. Sprinkle pepper over skin and in cavity. Tuck wing tips under loosely truss legs and place turkey on a V-shaped rack in roasting pan. Tent breast with foil. Put turkey in preheated oven. To ensure the bird cooks evenly rotate roasting pan 180° every 30 minutes. Roast for about one hour remove foil and baste Turkey with 1/2 cup of warm stock mixed with one tablespoon mushroom sage extra virgin olive oil. Start checking internal temperature after about one hour by inserting an instant read thermometer in the meatiest part of the thigh not touching the bone. If legs or breast begin to get too brown cover loosely with foil roast until internal thigh temperature reaches 165° total roasting time should be about two to two and three-quarter hours. Let bird rest least 20 to 30 minutes before carving.
(Credits:VFC 11/22/10)

Cranberry-Orange Olive Oil Cake



Ingredients

1 1/2 cups + 1 Tbs. fresh squeezed orange juice (about 4-5 large navel oranges)
1 Tbs. finely grated orange zest
3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 3/4 teaspoons kosher salt
5 large eggs
3 cups granulated sugar
1 1/2 cups + 1 Tbs. Blood Orange Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1 cup confectioners' sugar

Preparation

1. Position a rack in the middle of the oven, remove any racks above, and crank up the heat to 350°F (175°C). Coat a 12-cup bundt or tube pan with 1 tbs. blood orange extra virgin olive oil and set aside.
2. Finely grate the zest of 2 oranges, then squeeze 4 of them. You should have 1 1/2 cups and 1 reserved tablespoon of orange juice of juice; if not, squeeze the 5th orange. Set aside.
3. Whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl and set aside.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, or with a hand held mixer in a large bowl, beat the eggs on medium-high speed until well combined, about 1 minute. Slowly pour in the granulated sugar and continue beating until thick and pale yellow, about 3 minutes. On low speed, alternate adding the flour mixture and blood orange extra virgin olive oil, starting and ending with the flour, and beat until just a few wisps of flour remain. Pour in the orange juice, zest and dried cranberries and whirl for a few seconds to bring the batter together.
5. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake until a cake tester comes out with a few moist crumbs clinging to it, about 1 1/4 hours. If the top is browning too much as the cake bakes, cover lightly with foil. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 15 minutes and then turn the cake out on to a rack over a sheet pan. Mix together 1 tablespoon reserved orange juice with confectioners' sugar to form a glaze. Pour slowly and evenly over the warm cake. Serve at room temperature.

(Credits: VFC 11/22/10)

Honey-Ginger Balsamic Glazed B-B-Q Ribs



Marinade For the Ribs:

4 racks (8 pounds) baby back ribs
12 garlic cloves, mashed or minced
3 Tbs. Honey-Ginger White Balsamic
3 Tbs. dark brown sugar
1 Tbs. Toasted Sesame Oil
1 Tbs. Sea Salt

For the Glaze:

3/4 cup Honey-Ginger White Balsamic
3 Tbs. honey
2 Tbs. Soy Sauce
1 teaspoon Toasted Sesame Oil
Toasted sesame seeds for garnish - optional

For the marinade: Mix together the Honey-Ginger white balsamic, brown sugar, minced garlic, sea salt and sesame oil. Coat the ribs with the marinade and allow to marinate in a sealed container or large zip lock bags for a minimum of 12 hours or overnight, turning a few times.

For the Glaze: Combine the honey ginger white balsamic, honey and soy sauce in a small sauce pan over medium heat. Allow to reduce by half and remove from heat. Add one teaspoon of toasted sesame oil to the mixture and stir to combine.

For the ribs: Prepare the grill and preheat the oven to 275. Over medium heat grill the ribs for approximately 5 minutes per side. Prepare baking pan/s large enough to hold the ribs in a single layer. Brush the glaze over the ribs and seal each pan well with foil. Bake the ribs for 2 hours or until tender and meat falls off the bone. Optionally, sprinkle ribs with sesame seeds as a garnish.

(Credits: VFC 8/30/10)

Cinnamon-Pear Balsamic Roasted Sweet Potatoes



INGREDIENTS:

4 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and each cut lengthwise into 8 wedges
1/3 cup Cinnamon-Pear Balsamic
2 tablespoons Butter Extra Virgin Olive Oil
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt or sea salt

PREPARATION:

Heat oven to 400F. Cut a piece of parchment paper to fit the bottom of a half sheet jelly-roll pan.

Thoroughly shake or whisk together the Cinnamon-Pear Balsamic and Butter Extra Virgin Olive Oil. In a large bowl toss to liberally coat the sweet potato wedges with the emulsified balsamic-olive oil mixture.

Arrange the potato wedges on the parchment paper lined pan in a single layer, without over-crowding. Sprinkle with sea salt and roast for 45 minutes until tender and the balsamic glaze has caramelized.

(Credits: VFC 10/6/11)

Cranberry-Pear Glazed Butternut Squash With Rosemary



1 - 2 pound butternut squash peeled, seeded and diced in to 1" pieces (about 3 cups)
1/3 cup cranberry-pear white balsamic
1 tablespoon "sweet" fruity olive oil such as Australian Hojiblanca
3" sprig fresh rosemary, leaves stripped from stem and roughly chopped
Sea salt & fresh cracked pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 375.

In a large bowl whisk the olive oil and balsamic together until thoroughly combined. Add the rosemary and squash and toss to coat and combine evenly.

In a large roasting pan lined with parchment, arrange the squash in a single layer, drizzling with any remaining marinade. Sprinkle liberally with sea salt and fresh ground pepper.

Roast the squash for 30-35 minutes, stirring a few times until golden brown and caramelized. Adjust seasoning and serve.

(Credit: VFC 10/23/12)

Dark Chocolate Stuffed Blood Orange Cream Buns



Ingredients:

3 teaspoons active dry yeast
3 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/3 cup lukewarm cream or half & half
1/3 cup warm lukewarm water
2 large eggs
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 cup fresh blood orange olive oil
1 teaspoon fresh grated orange zest
16 - 1" chunks of dark chocolate or 5-6 dark chocolate morsels for each bun

1 egg beaten for glazing the buns

Sweet Orange Glaze

1 cup (4 ounces) confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoons half and half

1 tablespoon fresh orange juice

Directions:

Follow the directions for your bread machine, or place the warm water, half and half, eggs, sugar, blood orange olive oil, and yeast in bowl of standing heavy-duty mixer; stir until yeast dissolves. Fit mixer with dough hook. Add flour, zest, and salt to bowl and mix on low speed just until flour combined, about 10 seconds. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and increase the speed to medium and beat until dough comes together, about 3 minutes.

Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise at room temperature until almost doubled in volume, about 1 hour. Gently deflate the dough and cover bowl with plastic; chill dough overnight.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Divide dough into 4 equal pieces. Make a short log from each piece and cut each log into 4 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a bun. Gently push a 1/2" piece of dark chocolate in the center of each bun and pinch the bottom of each bun to seal securely. Arrange the buns about an inch apart, pinched side down on the prepared sheet pan and allow to rise, covered, for 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Gently brush top of the buns with the beaten egg glaze. Bake until buns are golden brown and fragrant, about 25 minutes.

Allow the buns to cool for 5 minutes. For Sweet Orange Glaze, mix together the orange juice, half and half, and confectioners' sugar. Brush each bun with glaze. Serve warm while the chocolate is still molten in the center.

Makes 16 buns

(Credit: VFC 5/3/12)

Roasted Garlic with Hojiblanca EVOO



This recipe is extra simple and extra delicious. Slow roasting whole garlic heads brings out a nutty sweetness in the garlic and turns the cloves creamy and spreadable. A robust olive oil is a must here otherwise you will lose the lovely marriage of flavors as the character of olive oils with modest phenol content will dissipate under such heat.

The ways in which you can then use this "garlic candy" as I call it, are endless. You can use them in dressings, sauces, marinades, smeared on a slice of toasted baguette with a drizzle of olive oil and a pinch of sea salt, in aioli, on roasted meats, grilled meats, fish, chicken breast, with vegetables, on baked potatoes, in pasta, and on, and on...

7-9 firm, whole heads of garlic, with the stem end sliced off. (Do not slice the root end or the bulb may fall apart)
1/3 cup good quality extra virgin olive oil such as Hojiblanca

Preheat the oven to 400. In a pie tin, cake pan, or other shallow oven proof baking vessel, place the garlic heads cut side up. Drizzle each head generously with approximately two teaspoons of extra virgin olive oil.

Seal the pan tight with aluminum foil and bake for 35-40 minutes, until the garlic is fragrant, soft, and golden brown

(Credit: VFC 5/31/12)

Chipotle-Serrano Rib-eye



1/2 Cup Honey-Serrano Vinegar
1/2 Cup Chipotle Olive Oil
1 tablespoon sea salt
2 cloves Garlic, Minced
fresh ground pepper to taste
4 - 8 to 10 oz. rib-eye steaks

Combine the salt, vinegar, garlic, and pepper. Slowly whisk in the chipotle olive oil. Place the steaks in a Zip-lock bag or in a single layer in a non-reactive pan or container. Pour the marinade over and massage it in to the steaks. Cover and allow to marinate refrigerated, for a minimum of 2 hours, or up to 6 hours.

Prepare a medium charcoal or gas grill, and cook to desired doneness. Allow to rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Serves 4

(Credit: VFC 7/6/13)

Dark Chocolate-Blood Orange Cake with Blood Orange Ganache



Chocolate Cake

1/2 cup cocoa powder 1 tsp. vanilla extract 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour 1 cup granulated sugar 1/4 tsp. salt 1 tsp. baking soda 1 Tbs. tangerine dark balsamic 2 large eggs beaten with enough cold water to equal one cup 1/2 cup Blood Orange Olive Oil + more for greasing pans

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Lightly grease two 9-inch cake pans, one muffin pan, or one 13x9-inch pan with Blood Orange.

Mix together all the dry ingredients in a large bowl. Thoroughly mix together the liquid ingredients in a separate large bowl until smooth. Add the dry ingredients in to the wet and mix using a hand or stand mixer on low. Pour the mixture into the prepared pans.

Bake for 30 minutes (cupcakes will take about 15 min.) or until a cake skewer inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Make sure to not over-bake the cake. It should spring back when lightly touched, and a cake skewer inserted in the middle of the cake should come out clean.

Cool for 20-25 minutes before removing the cakes from the pans to cool completely. Apply ganache when cool.

Blood Orange Ganache
8 ounces semisweet chocolate chips or chunks
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 Tbs. Blood Orange Olive Oil
1 pinch of sea salt

Place the chocolate chips in a heat-proof bowl. Heat the Cream in a sauce pan over medium heat until just about simmering. Pour the cream over the chocolate and allow to sit for five minutes. Gently whisk the chocolate and cream until smooth, consistent, and free from any lumps.

Add in the blood orange olive oil to the chocolate and whisk to thoroughly incorporate. Allow to cool until it reaches a spreadable consistency. Gently spread the slightly cooled ganache over the completely cooled cake. Serve with lightly sweetened whipped cream and a tangerine segment as garnish, if desired.

Serves 12 small but decadent serving

(credit: VFC 2/26/13)

Baklouti Croquettes

Crispy-crunchy on the outside, with soft billowy spicy Baklouti spiked potato on the inside, concealing a gooey melted cheese center. Oh yeah baby.



Ingredients

3 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut in to 2" chunks
2 tablespoons Baklouti Chili Pepper Olive Oil
1 tablespoon Garlic Infused Olive Oil
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 pound mozzarella cheese cut in to 1/2" cubes
3 large eggs
1 tablespoon finely minced flat leaf parsley
2 teaspoons sea salt
fresh ground pepper to taste
1 1/2 cups fine bread crumbs
For frying: Certified Ultra Premium Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Directions

Place the potatoes in a large pot with enough salted water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook for approximately 15 minutes until the potatoes are tender. Allow the potatoes to cool completely. Mash the cooled potatoes, season with salt and pepper, and add the garlic infused olive oil, Baklouti Chili Pepper, Parmesan, parsley, and one beaten egg. Mix thoroughly and set aside.

Beat the remaining two eggs in a separate bowl, and add the bread crumbs to another bowl.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Form the potato mixture in to a 2" oblong shape. Push a piece of mozzarella in to the center of each oblong, and form the potato around in so that it is completely encased. Coat each croquette in egg, and then roll in bread crumbs to thoroughly coat. Set aside on the baking sheet.

Heat 2" of Ultra Premium Extra Virgin Olive Oil in a heavy frying pan over medium high heat. When a deep fry thermometer reaches 375, fry the croquettes in batches until deep golden brown on all sides, about 2 minutes per side. Enjoy immediately.

Makes approximately 20 croquettes

(Credit VFC 2/14/13)

Chicken Saltimbocca... With Liberties



This is actually a mash-up of Chicken Saltimbocca and Chicken Piccata.

4 - boneless skinless, preferably free-range chicken breasts, butterflied and pounded to 1/4" thick
4 pieces of thinly sliced provolone cheese
2 medium shallots, thinly sliced
3 garlic cloves minced
1 tablespoon drained capers
2 tablespoons chopped flat leaf parsley
1/2 cup white wine
1/2 cup chicken stock, preferably homemade
1 teaspoon kosher salt
fresh ground pepper to taste
1 cup all purpose flour for dredging
1/2 cup good quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper on both sides. Lay each breast out flat and lay a piece of cheese on each breast. Roll as tightly as possible. Being careful not to unroll each breast, dredge in flour.

Add the breasts to the hot oil until golden-brown on all sides, once again turning carefully so as not to unroll the breasts. (Some cheese may ooze out of the ends of the roll and this is o.k. as long as it doesn't begin to burn in the oil)

Once the breasts are golden brown, and have cooked through (about 5 minutes per side) and have lost their pinkness, remove to a plate and cover to keep warm.

Drain off all but a couple tablespoons of olive oil from the pan. Place back over medium-high heat and add the shallot. Saute for approximately two minutes, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the garlic, saute for another minute, then add the wine, continuing to scrape up any frond from the bottom of the pan.

Add the chicken stock and capers, continue to simmer until the sauce is reduced by half and slightly thickened. Taste and adjust the seasoning with additional salt and fresh ground pepper if desired. Add the breasts back to the pan, spooning sauce over the tops, to warm for another minute, and then serve sprinkled with flat leaf parsley over polenta or pasta, if desired.

Serves 4

(Credit: VFC 1/1013)

Gravenstein Apple White Balsamic Mustard



Ingredients

1/2 cup plus 3 tablespoons yellow or brown mustard seeds
About 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons (1 1/4 ounces) mustard powder
1/2 cup Gravenstein Apple White Balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup flat hard apple cider
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 Granny Smith or Gravenstein or similar tart apple, peeled, cored and finely grated

Directions

Soak the mustard seeds: Place the mustard seeds and powder in a medium glass or ceramic bowl along with the balsamic and hard cider overnight. Place the mixture in a food processor along with the salt and process for 1 to 2 minutes until the seeds are coarsely ground. Add the grated apple and pulse a few times to incorporate. This makes about 1 2/3 cups mustard. The mustard will be very pungent at first. Cover and refrigerate for a few days (or to taste) before using

(Credit VFC 7/9/15)