

March 12, 2022, AAUW Gourmet Dinner

Crispy Beef Spring Rolls

Classic Onion Soup with Gruyere

Salmon Wellington

Rice Pilaf with Roasted Broccoli

Dark Chocolate Mousse Cake

Wine, Coffee and Tea

Our March menu comes from Oceania Cruises who feel there is simply no better way to cruise than aboard one of their six intimate, elegant ships. Others describe them as an upper premium cruise line which combines luxury with outstanding value. Whichever definition you believe, it does have worldwide itineraries that typically last between 10 and 14 days, but is also known for its long cruises lasting up to 218 days. Their ships have between 684 and 1250 passengers, so by today's standard they are considered smaller ships. The menu comes from their Jacques restaurant, we hope you enjoy the dinner.

Assignments

1. Host couple, Salmon Wellington
2. Dark Chocolate Mousse Cake
3. Crispy Beef Spring Rolls
4. Classic Onion Soup, Rice Pilaf with Roasted Broccoli

Suggested Wines

1. Spring Rolls-Sake (warm or room temperature) or Cava
2. Main Course-Pinot Noir or Sauvignon Blanc

Crispy Beef Spring Rolls

Elmundoeats.com-has helpful video

Servings: 14 Rolls

Prep Time: 20 Minutes, may take longer

Cook Time: 10 Minutes

Passive Time: 30 Minutes

Ingredients

The Filling

- 1 teaspoon corn starch
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 2 teaspoon soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon white pepper powder
- ½ pound minced beef
- 0.5 ounce dry shiitake, soak in hot water until soften & then thinly sliced into strips
- 3.5 ounce cabbage, thinly sliced
- 1 medium sized carrot , thinly julienned
- 1 ounce spring onion chopped
- 2 garlic cloves , grated
- ½ thumb sized ginger , grated
- 2 tablespoon oyster sauce

Slurry Glue

- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 tablespoon water

Others

- 14 pieces purchased spring roll sheets of 8.5 inch, thawed
- some sweet chili sauce, for dipping

Instructions

The Filling

- Into a bowl, add in corn starch, sugar, soy sauce and white pepper powder. Mix well and then add in minced beef. Mix until well combined, cover the bowl with a cling film and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.

- Heat some oil in a pan on medium high heat. Add in chilled beef and cook until it's fully cooked, breaking it into small pieces as you go. Transfer into a bowl and set aside.
- Wipe off the pan clean and heat some oil. Add in grated garlic, ginger and cook until they turn golden brown. Then add in all the veggies, mix well and continue cooking until they're soft but not soggy. The bottom of the pan needs to always be dry.
- Add in reserved meat together with oyster sauce and mix everything well for a few seconds. Cool completely before using.

Assembling

- Prepare the slurry glue by mixing both ingredients together. Set aside.
- Take a piece of spring roll sheet and place it in front of you with 1 corner pointing at you. Take 1 tablespoon of filling and place it at the bottom corner. Roll tightly until the middle of the sheet. Fold left and right side into the middle at a 90° angle.
- Continue folding until almost the end. Paint some slurry glue on the sheet and continue rolling until the end. Place in a tray. Continue with the rest.

Frying

- Heat abundance of oil in a pan on medium heat. Oil is ready when you place a chopstick standing in the oil and there are bubbles forming around it.
- Place a few spring rolls at a time into the oil. Fry until golden brown, turning them frequently for even color. Place them on a plate with kitchen paper to absorb the excess oil. Continue with the rest.

How to Serve

- Serve immediately with some sweet chili sauce on the side.

How to Handle Spring Roll Sheet

- Always cover them with damp cloth to avoid them getting dry.
- Cover uncooked rolled spring rolls with damp cloth also meanwhile you assemble everything and heat the oil.

How to Get Smooth Skin Fried Spring Rolls

- Fry using medium heat. High heat will create bubbles on the skin, making it not smooth.

Classic Onion Soup with Gruyere

Foodnetwork.com with Robin Miller

Prep: 10 Minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Yield: 8 Servings

Ingredients

2 Tbsp. Olive oil

2 Tbsp. butter

2 large yellow or Spanish onion, halved and thinly sliced

2 large red onion, halved and thinly sliced

2 Tbsp. sugar

2 tsps. dried thyme

4 Bay leaves

1 tsp. salt

½ tsp. ground black pepper

1 cup Port wine

12 cups reduced-sodium beef broth

2 (2-inch) piece Parmesan rind

Reserved bread from bread bowls or 8 slices sourdough baguette, about 1 inch thick and lighted toasted

16 slices Gruyere cheese

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F and preheat broiler.
 2. Melt butter and oil together in a large stock pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onions and sugar and cook 10 minutes, until onions are tender and golden brown. Add thyme, bay leaves, salt, and black pepper and stir to coat. Cook 1 minute, until fragrant. Add port and simmer until liquid is absorbed. Add broth and Parmesan rind and bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat to low, partially cover and simmer 20 minutes.
 3. Remove bay leaves and Parmesan rind and ladle soup into oven-proof bowls. Place bowls on a baking sheet. Place reserved bread rounds or a sourdough round into each bowl and top bread with Gruyere cheese. Broil 2 to 3 minutes, until cheese is golden and bubbly.
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Salmon Wellington

[simplyhomecooked.com/has video, pictures](http://simplyhomecooked.com/has-video-pictures)

Prep time: 20 Minutes

Cook Time: 25 Minutes

Total Time: 45 Minutes

Ingredients

4-7 ounce salmon fillets

Salt and pepper to taste

2 T. unsalted butter

2 garlic cloves minced

1 shallot finely chopped

¼ cup white wine

3 ounces cream cheese

5 ounces (or more) fresh baby spinach

2 T. plain bread crumbs

¼ cup shredded parmesan cheese

1-1 pound package puff pastry-2 sheets

1 egg for egg wash

Instructions

1. Season the salmon with salt and pepper to taste.
2. In a pan, heat butter, chopped shallots, and garlic over medium heat. Sauté until the shallots become translucent.
3. Bring the heat to high and add the white wine. Let the liquid cook out for about 5 minute, then add the cream cheese and sauté for 1 minute.
4. Lastly, add the spinach, bread crumbs, and Parmesan cheese. Sauté just until the spinach softens.
5. Unfold the puff pastry onto a light floured surface and roll out the 2 sheets, then cut them in half. So you end up with 4 pieces, each piece about 10X 14 inches.
6. Place each seasoned salmon fillet in the middle of each puff pastry sheet. Depending on the size of the fillet, you may need to roll out the puff pastry a little more or less. Leave about 2 inches around the edges.

7. Divide the spinach mixture into 4 equal parts and evenly spread it on top of the 4 fillets. Then brush the edges of the puff pastry with egg wash (1 egg + 1 tsp water). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
8. Begin folding the longer side of the puff pastry over the fillet. Fold the puff pastry over the top of the fillet like a flap, so that it partially covers it, then brush the top of the flap with egg wash. Fold the next side, adhering it to the first if the flaps are large enough to touch (the egg wash should act as a “glue”), then brush its top with egg wash. Repeat until all 4 sides are folded over, it should be as if you are wrapping up the salmon like a delicious present. As long as it’s well sealed and covers up the salmon, you’re golden. Carefully flip the salmon over (the spinach mixture will be on the bottom) and transfer it to the prepared baking sheet, with the folded side underneath. Repeat with the second, third, and fourth fillet.
9. Make crosshatch slits on top of the Wellington with a knife, see picture on website. Then brush with more egg wash.
10. Bake at 400 degrees Fahrenheit for 25-30 minutes or until the pastry is golden brown. Cut in half to serve eight.

To Make Ahead: Up to 1 day in advance, you can prepare the salmon fillets and wrap them in the puff pastry. Score the puff pastry, but do not add the egg wash yet. Store it in the refrigerator. When you are ready to bake the salmon, then add the egg wash and bake as directed.

RICE PILAF WITH ROASTED BROCCOLI

<https://greenvallykitchen.com>

PREP TIME: 25 Minutes, COOK TIME: 25 minutes. TOTAL TIME: 50 minutes

YIELD: 8-10

INGREDIENTS

For Roasted Broccoli:

2 1/4 pounds broccoli – about 3 medium size heads of broccoli – cut into small pieces

3 Tbsp. olive oil
9 twists of black pepper
3 cloves of garlic – minced or put through a garlic press

For the Rice Pilaf:

1 ½ medium onion – diced
3 celery stalks – diced
3 cloves of garlic – minced or put through a garlic press
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 1/2 cup of basmati rice
¾ tsp dried thyme
2 5/8 cups of vegetable broth
1 cup slivered almonds
¾ cup fresh parsley – minced

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Add 3 Tbsp. olive oil to a sauce pan over medium/low heat.

Add diced onions, celery and minced garlic to the sauce pan. Stir occasionally until onions are soft – about 5 minutes. Keep the heat on the low side so it doesn't burn. Add the basmati rice and dried thyme to the onion, celery, garlic mixture and stir for 2 minutes until the rice becomes translucent. Add the vegetable broth and bring to a boil. As soon as the rice is boiling, turn down to low – the lowest your burner will go and cover the sauce pan with a lid. Set the timer for 17 minutes.

When the rice is done, remove it from the burner – do not take the lid off – let it rest for 10 minutes with the lid on before fluffing with a fork.

While rice is cooking, toss the chopped broccoli with 3 tbsp. olive oil and black pepper. Spread broccoli evenly onto a large baking sheet and put into the oven. Set the timer for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, remove broccoli from oven, stir and add 3 minced garlic cloves. Put broccoli back in the oven for 5 minutes. Toast almonds in a frying pan over medium heat for 2 minutes until lightly browned. Be careful that they don't burn. When rice has rested for 10 minutes, fluff with a fork and add to a large bowl. Add roasted broccoli, toasted almonds and parsley. Toss to combine and serve.

Dark Chocolate Mousse Cake

sallysbakingaddiction.com--good tutorial/pictures

- Prep Time: 2 hours, 30 minutes
- Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 5 hours, 55 minutes

Yield: serves 10-12

Ingredients

- 1 and 3/4 cups all-purpose flour (spoon & leveled)
- 3/4 cup unsweetened natural cocoa powder (see note)
- 1 and 3/4 cups granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons espresso powder (optional)
- 1/2 cup canola or vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 3/4 cup full fat sour cream, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup buttermilk, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup hot water **or** coffee
- optional: 1 cup mini or regular semi-sweet chocolate chips
- optional garnish: fresh berries and/or chocolate shavings

Chocolate Mousse

- 1/2 cup hot water
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (see note)
- two 4-ounce quality semi-sweet chocolate bars, finely chopped
- 2 cups heavy cream or heavy whipping cream
- 4 Tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Chocolate Ganache

- two 4-ounce quality semi-sweet chocolate bars, finely chopped

- 1 cup heavy cream or heavy whipping cream
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Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F Grease four 8-inch or 9-inch cake pans, line with parchment paper, then grease the parchment paper. Parchment paper helps the cakes seamlessly release from the pans.
2. **Make the cake:** Whisk the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and espresso powder (if using) together in a large bowl. Set aside. Using a handheld or stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment (or you can use a whisk) mix the oil, eggs, and sour cream together on medium-high speed until combined. Add the buttermilk and vanilla and mix until combined. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, add the hot water/coffee, and whisk or beat on low speed until the batter is completely combined. Fold in the chocolate chips, if using.
3. Divide batter evenly between 4 pans. Bake for 19-23 minutes. Baking times vary, so keep an eye on yours. The cakes are done when a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
4. Remove the cakes from the oven and set on a wire rack. Allow to cool completely in the pan.
5. **As the cakes cool, prepare the chocolate mousse** so it can chill and be ready at the same time as the cake layers. You can also prepare the mousse 1-2 days ahead of time. Whisk the hot water and cocoa powder together. Set aside. Melt the chopped chocolate bars in a double boiler or use the microwave. If using the microwave: place the chopped chocolate in a medium heat-proof bowl. Melt in 20 second increments in the microwave, stirring after each increment until completely melted and smooth. Pour hot water/cocoa mixture into melted chocolate and stir until thick and smooth. Set aside. Using a hand mixer or a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whip the heavy cream, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla extract together on medium-high speed until medium peaks form, about 3-4 minutes. Medium peaks are between soft/loose peaks and stiff peaks. Pour in the chocolate mixture and using a spoon or rubber spatula, gently fold together. Avoid over-mixing which can deflate/thin out the mousse. Cover mousse and chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours and up to 2 days. Makes about 4.5 cups chocolate mousse.
6. **Assemble layers before preparing chocolate ganache:** First, level the cakes if needed: using a large serrated knife, slice a thin layer off the tops of the cakes to create a flat surface. Discard (or crumble over ice cream!). Place 1 cake layer on your cake stand or serving plate. Using a large icing spatula, evenly cover the top with about 1.5 cups chocolate mousse. Top with 2nd layer and evenly cover the top with 1.5 cups chocolate mousse. Top with the third cake layer, then spread another 1.5

cups mousse evenly on top. Save a large spoonful of mousse for a thin crumb coat. Top with final 4th cake layer. Spread any remaining mousse around the sides as a crumb coat. Run a bench scraper around the cake to smooth out crumb coat. Refrigerate cake for at least 1 hour and up to 4 hours. Prepare the ganache as you wait.

7. **Chocolate Ganache:** Place chopped chocolate in a medium heat-proof bowl. Heat the cream in a small saucepan over medium heat until it begins to gently simmer. (Do not let it come to a rapid boil– that’s too hot!) Pour over chocolate, then let it sit for 2-3 minutes to gently soften the chocolate. With a metal spoon or small rubber spatula, very slowly stir until chocolate has melted and mixture is smooth. The finer you chopped the chocolate, the quicker it will melt with the cream. If it’s not melting, do not microwave it. If needed, see Troubleshooting Chocolate Ganache on the website. Once ganache mixture is smooth, let it cool for 20 minutes at room temperature before spreading on chilled cake.
 8. Pour/spoon ganache on chilled cake. Smooth the top with an icing spatula and the sides with a bench scraper. Top with optional garnish such as fresh berries and/or chocolate shavings. Serve cake immediately or chill, uncovered, for up to 4-6 hours before serving. Cake can be served at room temperature or chilled.
 9. Cover leftover cake tightly and store in the refrigerator for 5 days.
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Notes

1. **Make Ahead & Freezing Instructions:** Prepare cake through step 4. Wrap the individual baked and cooled cake layers tightly and refrigerate for up to 2 days or freeze up to 3 months. Bring to room temperature, make mousse filling, then continue with step 6. You can prepare the chocolate mousse in advance. See step 5. You can also prepare the chocolate ganache ahead of time too. Refrigerate prepared ganache for up to 2-3 days. Bring to room temperature before spreading onto cake. Frosted cake freezes well, up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator, then bring to room temperature or serve cold.
2. **3 Layer Cake:** You can also prepare this cake as a 3 layer cake. Divide batter between three 8-inch or 9-inch cake pans and bake for 22-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Use about 2 cups of chocolate mousse between each layer.
3. **Espresso Powder/Coffee:** Espresso powder and coffee will not make the cake taste like coffee. Rather, they deepen the chocolate flavor. I highly recommend them both. If coffee isn’t your thing, you can leave out the espresso powder and use extra hot water instead of the hot coffee.
4. **Cocoa Powder:** For the best dark chocolate flavor in the cake, I recommend using a blend of unsweetened natural cocoa powder (1/4 cup) and Hershey’s “Special Dark” cocoa powder (1/2 cup). Hershey’s Special Dark is actually a mix of natural cocoa powder (an acid) and dutch-process cocoa powder (a base) and it worked fine in this recipe. This recipe needs acidic natural cocoa powder, so do not use ALL dutch-process

cocoa powder. For best results, use 3/4 cup natural or the blend of natural/Special Dark I used. For the chocolate mousse, you can use either unsweetened natural or dutch-process cocoa powder. (Or the Hershey's Special Dark.)

5. **Why Room Temperature?** All refrigerated items should be at room temperature so the batter mixes together easily and evenly. [Read here for more](#) information. Instead of sour cream, you can use plain yogurt. The cake won't taste as rich, but it's a fine substitute.
6. **Buttermilk:** Buttermilk is required for this recipe. You can make your own DIY version of buttermilk if needed. Add 1 teaspoon of white vinegar or lemon juice to a liquid measuring cup. Then add enough whole milk to the same measuring cup until it reaches 1/2 cup. (In a pinch, lower fat or nondairy milks work for this soured milk, but the cake won't taste as moist or rich.) Stir it around and let sit for 5 minutes. The homemade "buttermilk" will be somewhat curdled and ready to use in the recipe.
7. **Chocolate in Mousse & Ganache:** Mousse & ganache will only set if the correct chocolate is used. You can use high quality chocolate chips if needed (I prefer Ghirardelli semi-sweet chocolate chips), but I recommend using pure chocolate baking bars. You can find them right next to the chocolate chips in the baking aisle. They are sold in 4 ounce bars. I like Bakers or Ghirardelli brands.
8. **Bench scraper** is a rectangular piece of usually **metal with plastic handle on top**. It's can be also made of plastic, wood, rubber or silicone. It is also known as pastry scraper, dough scraper, bench knife sometimes baker's knife.