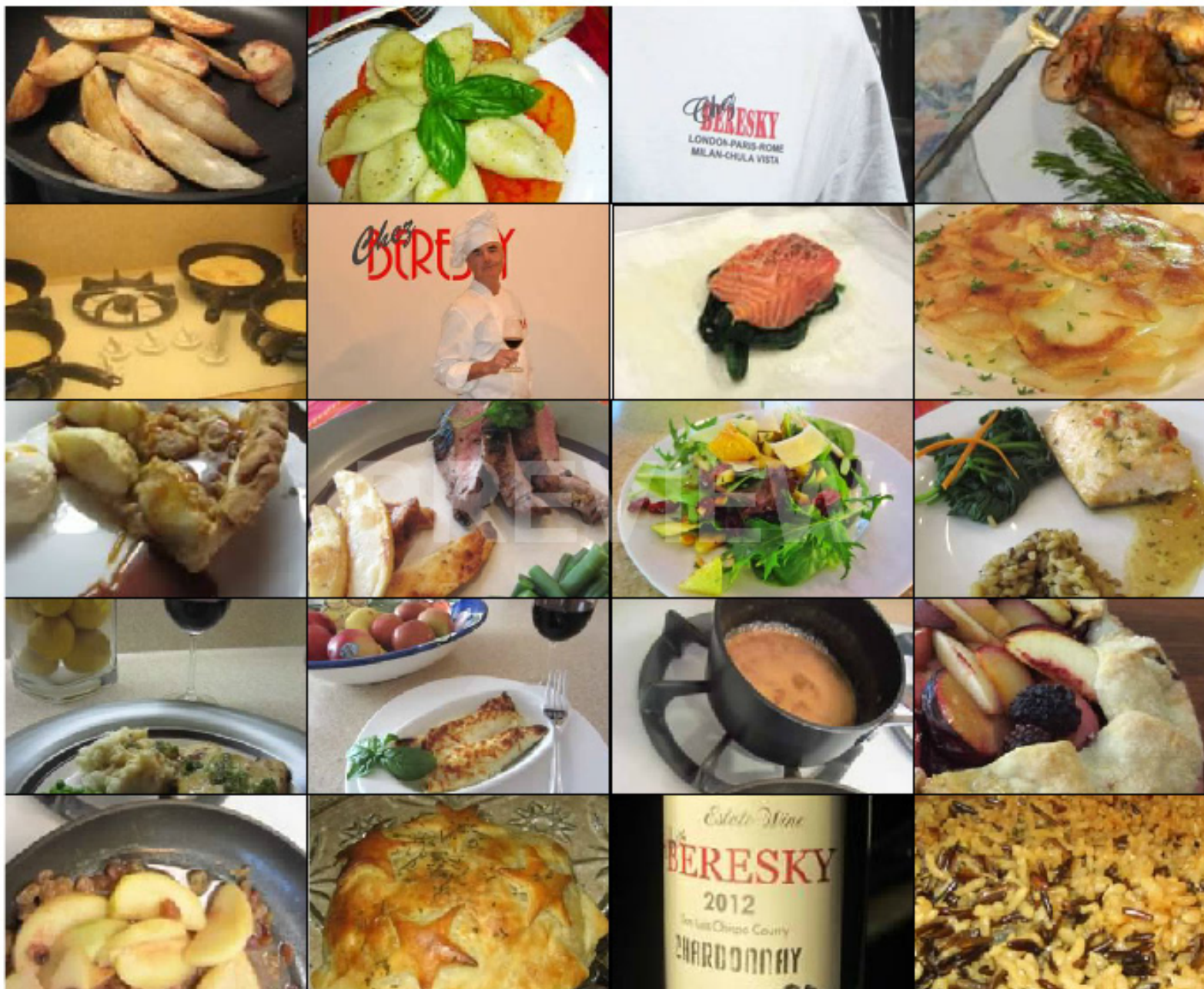




Cher
BERESKY
CUISINE

Chez Berekky

CUISINE



Cher **BERESKY** CUISINE

Friends and family know that I like to cook. Like other creative endeavors, planning and creating meals can be richly satisfying. I grew up in an environment where I was exposed to the "kitchen arts" from an early age. My mother was a wonderful cook who not only relied on family recipes from her childhood, but was uniquely inventive herself. My father was a "Master Grill Artist". In my early adulthood, when my friends were watching sports on TV, I was watching Julia Child. As the years went by I began to travel, which exposed me to different cooking concepts and techniques. I learned that in addition to making the effort to prepare a good meal, consideration in the presentation was equally important.

I have always wanted to author a cookbook, and after Kelly created one for me using recipes from my website, I realized that the wonders of the digital age made this all too easy. The recipes in the book are taken from those found on my website. Some are my variations on published recipes from others (credit given), some are dishes I've envisioned and created after an idea realized from a restaurant or cruise ship meal that Tina and I have enjoyed and some are simply "family" recipes. The photography is all mine!

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Intro 1



Pre heat oven to 450 degrees. Rinse the bird inside and out and pat dry with paper towels. Rub outside skin with 2 tbs of KOSHER or SEA SALT and stuff with a few sprigs of rosemary and some garlic. Preheat cast iron skillet on stove top. After its hot, add 1 tbs olive oil. Put chicken BREAST SIDE down on pan and place in the oven and roast about an hour for a 3 1/2 lb chicken, up to 80-90 minutes if its 5 lbs. At 45 minutes, test with thermometer in thickest part of thigh. A good temperature to pull it out would be 160 degrees. Foodborne pathogens are killed when food is heated to 160F, which is a consideration when cooking any type of poultry. It will continue to cook another 4-5 degrees as it rests. Let chicken stand for 15 minutes before carving.

A variation of a Jacques Pepin recipe.

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Roast Chicken

There are thousands of ways to roast a chicken. However, if you want a truly simple method that produces a picture-perfect and juicy chicken with a crisp skin, try this version using your old cast iron skillet (or any other skillet that will tolerate a 450 degree oven).

HINT: Ensure that the bird is as dry as possible. Adding a lemon or ANY liquid will produce too much steam in this very hot oven and will prevent the skin from becoming really crisp. Its OK to rub a little olive oil over the skin prior to cooking, but its really not necessary.



MEAT & POULTRY

Chicken in Puff Pastry

The only essential ingredients in this versatile recipe are the chicken and the pastry, everything else is open to improvisation.



- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts.
- 2 sheets of pre-packaged pastry dough (Pepperidge Farm).
- 6 tbs melted butter.
- Handfull of fresh spinach.
- Handfull of sliced mushrooms
- *8 tbs sundried tomatoes or sliced artichoke hearts
- *8 tbs grated cheese such as parmesan or mozzarella
- Salt & Pepper

* separated into 4 portions

Remove puff pastry sheets from box and thaw according to package instructions.
Split each chicken breast with a sharp knife so that you end up with 4 thin fillets.
Pre cook each piece in a pan with a little oil 1-2 minutes per side. Add S&P.
The pastry dough will probably come 2 sheets per box. Cut each in half so that you have 4 sheets.

I like to use a rolling pin to slightly enlarge and thin out the dough.

At the center of each sheet put 4 or 5 fresh spinach leaves and top with other ingredients suggested above (or your own favorites).

Place a chicken fillet on very top and sprinkle with some cheese.

Fold the opposite end of the pastry sheet over the top and push down and seal the edges.

Repeat for the other 3 pieces.

Decorate the top of each one with bits of pastry scraps.

Place on cookie sheet and brush with melted butter.

Bake for about 25-30 minutes at 400 degrees, its ready when the pastry has developed a nice golden brown color. Serve immediately.



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Prosciutto Wrapped Chicken Thighs Stuffed with Mushrooms & Parmesan Cheese

Pollo avvolti nel Prosciutto farcite di Funghi e Formaggio

With a name like this, it must be good....right! I got this idea from a menu item in a classy Paso Robles restaurant a small quail wrapped in bacon. Since I am not much of a "game bird" fan, I thought it would be fun to try this with a simple boneless/skinless chicken thigh. And, to add some pizzazz, lets stuff the thigh with mushrooms and parmesan cheese. Thanks to my niece, Annie, for the translation to Italian!

INGREDIENTS: 8 very thin prosciutto slices, 4 boneless/skinless chicken thighs, 1 cup fresh mushrooms, 1/4 cup parmesan cheese

1. Take 4 boneless/skinless chicken breasts and pound them between wax paper to thin them out just a bit. Using a sharp knife, trim the fillets so that they conform somewhat to a rectangle. Season with S&P (I also add a bit of oregano).
2. Chop about a cup of fresh mushrooms and cook with a bit of oil or sweet butter until the mushrooms are slightly tender...no more than a minute or two.
3. Add several tablespoons of the mushrooms along with a sprinkling of parmesan cheese to one end of the fillet.
4. Roll each fillet so that it looks like a tube.
5. Lay out 2 strips of prosciutto on a large plate, slightly overlapped, and place a rolled fillet at the end, then wrap the prosciutto around the rolled chicken fillet as shown below.
6. Preheat Oven to 350 degrees.
7. In a large pan, add 5 or 6 tbs olive oil and bring to moderate heat. Using a kitchen tong or large fork, place 2 fillets onto the pan and cook each side for 1-2 minutes until the prosciutto wrapper is just slightly brown and crisp..then remove to oven-proof pan. Repeat with remaining two fillets.
8. Place pan with 4 fillets into the oven and bake for 40 minutes. Serve immediately!



Chefs Tip: Add 1/4 cup of beef or chicken broth to the hot juices once chicken is removed from pan.
Heat on high till liquid is reduced by half for a great sauce.

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Standing Rib Roast

At Chez Beresky, this is our "go-to" meal for both Christmas and Easter! The term "standing" refers to the fact that the rib bones are in-place (bone-in). A 2 rib roast weights about 4-5 lbs, a 3 rib roast about 7 pounds and a full 7 rib about 15 pounds and enough to feed 20 people. A 7 pound roast will easily feed 10 adults & children, or 7- 8 adults easily with some left over.



Remove roast from refer 2 hours prior to cooking. Make a cut between the roast and the rib bones (this makes it much easier to slice after cooking). Spread about 2 garlic cloves and a sprinkling of kosher or sea salt and pepper into the space. Secure rib bones to meat with kitchen twine.

Pre heat oven to 450 degrees. Season meat with additional pepper, chopped rosemary and garlic. (at this point, I don't recommend adding any more salt since it will tend to "draw-out" or absorb the juices during the cooking process.....we prefer a "juicy" roast!)

Place roast in roasting pan bone side down, fat side up (the bones will serve as your roasting rack)



Insert Roast in oven and cook at 450 for 15-20 minutes depending on the size of the roast (this ensures the outside is nicely seared), then reduce heat to 325 degrees. Then continue to roast for approximately 15 minutes per pound. As you approach within 15 minutes of your cut-off point, begin taking temperature readings with an instant read thermometer.

For very rare you want to pull the roast at 120 degrees, for rare 125 degrees. (we don't cook it any higher then that at Chez B, but 130 will yield medium rare and 135 medium). Allow the roast to sit for 15-20 minutes prior to carving; it will cook another 5 degrees outside of the oven.

Au Jus: Pour off any extra grease that's collected in the pan. Now deglaze the pan by pouring in 1/2 cup beef broth and bring to a boil. After you've scraped off the bottom of your pan and mixed it into the jus, season with salt and pepper. Simple! Serve with small potatoes.

Chef's Tip: Removing roast from oven at the proper temperature is your key to success...invest in a good quality meat thermometer. Insert the probe so that its tip is in the center of the roast.



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Bone-In Pork Chop

Pork Chops are one of our favorite dishes...especially when grilled. But they can be "boring"..always basted with the same 'ol sauce and served with rice or potatoes. So lets have some fun and cook "outside of the box". Instead of apple sauce we'll add "apples"...and plums...and grapes.... and tomatoes.



Simply grill the chops (or pan fry in a little olive oil) adding only salt and pepper. At the same time heat some sliced apples, plums, grapes and cherry tomatoes in a tablespoon of butter...add fresh thyme and rosemary. Remove chops, put on plate and surround with the fruit mixture.

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Trudy's Amazing Buttermilk Meatballs



From the "original" Beresky Kitchen! This is the type fare I grew up on. I believe my Mom got this from my Grandmother!

- 1 1/2 lbs Ground Beef
- 1 small onion finely chopped
- 3 TB chopped green pepper
- 1/3 cup sliced celery
- 1 cup cooked rice
- 1/2 TSP pepper
- 1 egg
- 1 can Creme-of-Mushroom soup
- 1 1/2 soupcans-full of buttermilk
- 1 small can sliced or stem mushrooms
- Fresh garlic "to taste"

Mix 1st seven ingredients together until well mixed. Divide meat into 12 portions and roll each into a ball. Place them evenly on a casserole dish. Combine then pour all the liquid ingredients over the top and bake in a 350 degree oven for about an hour.

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Veal Picatta

As this is one of Tina's favorite dishes (both at Chez Beresky and dining out), we have tried it many times in locations all over the world. I have simply kept note of the better renditions and, over time, developed my own version.

- 1/2 lb veal cutlets- *1/2 cup chicken stock
- Handful of flour
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 cup olive oil or less
- 1/8 cup lemon juice or juice from one lemon
- 1 TBS butter
- parsely and minced shallots (or onions OK).
- 1 TBS capers



If cutlets are thicker than 1/4 inch, pound them between plastic wrap with a kitchen mallet (or a can of soup works fine if you don't have the mallet!). Sprinkle with S&P. Coat both sides lightly with flour; the flour won't adhere much to the meat, but it helps thicken the sauce. Heat OIL & BUTTER in pan over a moderate burner. Add cutlets. Brown for 1 1/2 minutes (thinner cuts) or 2 minutes (thicker cuts) ...no longer! Flip to other side and brown for 30 seconds!! DON'T OVERCROWD PAN. Remove veal to warm platter....add a tbs or so of minced shallots to the pan juices. Add remaining ingredients. *Chicken stock (broth) compliments the "lighter" taste/consistency of the veal; however, you can just as easily use beef broth instead for a slightly darker, more robust sauce. Return veal to skillet, for a minute or two, sprinkle with parsely & capers and serve immediately with pan sauce.

CHEFS TIP: Recipe can easily be converted to "Chicken Picatta"; use thinly sliced, skinned breasts and follow same procedure as above. I even use sliced turkey breasts with excellent results.

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Beef Jerkey

When I was a boy growing up in San Luis Obispo, I loved to stop into the Berkemeyer Butcher shop after school and buy 4 or 5 sticks of their fabulous beef jerkey. What a treat! The Berkemeyer Butcher shop is long gone, but that doesn't mean I can't continue to enjoy this terrific, high protein-low calorie snack! Here's my way of doing it for the past 40 years!

Buy a 3 or 4 pound cut of round roast or tri-tip...don't forget, we are going to dry this meat out completely, so don't spend alot of money on a prime piece of meat!

- Cut the meat into long thin strips.
- Season heavily with Salt & Pepper.
- Continue to add your own favorite spices: onion power, garlic powder, etc.
- Pour 2 cups of low sodium soy sauce into a large resealable bag.
- Add meat strips to bag and ensure the meat is completely covered with the liquid.

Let the meat soak in the bag for at least an hour but no more than 6 hours, then remove.

Line several cookie sheets with tin foil then place a wire cooling rack over each one. Spread the meat strips over the wire rack; do not overlap.

Place the cookie sheets in the oven and turn the temperature to its LOWEST SETTING (WARM). Come back in 8-9 hours and, voila, you have perfect beef jerkey! Store in zip lock bags in freezer...these will keep a long time.

CHEFS TIP: I find it best to prep the meat just before dinner, then put it in the oven at bedtime. Its ready when I wake up! They really do taste best directly out of the freezer!



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Salmon in Phyllo

You can use salmon, halibut, swordfish or virtually any other fish.

NOTE: Ensure the skin is removed.



SEAFOOD

Thaw phyllo per instructions on the box. Lay a damp tea cloth over phyllo or it will dry out real fast.

Separate 2 sheets of phyllo, brush with butter immediately.

Place a small mound of slightly pre-cooked (30 seconds in boiling water) spinach in the center of the phyllo sheets.

Put salted and peppered fish fillet on top of the spinach.

Drizzle lemon juice over the fish.

Fold the phyllo over the fish so that it looks like a "Hot-Pocket", trim off any excess dough and brush again with butter.

The folded, tucked-in area now becomes the bottom of the item, with the fish fillet and finally the spinach on top.

Bake at 400 degrees for 18 - 20 minutes

Serve with salsa

CHEF'S NOTE: If using fresh spinach, blanch it only briefly..just enough for the spinach to wilt. If using frozen spinach from a box or bag, simply drain the appropriate amount, and place directly on the fish as described above.

The spinach will cook along with the fish while its in the oven.

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Tilapia in Potato Crust Blanket

This can be done with any firm fish (I often use tilapia from Costco); ensure skin is removed. The fish should be no more than 1/2 inch thick.

- 4 fillets of Tilapia
- 2 Potatoes
- Oil / Butter
- Lemon juice and or wine vinager
- Parmesan Cheese

Peel the potatoes and grate with your cheese grater. Immediately immerse the grated potatoes in a bowl of water with a tiny bit of lemon juice and wine vinager added.....the proportions depend on taste. This serves 2 purposes: (1) prevents potatoes from turning brown from oxidation, and (2) gives them a nice, acidic flavor which compliments the fish.



Next step is to *rinse and pre-cook the potatoes. Place 1 tbs of oil and 1 of butter (unsalted best) in pan and heat until hot. Cook the potatoes for 3-4 minutes stirring constantly. Add 3-4 tbsp of grated parmesan cheese then remove from pan and set aside.



Make 4 "patties" from the pre-cooked potatoes to conform to the size of each fillet...press down to make them relatively thin. I do this on a sheet of wax paper, which makes it easy to remove the finished product to the pan!

Salt and Pepper the fish fillets to taste.

Add some more butter and oil to pan and bring it back to med-high.

Gently using a large spatula, place the potato "patties" on the heated pan. Then press the fish unto each one. Cook, uncovered, for 4-6 minutes and carefully turn for another 4-6 minutes. (Cooking time, of course, depends on the thickness of the fish...4 minutes for a thinner fillet, such as tilapia and 6 minutes for thicker cuts such as seabass).

CHEFS NOTE: *Important to remove as much of the water from the potatoes as possible...an excellent method is to use a salad spinner; otherwise place the grated potatoes in several paper towels and "wring" them tightly to remove all the liquid.

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Shrimp Scampi

A variation from from a McCormick & Schmick's creation that my brother-in-law, Tom, introduced to me when he was running their San Diego operations. I have used this recipe many times with wonderful results.



- 8 to 10 large size shrimp (uncooked, peeled, tail on).
- 2 oz olive oil
- 2 tbs garlic, chopped
- 2 tbs shallots, chopped
- 1 tbs Old Bay seasoning or S&P to taste (not both)
- 1 cup Roma tomatoes, diced
- 4 oz white wine
- 2 tbs butter
- 1 oz lemon juice
- 2 tbs fresh parsley
- 8 oz spaghetti
- 2-3 tsp capers

Pre cook pasta according to package directions.

Heat olive oil in large frying pan. Saute shrimp in olive oil for one minute, turn each one with a fork and add garlic, shallots and seasoning.

Continue cooking for 45-60 seconds (no more) and remove the shrimp from the pan to a warm dish.

Add tomatoes & capers to the hot pan, saute for an additional 30 seconds.

Deglaze with white wine, allow to reduce by 50%. Add lemon juice.

Finish sauce with the butter, THEN place the shrimp back into the pan and toss several times continuing to cook for another minute or two.

Add shrimp mixture to pasta, sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve immediately.

CHEFS TIP: Serve on top of whole wheat spaghetti or linguini.

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Upside Down Spaghetti

A great use for leftover spaghetti or fettuccine; once cold, mix the pasta with eggs and cheese (so they hold together) and pan-fry till crisp.

A variation of a recipe
I found in Cooks Illustrated.

- 8 oz of spaghetti, cooked and chilled.
- 2 beaten eggs
- 1/2 cup parmesan
- 1/4 cup panko or bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Salt & Pepper

Combine pasta, eggs, cheese, bread crumbs and parsley into a bowl, toss thoroughly and season with S&P.

Heat the oil over med-high heat then add the mixture and carefully spread across the skillet.



Cook for 3-4 minutes, occasionally peaking underneath with a fork...when golden and crisp, flip it over. (An easy technique is to put a large dish over the fry pan, then turn the whole thing over so that the "spaghetti-fritter" drops onto the plate, then simply slide it back in the pan to complete cooking)

Continue cooking for another 2 minutes then remove to a plate.

Slice the "fritter" as you would a pizza and serve with your favorite tomato sauce.



pasta 15



Cannelloni Rusticana

I was introduced to this form of "Northern Italian" cannelloni when visiting Italy in 1968. What sets this style apart is that the filling is encased in a "crepe" vice a "pasta" shell. I'll make a large batch of cannelloni 2 or 3 times a year by doubling the recipe below, then freeze it for later use. I have been doing this for over 30 years and have made close to 3500 (that makes me the "Cannelloni King").

CREPES: (makes about 23)

- 4 eggs
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 cups flour
- 3 cups of milk, or more
(I use non-fat)
- 1/4 cup melted butter

In a large bowl, slowly add the milk to the flour/salt followed by the melted butter mixing all the while with an electric mixer or wire whisk. For the best results the mixture should be very "liquidy", a consistency that resembles "eggnog", or even a bit thinner...so you'll probably find that 3 cups milk is not quite enough. Once well blended, use a 1/4 measuring cup and pour that amount into a med-hot, slightly oiled crepe pan, and immediately pick up the pan and "swirl" the batter so that it uniformly coats the bottom of the pan.



Let sit for about a minute on a medium-heat burner then flip over to the other side. (A simple way to do this is to have a crepe pan plus a larger fry pan of any type heating on separate burner (medium heat). Simply turn over the crepe pan when ready and drop the crepe onto the 2nd pan where the 2nd side heats for about another minute. Remove the crepe to a large sheet of wax or parchment paper and let cool. Repeat the process until the batter is gone.

The wonderful thing about cannelloni is that you can stuff it with almost anything. But to stay close to the classic Tuscan style, we use a mixture of equal parts italian sweet sausage, spinach and ricotta cheese. However, don't be timid about altering the ingredients or proportions. You could easily substitute ground veal, turkey or even crab meat for the sausage!

Cook the sausage then chop it very finely...use a food processor if you have one. Very finely dice the onion and cook in the same pan used for the sausage earlier. I prefer to use fresh spinach, one bunch-chopped and cooked for 30 seconds in boiling water then strained to remove the water (or, to make it easy, its OK to use 1 bag of frozen spinach, thawed and water removed...no one will know!). In a large bowl, combine the ground sausage, onions, spinach and ricotta cheese. S&P to taste.

FILLING

- 3 large Italian Sweet Sausage
(about 1/2 pound)
- 1 small onion
- 1 bunch fresh spinach
- 16 oz ricotta cheese (small tub)
- S&P to taste

Spoon out 2 tbs of the mixture onto the edge of a crepe, then roll it closed in a cigar shape. Repeat until all the crepes are filled.

Place the crepes in a baking dish and cook at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Serve with your favorite marinara or bechemel (cheese) sauce. Although you can add the sauce before cooking, I prefer to add it just before I serve them.

pasta 17

Potatoes au Gratin Parisienne

Got this idea from a bistro in Paris we visited in 2004. A variation of the classic "Pommes Anna" recipe, the difference being my addition of parmesan cheese. Its best described as a "thinly sliced potato upside-down pancake".

SERVES 4

- 3 potatoes
- 3 TBS butter
- 1 Tsp minced garlic
- 2 TBS oil
- 2 TBS chopped Parsely
- 1/4 - 1/2 cup shredded parmesan or gruyere cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Peel the potatoes and slice VERY THIN!

NOTE: The best way to do this is with a mandolin slicer

Melt 2 TBS of the butter, add garlic and set aside.

Heat oil and remainder of the butter in a medium size non-stick, oven-safe fry pan at med-high heat. When the oil is hot, begin to line the pan with the sliced potatoes; starting in the center and working outward in a circular pattern until you have filled the pan with one layer. Drizzle the melted butter/garlic mixture over the top and sprinkle with the grated cheese

Place a 2nd layer of sliced potatoes over the top in the same manner described above (although its not necessary to be as consise with the individual placement since this part of the dish ends up on the bottom and won't be seen.).

Continue to cook for another few minutes.



sides 18



SIDES

Using a fork, take a peek under the bottom layer and when it has begun to brown slightly, remove the pan from the burner and place into the preheated oven.

Continue cooking in oven for another 10 minutes or so, taking occasional peeks at the bottom layer to ensure it doesn't burn.

When done, remove pan from oven, place a dish inverted on top of the pan to cover and flip the pan over: the potatoes will fall onto the plate "bottom-side up".

Sprinkle with chopped parsely and serve.

CHEFS NOTE: The secret is to use very thinly sliced potaoes and to not over-cook them.



Herb Rolls

From a Bradley Ogden creation. I've amended it to use buttermilk instead of milk, which I think gives the bread a truly unique and subtle flavor.



- 1 package active dry yeast (about 1 tbsp.)
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon minced parsley
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon minced chives
- 1 tablespoon minced rosemary
- 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 large egg plus 1 tbsp. lightly beaten egg, divided
- 1 cup buttermilk (milk can be substituted)
- 3 1/2 to 3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- About 1 tbsp. coarse sea salt

1. In a large bowl, sprinkle yeast over 1/4 cup cool water. Let stand until dissolved, 5 minutes. Stir in sugar, table salt, herbs, butter, whole egg, and milk; add 3 1/4 cups flour and stir to moisten.
2. Knead dough on a lightly floured board for 10-15 minutes until it is elastic and not sticky..... add flour as needed to prevent sticking. Shape into 12 -14 equal balls; place in a well-buttered 9 x 13 in. oven proof dish, or divide into 2 smaller ovenproof dishes.
3. Let dough rise in a warm place until doubled, 45 to 60 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350.
4. Brush rolls with beaten egg and sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake until a deep golden color appears, 25 to 30 minutes.

CHEFS NOTE: Feel free to use any blend of herbs that suits your fancy...just try to keep the total amount to 4 tablespoons.

Make ahead: Prepare through step 2; immediately wrap airtight (do not let rise) and chill.

sides 20

Tomato Frittata

This is a fairly standard dish that is found in many cookbooks. It can be served as an appetizer or as a unique side dish along with your main course. I like it because it is simple, elegant and nutritious.

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 large eggs
- 2 Tbsp grated parmesan cheese
- 1 minced garlic clove
- 3 ripe tomatoes / sliced
- Sea salt & ground pepper
- parsely

With the ingredients above, I use a small-medium fry pan (about 7 inches). Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat oil in the fry pan over med-high heat. Lightly beat eggs in a small bowl. Add in cheese and garlic and season with S&P. When oil is hot, add egg mixture into pan and wait about a minute, then add the tomato slices. Continue cooking until edges begin to turn golden brown at which point you will transfer the pan into the hot oven to continue to bake.

The eggs should be completely set in 7-8 minutes. Remove from oven and slide frittata onto a plate, garnish with fresh parsely. You can slice and serve immediately, or its just as good warm or even at room temperature.

Serves 4

CHEFS NOTE: Try adding some chopped onions and ground sausage and you've got an all-in-one, terrific breakfast!



sides 21



Zucchini Oven Frys

A different take on zucchini designed to appeal to the person who normally doesn't like zucchini or other types of squash! These can be served as an appetizer, or as an accompaniment to your main course.

- 1/4 cup panko or dry breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1/4 tsp salt
- dash of freshly ground pepper
- 1 large zucchini
- 1/2 cup milk (fat free OK)
- Cooking Spray (PAM)



Preheat oven to 425.

Combine all the dry ingredients in bowl and mix.

Pour milk into another small bowl.

Wash and slice the zucchini "french fry" style.

Dip each slice in the milk, then into the bowl with the dry ingredients to coat both sides.

Spray a wire cooking rack with PAM and place over a baking sheet.

Place coated slices of zucchini on wire rack.

Place in oven for about 25-30 minutes.

Remove and serve immediately.

Serves 4.

CHEFS NOTE: Try to use Panko (the delicate, crisper, airier textured crumbs used in Japanese cooking). If using regular bread crumbs, grate them as finely as possible. As an alternative, try slicing the zucchini into coins (see picture above) for a completely different look.

sides 23

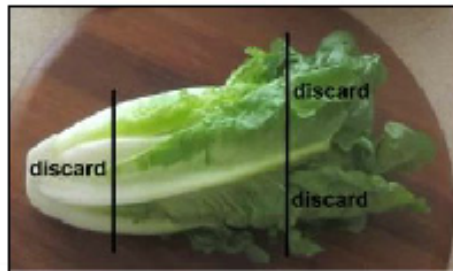
Caesar Salad

One of the most famous salads in the world, and certainly the most mis-understood. Every restaurant has their own version and many have strayed dramatically from the original concept of Caesar Cardini, a San Diego/Tijuana restaurant owner in the 1920's who created the original "caesar". The basics include fresh romaine lettuce, lemon juice, olive oil, egg, garlic, parmesan cheese and croutons. The signature "bite" comes from either worcestershire sauce or anchovies (I prefer anchovies!). This assortment of ingredients, when prepared correctly, creates a wonderful salad that is perfect for table-side "tossing". I have been "tossing" caesar's for 35 years and am proud to have had the opportunity to teach, not only Kelly, but many of my nieces and nephews, the Chez Beresky method of preparing this wonderful salad when they were all very young.

- 2 heads romaine lettuce
- 1 clove garlic sliced in 2 pieces
- Fresh ground pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 coddled egg
- 1 1/2 cup croutons
- 1/2-3/4 cup FRESH grated parmesan cheese
- Anchovies (amt depends on taste)
- 1 lemon

Rub inside of a large bowl with the garlic.
Tear the lettuce into medium size pieces and place in bowl.
Add freshly ground pepper to taste.
Add olive oil and toss.
Squeeze in the lemon juice.
Cook the egg for 1 minute (coddled) and break into the bowl, continue to toss.
Add the grated cheese and croutons.

Serves 4-6



sides 24

CHEFS NOTE: For the perfect caesar salad you must be selective with the romaine; peel off and discard the outer layers and discard the top and bottom portions as seen in the diagram. Wash the remaining leaves thoroughly.

Why use boxed croutons when you can make your own. Use leftover sourdough bread and slice into bite size cubes. Heat a little olive oil in a pan then toss the bread cubes until they appear slightly golden and toasty...let cool.



sides 25

Baked Multi-Grain Rice

Did you ever try mixing different rice varieties together and then try to boil the mixture? Doesn't always turn out so great because some rice needs longer to cook than others! The "baking" method solves the problem. I use a mixture of wild and brown rice (whole grain goodness) and arborio rice (adds a wonderful silky and creamy texture). It always turns out terrific and is the perfect complement to seafood, poultry or meat dishes.

- 1 cup brown rice.
- 1/2 cup wild rice
- 1/2 cup arborio rice
- 3 cups of low sodium chicken or beef broth
- 2 1/2 tsp butter or canola oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- parsely

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. I use a 12-14 inch pyrex baking dish; however, any oven-proof casserole or baking dish will work fine. Spread the rice into the baking dish (its OK to vary the types/ratios of rice variety...just as long as the total amount is 2 cups!). Add salt and parsely to taste (or any other herb that you prefer). Heat the liquid over the stove in a separate pan till its almost boiling) and then pour it over the rice mixture...add the butter or oil. Cover...if your dish doesn't have a top, use 2 layers of tin foil (or 1 layer of heavy duty tin foil) and cover tightly! Bake for 80 minutes.



Remove from oven and let sit on counter for 20-30 minutes covered. At this point it is ready to serve. I freeze excess by placing about 1 cup of the cooked rice in a freezer baggy, squeeze the air out then freeze. Reheat in microwave by transferring frozen rice to a microwave-safe dish, add a tbsp of water, cover or seal with saran wrap and microwave for several minutes.

sides 26

Petite Brownie with Chocolate Hat

FUN! GREAT PRESENTATION! DELICIOUS! Fairly simple! Small "brownie-bites" that can either be cut out of the brownie pan with a knife or scooped out with a mold.



1. Bake brownies per package directions. Let cool, then using a small round mold (make your own by saving a used 6 oz can of tomato paste and ensure both ends are removed) and cut out as many circular sections as you can.



*Chef Mike's
BROWNIE MOLD
(patent pending)*

CHOCOLATE HAT: Zap some chocolate chips (same kind you would use for chocolate chip cookies) according to the directions on the package. (50% for 3-4 minutes) Using a spatula, spread the melted chocolate over the back side of a cookie sheet getting it as thin as possible. Freeze! When you remove the sheet from the freezer, the chocolate sheet will be solid, thin and "breakable"!

CHEFS NOTE: The presentation is up to you. Start with a small scoop of vanilla ice creme on top of each petite brownie. The display above shows a plate drizzled with chocolate syrup and minced-walnuts with a chocolate "hat".

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Reverse Engineered Apple Pie

A different take altogether on this favorite American dessert. I take the best parts of an apple pie, and turn them inside out. Stacked apples with vanilla ice cream and caramel sauce...and the pre-cooked pie crust wedges are added last. Makes enough for 6 servings. Initial concept from a "Deconstructed Pie" recipe from CuisineAtHome.

- 1 pie dough (rolled in a box: available at the grocery).
- 1 Tbs unsalted butter (melted)
- 2 Tbs coarse sugar (raw).
- 1 Tbs unsalted butter
- 3 lg apples (braeburn or granny smith work well) Peeled, cored & thinly sliced.
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup apple juice or cider (NOT VINAGAR)
- 3/4 cup caramel sauce



Preheat oven to 400 degrees; line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Unroll pie dough onto prepared baking sheet, brush with melted butter and sprinkle with sugar. Using a pastry wheel, cut dough into 12 wedges and bake until golden brown and crisp, about 15 minutes. Set aside.

Melt butter in nonstick skillet over medium heat; add apples, raisins, cinnamon and salt and saute until apples begin to soften...about 4 minutes. Add juice, simmer until nearly evaporated, then add the caramel sauce. Reduce heat to low to keep mixture warm (or you can refrigerate for later use).

To assemble, arrange 1 crust wedge on each of six plates, then top with 1 or 2 scoops of vanilla ice creme and a spoonfull of the apple mixture. Place a second wedge on top with another scoop or two of ice creme and apple mixture. Serve Immediately!

CARAMEL SAUCE: Use either commercial variety, or my recipe:

Combine 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1/4 heavy cream and 2 tablespoons softened butter in a small, heavy saucepan over medium-high heat; bring to a boil. Cook 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat; stir in 2 Tbs water.

CHEFS NOTE: No need to separate the pastry triangles after cutting -- they will shrink during baking and won't stick together!

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Pear Streusel with Caramel Sauce

Bartlett or Anjou pears work best in this pie. As a substitute, try apples..granny smiths are good. The caramel sauce adds a flair of elegance (and decadence)..and its OK to use store-bought caramel sauce...simply heat it in microwave prior to using.



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PIE:

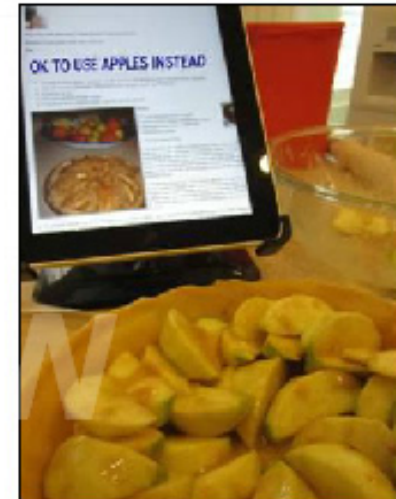
- 3 ounces all-purpose flour, divided (about 2/3 cup)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 6 pears, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch-thick wedges
- 1/2 (15-ounce) package refrigerated pie dough (such as Pillsbury)
- Cooking spray
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons chilled butter, cut into small pieces

1. Preheat oven to 375.
2. To prepare filling, combine 1/3 cup flour, granulated sugar, cinnamon, and salt in a large bowl. Add juice and pears to flour mixture; toss gently to coat.
3. Roll pie dough into an 11-inch circle then place into a 9-inch pie plate coated with cooking spray. Fold edges under and flute.
4. Arrange pear mixture in an even layer on top of the pie dough.
5. Combine remaining 1/3 cup flour and 1/3 cup brown sugar in a bowl. Add 3 tablespoons cold butter to brown sugar mixture; cut in with a pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle butter mixture evenly over pears. Bake at 375 for about 50 minutes or until lightly browned. Let cool on a wire rack 10 minutes.
6. To prepare sauce, combine 1/3 cup brown sugar, cream, and 2 tablespoons softened butter in a small, heavy saucepan over medium-high heat; bring to a boil. Cook 1-2 minutes, or until thickened. Remove from heat; stir in 2 teaspoons water.

CHEFS NOTE: The pie can be served at room temperature (or slightly warmed) with the warm caramel sauce drizzled over the top.

CARAMEL SAUCE:

- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened
- 2 teaspoons water





More Tips from the Chef

Things always in my refrigerator: Low Fat Buttermilk and Sauvignon Blanc!

I certainly don't drink the buttermilk, but as you have noticed throughout this book, I use it for alot of other things... with bisquick instead of water for the absolute best biscuits and pancakes; mash your potatoes with the stuff and use it as a base for different sauces. The sauvignon blanc....well, you know!

Other things that I consider essential in cooking is a good selection of oils. This includes olive oil, extra virgin for pouring over pasta or dipping, and virgin for cooking. Stay away from the various low fat versions. Canola oil is derived from the crushed seeds of the canola plant (rapseed) and is my first choice for most saute tasks. Tina will tell you that canola oil has fewer saturated (bad) fats and more unsaturated (good) fats than other oils.



RULE OF THUMB. Saute with olive oil if the recipe has the slightest hint of being italian, spanish or greek. Canola for everything else!



Don't be afraid of butter..if a recipe calls for it, resist the temptation to substitute margarine.



I also keep on hand Sesame Oil...a key flavor component in many sauces and dressings. As an accompaniment to seafood I often serve baby bok choy that I season at the last minute with a tiny bit of sesame oil.

Although not found in many kitchens, I maintain a small supply of White Truffle Oil, which can lend a totally sublime flavor to many recipes.



Ground pepper should come out of a grinder and not a box! And I prefer sea salt and kosher salt to the regular stuff. Salt is salt, and ultimately comes from the sea, but I like the course consistency and the fact that there are no additives.

If you don't own a Vacuum Food Sealer, buy one immediately. These devices are great for storing food in the freezer. No freezer burn, and the food will last much longer. When its time to thaw out the frozen food, simply place the sealed bag in a pan of cold water and its ready to cook in 30-60 minutes.



Bloom your Greens! I learned this one from my brother-in-law, Tom. Place your spinach or salad lettuce in a pot of cold water and leave it there for 30-60 minutes. Remove and drain (spin) and use! The water infusion "blooms" the leaves back to their natural state.

Our "go-to" salad dressing and all-purpose chicken and flank steak marinade at Chez Beresky is Paul Newman's Light Balsamic ...nothing finer!





Don't spoon the rice onto the plate, use a 1/4 or 1/3 cup measuring cup as a mold.



Marinade Basics. Most of us like to marinate beef, chicken and fish. But keep in mind that most marinades have some sort of acidic ingredient (lemon juice, balsamic vinegar or wine) and will serve to actually "cook" whatever its surrounding. For that reason, these types of marinades should never be used for more than a couple hours. Longer than that and you risk "toughening-up" the food, especially the surface area. Marinades that are based with sugary ingredients (honey, pineapple juice, etc) will tend to "mush-up" the food surface after 2 or 3 hours. Marinades DO NOT tenderize the food, they simply add flavor...so, in most cases, 2-3 hours is plenty!

Do you get confused at the market when buying meat? Most cuts should be labeled either select, choice or prime (although prime cuts will only be found in upscale markets such as Wholefoods...this is the best and what you'll find served in the better restaurants.) If the meat is not labeled, I would be hesitant in buying it since it may be a quality the USDA considers lower than select. Select is the lowest quality a reputable market will sell...choice is better. "Angus" labeled meat is becoming more common. This is simply a specific breed of cattle which produces high quality meat and will certainly be at the higher end of the choice label. At Chez Beresky we do cook select cuts; however, when company comes we opt for the choice. The select ribeye will be OK, but the choice will be more tender, juicy and flavorful.

Always have some different "Campbell's Creme of Whatever" soup on hand for quick and easy sauces. A can of Creme of Chicken soup and an equal amount of buttermilk make for a wickedly delightful sauce for your baked chicken...Creme of Golden Mushroom thinned with low sodium beef broth can be every bit as good as the fancy pork or beef sauce that you'd find in a 4 star restaurant.

Living with a dietitian has taught me to always read the labels. Check out that fantastic looking frozen dinner at Costco or Trader Joe's - but wait a minute, maybe it has 300% of your daily sodium limit. Learn how to read the labels...they will give you the scoop on the fat, sugar and sodium levels.



CORN ON THE COB MY WAY: Remove the husks and place in a large pot of water. Place on stove and heat to high; the moment they start to boil, time for exactly 2 minutes, then remove the pan from the burner and let sit in the hot water for 10 minutes. Best corn you've ever had!

I know its hard, but try to dump the refined (white) pasta habit. All the good stuff has been filtered out! Instead, try the whole wheat version of spaghetti or farfalle or fusilli...once you get use to it, I think you'll agree with Tina and I that it tastes better!



MASHED POTATOES MY WAY. Russets, peeled, sliced and boiled in water without adding salt. When tender, drain then mash them using a small amount of butter and a larger amount of low fat buttermilk. Add a little garlic for variation...if buttermilk not your thing, try low fat sour cream instead.

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