

WHAT'S COOKING



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April 2007

NEWS LETTER

#80

GOURMET COUPLES SCHEDULE FOR 2007

April 21, 2007- Dinner Party
April 28, 2007- Alternate Dinner Party
May 19, 2007 - Party with Music Theme **CANCELED**
June 10, 2007 - Strawberry Brunch - at Linda and Shelly's
July 22, 2007- Planning Party - 6 to 8 PM
July 29, 2007- Restaurant Visit - Place-TBA
August 18, 2007- Dinner Party
August 25, 2007- Alternate Dinner Party
September 1, 2007 - Nationals Baseball Game with / Dinner (approx. date)
September 29, 2007 - Crab Feast at Paula and Joe's, North Beach
September 30, 2007 - Rain Date
October 14, 2007- Planning party - 4 to 6 PM
October 27, 2007- Halloween Party At Mitzi and Bob's
November 10, 2007- Dinner Party
November 17, 2007- Alternate Dinner Party
December 2, 2007 - Restaurant Visit - Brunch - Place-TBA
January 5, 2008 - 12th Night Party

LOTS OF FUN AT ST. PADDY'S DAY PARTY

Every one had a beer-y nice time at the St. Patrick's Day party and beer tasting at Fran Place's home on March 17. Fourteen member couples attended, plus former members Robert & Ann Stevens, our beer experts for the evening. Everyone enjoyed plenty of appetizers, chili, and desserts, then listened attentively to the Stevens presentation, which included samples of seven very different beers (two of which were brewed by Robert himself). We all learned a lot about what things make one beer different from another- and no one got green around the gills! Our thanks to Robert & Ann for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm.

--Jerry M.

We neglected to add the appetizers for the Hungarian Rhapsody dinner, March 3, 2007.

PALACSINTA

(Prepared by Fran P. and Jerry M.)
Hungarian Rhapsody dinner, March 3, 2007

Crepes

1/3 Teaspoon salt
3 Eggs
1-1/2 Cups whole milk (not skim or 2%)
1-1/2 Cups all-purpose flour
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil

Put all ingredients into blender in order listed. Blend until smooth. Heat 8-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat. Pour enough of crepe mixture into skillet to just cover bottom, about 1/4 cup. When crepe loses gloss, lift one side to check for golden-brown color, then flip over in pan for about 10 seconds. Remove crepe and place on waxed paper. Repeat until mixture is used up.

Filling

2 Cups cooked chopped cabbage
1 Cup spicy pork sausage
1/2 Small onion, chopped
2 Tablespoons sour cream
1/2 Teaspoon salt
1-1/2 Tablespoon caraway seeds

Use about half a head of cabbage. Remove core and chop cabbage coarsely. Place cabbage in boiling water for 5 minutes, remove, and drain well. Cook sausage over medium heat, breaking up pieces while cooking, until no pink remains.

Remove sausage from heat and drain well. Mix 2 cups cabbage with sausage and other ingredients.

On each crepe, place about 2 tablespoon filling near one edge and roll up like an enchilada, folding in the ends. Cut each in half and arrange on a serving platter. Serve warm.

Optional: Serve with one-half cup sour cream mixed with 1 Tablespoon Hungarian paprika.

LIPTOI SPREAD

(Prepared by Fran P. and Jerry M.)

Hungarian Rhapsody dinner, March 3, 2007

- 1 8 ounce cream cheese
- 1/4 Cup softened butter
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon Hungarian paprika
- 1 Teaspoon dry mustard
- 1-1/2 Tablespoon caraway seeds

Blend cheese and butter, then mix in remaining ingredients. Chill at least 2 hours. Serve with quarter slices of pumpnickel bread.

LIPTAUER SPREAD

(Prepared by Fran P. and Jerry M.)

Hungarian Rhapsody dinner, March 3, 2007

- 1 8 ounce large-curd cottage cheese
- 1 Clove of garlic, crushed
- 1/2 Teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon Hungarian paprika
- 1 Small onion, chopped fine

Blend cottage cheese, garlic, salt, and paprika until smooth, then mix in onion. Serve with quarter slices of pumpnickel bread.

Habanero Jack Cheese Spread

(Prepared by Silvia and George Schuld)

Saint Patrick's Day Party with Beer Tasting, March 17, 2007

- 8 Ounces habanero cheese
 - 1 8 ounce package Philadelphia Cream Cheese
 - 2 Tablespoons soft butter
 - 1 Small grated onion
 - 2 Tablespoons dry sherry
- Salt if needed

Mix well. Keep in a loosely covered jar in the refrigerator. Serve spread on toast rounds.

BEEF AND DARK BEER CHILI

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Saint Patrick's Day Party with Beer Tasting, March 17, 2007

Stout makes the beef taste beefier in this chili. For best results, pick out a five-pound boneless chuck roast and have the butcher grind it for you.

WHAT TO DRINK: Sam Adams Cream Stout has a malt sweetness that's just right.

- 1-1/2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 1 Tablespoon ground coriander
- 5 Pounds ground chuck
- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 2-1/2 Pounds onions, coarsely chopped
- 1-1/2 pounds red bell peppers, seeded, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1-1/2 Pounds yellow bell peppers, seeded, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

- 2 Large Jalapeno chiles with seeds, chopped (about 1/3 cup)
- 7 Tablespoons chili powder
- 2 Teaspoons (packed) minced canned chipotle chiles in adobo sauce*
- 2 28-ounce cans crushed tomatoes with added puree
- 2 15-ounce cans kidney beans, drained
- 1 12-ounce bottle dark beer (such as stout)

Sour cream

Chopped green onions

Coarsely grated extra-sharp cheddar cheese

*Available in the Latin foods section of some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Latin markets.

Toast cumin and coriander in skillet over medium heat until darker and beginning to smoke, about 4 minutes. Cool.

Sauté beef in heavy large pot over medium-high heat until no longer pink, breaking up with spoon, about 8 minutes. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions, all bell peppers, and Jalapenos. Sauté until vegetables begin to soften, about 15 minutes. Add mixture to pot with meat. Mix in toasted spices, chili powder, and chipotle chiles. Add crushed tomatoes, beans, and beer. Bring chili to boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, stirring often. Season with salt and pepper. DO AHEAD Can be made ahead. Cool slightly. Refrigerate uncovered until cold, then cover and keep refrigerated up to 2 days (or freeze up to 1 month). Rewarm over medium-low heat.

Ladle chili into bowls. Serve with sour cream, green onions, and cheese.

Makes 10 to 12 servings.

COCA With Honeyed Onions and Pine Nuts

(Prepared by Joan and Bob)

Saint Patrick's Day Party with Beer Tasting, March 17, 2007

Harking back to medieval Arab cooking, the intriguing mix of sweet and savory flavors here is typical of the island's cuisine. Pre bake the coca dough briefly so that the topping doesn't render it soggy. To soften the onions and get rid of some of their bitterness, rub them with salt and lets them sit (you'll need to allow about an hour for this). Once you're ready to bake the coca, make sure to rinse the onions well and thoroughly squeeze the water out. See the Variations to turn this coca into a savory one, made with anchovies.

- 4 Large sweet white onions (about 3 pounds total), cut in half and very thinly sliced
- Coarse salt (kosher or sea)
- 1/4 Cup plus 2 to 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- All-purpose flour, for dusting the work surface
- Coca Dough (recipe follows)
- 1/4 Cup plus 1 to 2 tablespoons honey, preferably rosemary honey
- 1 Tablespoon best-quality red wine vinegar
- 1/3 Cup dried currants
- 2 Tablespoons finely minced Fresh rosemary
- 1/2 Cup pine nuts

Place the onions in a sieve and massage about 1 tablespoon salt into them. Place the sieve over a bowl and let stand for about 1 hour.

Place an oven rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Generously brush a 11x7-inch baking sheet with olive oil. Lightly flour a work surface. Using a floured rolling pin, roll out the dough so that it's roughly as large as the baking sheet. Prick the dough all over with the tines of a fork and bake it on the center rack until half done, about 15 minutes.

While the crust is baking, rinse the onions well under cold running water. Thoroughly press the slices of onion hard against the sieve to get rid of the excess moisture. Add 1/4 cup of the honey to the onions in the sieve, massaging it into the onions and pressing against the sieve to squeeze out more moisture. Transfer the onions to a bowl and add the vinegar, currants, rosemary, and 1/4 cup of the olive oil.

When the dough is half baked, spread the onion mixture evenly on top. Drizzle 1 to 2 table spoons of honey over it, then scatter pine nuts on top. Bake the coca for 20 minutes, drizzle with the remaining olive oil, then continue baking until the onion is lightly golden and has lost most of its crunch, 15 to 20 minutes longer.

Cover the coca with a clean kitchen towel and let it cool for about 30 minutes, then cut it into squares and serve. The coca can be baked ahead and served the next day; it will taste even better. Makes 1 large Coca; serve 12 as a Tapa

VARIATIONS: To turn this coca into a more savory onion- and -anchovy flatbread, follow the recipe but omit the honey, vinegar, and currants. After spreading the onion topping on the dough, top it with drained, oil-packed anchovy fillets (you'll need 20 to 24 fillets). Or toss some chopped anchovies into the onion topping before spreading it on the coca. Alternatively, the onion coca can be topped with thin slices of pork sausage, julienned salami, or cleaned, fresh sardine fillets before baking.

COCA DOUGH:

- 1/3 Cup lager-style beer
- 1/2 Cup light olive oil
- 1 Large egg, beaten
- 2 Teaspoons coarse salt (kosher or sea)
- 2-3/4 to 3-1/4 Cups all-purpose flour

Place the beer, olive oil, egg, salt, and 2/3 cup water in a large bowl and whisk to mix. Add 2-3/4 cups of the flour, 1/2 cup at a time, mixing well after each addition. Knead the dough briefly in the bowl to incorporate all the stray flour.

Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes, kneading in enough of the remaining 1/2 cup flour for the dough not to stick to your hands. (If the dough still sticks after all the remaining flour has been incorporated, oil your hands and continue kneading.) The dough will be pliable and slightly oily. Shape the dough into a ball, place it in a well-oiled bowl, cover it with plastic wrap, and let stand while you prepare the coca filling. Makes enough for one 17x1- inch Coca

ORANGE CARROT CAKE

(Prepared by Barbara and Jim)

Saint Patrick's Day Party with Beer Tasting, March 17, 2007

CAKE

- 3 Cups all-purpose flour
- 2 Cups sugar
- 1 Cup coconut
- 2-1/2 Teaspoons soda
- 2-1/2 Teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 2 Cups (4 medium) shredded carrots
- 1-1/4 Cups cooking oil
- 2 Teaspoons vanilla
- 1 Teaspoon grated orange peel
- 1 11 ounce can (1-3/4 cups) mandarin oranges, undrained
- 3 eggs

FROSTING

- 1 8 Ounce package cream cheese, softened
- 2 Tablespoons margarine or butter, melted
- 1 Teaspoon vanilla 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1 Cup chopped nuts

Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease (not oil) 13X9 inch pan. Lightly spoon flour into measuring cup; level off) In large bowl blend all cake ingredients; beat 2 minutes at high speed. Pour into greased pan. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 45 to 55 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool. In medium bowl, blend all frosting ingredients except nuts; beat until smooth. Spread over cake; sprinkle with nuts.

BAILEY'S IRISH CREAM TART with RASPBERRY SAUCE

(Prepared by Fran P. and Jerry M.)

Saint Patrick's Day Party with Beer Tasting, March 17, 2007

Pastry

- 2 Cups all-purpose flour
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 1 Stick unsalted butter
- 2 large egg yolks, beaten with 2 tablespoons water--divided

Filling

- 8 Ounces white chocolate
- 1 Stick unsalted butter
- 3 Tablespoons Bailey's Irish Cream liqueur
- 2 Large eggs
- 3 Large egg yolks
- 1 Tablespoon honey

Raspberry Sauce

- 4 Ounces raspberries
- 1 Tablespoon water

Make pastry:

Combine flour, sugar, and water in food processor and pulse 5 or 6 times, or until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add half the egg yolk mixture and process until soft dough forms. Form dough into a ball, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Roll out dough between two sheets of waxed paper to a thickness of one-quarter inch. Line a 12-inch tart pan with dough, leaving a slight overlap. Cover dough with foil, fill with pie weights, and bake in 400-degree oven for 15 minutes. Remove weights and foil, brush with remaining egg wash, and bake for 3 to 5 minutes longer, or until lightly browned. Remove from oven and set aside. Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees.

Make filling:

In top half of double boiler, over simmering water, melt chocolate and butter. Stir in Bailey's, remove from heat, and cool for 20 minutes. In a large bowl, beat eggs, egg yolks, and honey with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Whisk chocolate mixture into egg mixture and pour into pastry shell.

Bake tart:

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes, or until filling is set and top is golden. If top begins to brown too much, cover entire tart with a foil tent or a **deep** cake pan that doesn't touch the top, and continue baking. Remove from oven and cool completely on a wire rack.

Make sauce:

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine raspberries and 1 tablespoon water. Cook for 5 to 8 minutes, until berries break down. Transfer to food processor and puree until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve and let cool.

Chocolate Cake

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly)

Saint Patrick's Day Party with Beer Tasting, March 17, 2007

Cake Ingredients

2 Cups stout (such as Guinness)
2 Cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter
1-1/2 Cups unsweetened cocoa powder (preferably Dutch-process)
4 Cups all purpose flour
4 Cups sugar
1 Tablespoon baking soda
1-1/2 Teaspoons salt
4 Large eggs
1-1/3 Cups sour cream

Icing Ingredients

2 Cups whipping cream
1 Pound bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semi-sweet chocolate, chopped

For cake:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter three 8-inch round cake pans with 2-inch-high sides. Line with parchment paper. Butter paper. Bring 2 cups stout and 2 cups butter to simmer in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add cocoa powder and whisk until mixture is smooth. Cool slightly.

Whisk flour, sugar, baking soda, and 1 1/2 teaspoons salt in large bowl to blend. Using electric mixer, beat eggs and sour cream in another large bowl to blend. Add stout-chocolate mixture to egg mixture and beat just to combine. Add flour mixture and beat briefly on slow speed. Using rubber spatula, fold batter until completely combined. Divide batter equally among prepared pans. Bake cakes until tester inserted into center of cakes comes out clean, about 35 minutes. Transfer cakes to rack; cool 10 minutes. Turn cakes out onto rack and cool completely.

For icing:

Bring cream to simmer in heavy medium saucepan. Remove from heat. Add chopped chocolate and whisk until melted and smooth. Refrigerate until icing is spreadable, stirring frequently, about 2 hours.

Place 1 cake layer on plate. Spread 2/3 cup icing over. Top with second cake layer. Spread 2/3 cup icing over. Top with third cake layer. Spread remaining icing over top and sides of cake.

The Planning Party for April Dinner Sets was held at Cheryl and Dick's spacious and beautiful new home on April 1st. The April 21st Dinner Set will be hosted by Dorothy T. and Dick D. The 28th Dinner Set will be hosted by Bob and Joan J.

Avocado-Shrimp Salsa

(Prepared by Barbara and Jim)

Planning Party, April 1, 2007

1/2 Pound of medium shrimp (about 20) peeled and cooked
2 Small avocados peeled and chopped (about 1-1/4 cups)
2 Plum tomatoes seeded and chopped (about 1 cup)
2 Tablespoons of minced red onion
1 Tablespoon fresh lime juice
Coarse salt to taste
32 Baked tortilla chips

Place all ingredients in a medium bowl. Toss gently to mix; let stand 5-10 minutes. Serve at room temperature. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. To make the chips brush each tortilla with 1/2 teaspoon of oil and stack the rounds one on top of another. Cut the stack in half. Place the halves on a nonstick baking sheet, coated lightly with cooking spray or oil, oiled side up. Sprinkle with coarse salt and bake 8-12 minutes or until crisp.

Cappuccino Cream Cheese Brownies

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly)

Planning Party , April 1, 2007

- 4 Squares Unsweetened Baking Chocolate
- 3/4 Cup (1-1/2 sticks) butter
- 2-1/3 Cups sugar
- 5 Eggs
- 3 Tablespoons Instant Coffee
- 1 Teaspoon vanilla
- 1-1/4 Cups flour
- 1 Package (8 ounces) Cream Cheese, softened
- 2 Tablespoons flour
- 1/2 Teaspoon ground cinnamon

PREHEAT oven to 350 degrees F. Microwave chocolate and butter in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 2 minutes or until butter is melted. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Stir in 2 cups of the sugar. Add 4 of the eggs, coffee granules and vanilla; mix well. Stir in 1-1/4 cups of the flour. Spread into greased foil-lined 13 x9 inch baking pan.

BEAT cream cheese, remaining 1/3 cup sugar, remaining egg, 2 Tablespoons flour and cinnamon in same bowl until well blended. Spoon over brownie batter. Swirl with knife to marbleize.

BAKE 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out with fudgy crumbs. **DO NOT OVER BAKE.** Cool in pan; cut into 24 squares.

Monster Cookies

(Prepared by Cheryl L. and Dick N.)

Planning Party , April 1, 2007

- 1-1/4 Cups firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 Cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 Cup shortening
- 3 Eggs
- 1 -1/2 Cups crunchy peanut butter
- 1 Tablespoon light corn syrup
- 2 Teaspoons baking soda
- 1 Teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 -1/2 Cups quick oats, uncooked
- 1 Cup (6 ounces) semi-sweet chocolate chips

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Place sheets of foil on countertop for cooling cookies

Combine brown sugar, granulated sugar and 3/4 cup shortening in large bowl. Beat at medium speed of electric mixer until well blended. Beat in eggs. Beat in peanut butter, corn syrup, baking soda and vanilla. Stir in oats and chocolate chips with spoon.

Fill ice cream scoop that holds 1/4 cup with dough (or use 1/4-cup measure). Level with knife. (Or form dough into 2-inch balls.) Drop 3 inches apart onto ungreased baking sheet.

Bake for 11 to 13 minutes or until just beginning to brown. Do not over bake. Cool on baking sheet for 2 minutes. Remove cookies to foil to cool completely. Makes about 1 -1/2 dozen.

Jarlsberg Cheese and Onion Dip

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Planning Party, April 1, 2007

- 2 Large Vidalia onions , Sliced
- 2 Cups Hellman's mayonnaise
- 1/4 Teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3/4 pound Jarlsberg cheese
- Salt, sugar and worcestershire sauce to taste
- Paprika.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Sauté onions in a covered skillet in small amount of butter until soft. This takes about 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. Mix in equal amount of grated cheese and onion (approximately), cayenne pepper and mayonnaise.

Place in pie dish. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake 30 minutes or until browned. Serve with with bread or crackers.

Shrimp Dip

(Prepared by Silvia and George)

Planning Party, April 1, 2007

- 8 Ounces Philadelphia Cream Cheese
- 1 Cup coarsely chopped shrimp
- 1 Teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 Teaspoon curry powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon garlic powder
- Shake of salt
- Shake of pepper

Mix the above and serve on French baguettes, sliced thin, or crackers

Baba Ghanouj

(Prepared by Joan and Bob)

Planning Party , April 1, 2007

Yield: 1 cup

- 1 Small eggplant
- 3 Tablespoons Tahiti
- 3 Tablespoons lemon juice .
- 1 Large garlic clove, minced
- Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Remove and discard the eggplant stems. Bake the egg plant in a shallow baking pan for 40 minutes or until soft. Peel.
3. In a food processor, puree the pulp with the tahini, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and pepper.
4. Serve with sesame crackers, toast, or toasted pita bread.
Keeps 4 days, refrigerated.



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