

WHAT'S COOKING



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MAY 2007

NEWS LETTER

#81

GOURMET COUPLES SCHEDULE FOR 2007

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

THE PARTY WITH MUSIC THEME HAS BEEN CANCELED

The annual Strawberry Champagne Brunch is on schedule for June 10, 2007 will began at at 12:30 PM . The club will provide the strawberries, champagne, orange juice, iced tea, and breads. You bring prepared brunch dishes, such as quiche, casserole, pasta salad, or a dessert (preferably NOT strawberries). Please indicate your choice on the reply coupon.

The party fee this year is \$10 per couple. Please make checks payable to: **GOURMET COUPLES**

Remember to bring a copy of your recipe, as well as any utensils or appliances needed for serving your dish. Also remember to bring lawn chairs or a blanket and plenty of sunscreen.

Guests who are prospective members are welcome. They need to bring a dish but they do not need to pay the party fee. (former members who did not join this year should pay the fee as well).

Please respond by May 30, 2006

Gourmet Couples 25th

May 2008 will mark the 25th anniversary of Gourmet Couples. I think we should plan something special to commemorate GC's founding. Let's all start thinking of some plans.
-Jerry M

The Dinner party on April 1, 2007 was hosted by Dorothy and Dick .

Our dinner evening started with the guests hand feeding the horses with gifts of apple slices prepared by the hostess Dorothy, followed by a tour of the farm (No takers on stall cleaning). We had a lovely dinner and all hands turned out their best effort to make the evening an enjoyable experience culminated in a fantastic desert of Bananas Foster prepared by Cheryl and Dick. A great time was had by all.

MENU

Crab Cakes, Fresh Pea Soup with Croutons Saffron-Broiled Chicken Quarters, Fennel Salad with Red Onion and Sun-Dried Tomatoes, Baked Bananas with Rum and Buffer

Crab Cakes

(Prepared by Silvia and George)
Saffron Broiled Chicken Dinner, April 1, 2007

- 1 Pound crab meat
- 2 Eggs
- 2 Tablespoons of Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 Tablespoon of dry mustard
- 2 Tablespoons of Mayonnaise
- 2 Tablespoons of lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon of mustard
- 1 Tablespoon of melted butter
- 1 Tablespoon of parsley flakes
- 1 Tablespoon of Phillips seafood seasoning
- 1 Cup bread crumbs

Combine all ingredients except meat. Fold in crab meat. and shape into cakes or balls fry at 375 degrees F. for 15 minutes

- Dip
- 1-1/2 Cups of ketchup
 - 1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 Tablespoon onion juice
 - 1/2 Tablespoon garlic powder
 - 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
 - 2 Tablespoons old bay seasoning

Fresh Pea Soup with Croutons

(Prepared by Dorothy and Dick)

Saffron Broiled Chicken Dinner, April 1, 2007

- 3 Tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 Tups fresh or frozen peas
- 1 Medium-size head buffer lettuce, chopped
- 4 Scallions, chopped
- 6 Cups chicken stock or water
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 6 Leaves fresh tarragon
- Finely chopped Croutons
- Heavy cream or crème fraiche (optional)

Melt butter in a pot and add peas, lettuce, and scallions. Cook over medium-low heat for 5 minutes. Do not brown them.

Add stock, bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook until peas are tender, 10 to 15 minutes.

Purée the soup in a blender or food processor. Season with salt and pepper and add tarragon. Serve hot or cold with croutons. You can enrich the soup with a few tablespoons of heavy cream or crème fraiche, if you wish.

To make croutons, sauté 1/2-inch cubes of French bread in olive oil until brown and crispy. Serves 4.

Saffron-Broiled Chicken Quarters

(Prepared by Dorothy and Dick)

Saffron Broiled Chicken Dinner, April 1, 2007

- 2 Small broiling chickens, quartered with backs removed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 Teaspoon saffron Juice of 1 lemon

Preheat the broiler. Put chicken pieces, skin side down, on a foil covered baking sheet (this makes cleanup easier).

Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper, half the saffron, and half the lemon juice. Broil for 8 to 10 minutes, until crispy and golden brown.

Turn chicken pieces and season with salt and pepper and remaining saffron and lemon juice. Broil for another 8 to 10 minutes, adjusting the heat if necessary so the skin turns crispy and golden. Serve hot or warm.

Serves 4

Fennel Salad with Red Onion and Sun-Dried Tomatoes

(Prepared by Barbara and Jim Potzick)

Saffron Broiled Chicken Dinner, April 1, 2007

- 2 Large bulbs fennel
- 1 Medium-size red onion, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 6 Sun-dried tomatoes, cut into thin strips
- 1/4 Cup Italian parsley (leaves only)
- Vinaigrette (Makes 3/4 cup)
- 1 Tablespoon oil from sun-dried tomatoes
- 6 Tablespoons olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons tarragon vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Trim the fennel, removing any hard core and stalk. Cut into thin strips lengthwise.

Combine fennel, onion, tomatoes, and parsley in a serving bowl.

In a small mixing bowl combine all the dressing ingredients and pour over the salad. Toss well and serve.

Note: This salad will retain its crispness and flavor for several hours. Serves 4

Baked Bananas with Rum and Butter

(Prepared by Cheryl and Dick)

Saffron Broiled Chicken Dinner, April 1, 2007

- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 4 Medium bananas, peeled and halved lengthwise
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup dark rum

Preheat oven to 400°.

Butter a glass baking dish large enough to hold all the bananas in one layer.

Put the bananas, cut side down, in the dish. Sprinkle with sugar and rum, and dot with the remaining butter. Bake until sugar is melted and bananas are tender but not mushy, about 10 minutes. Serve hot. Serves 4

The Spring Four Ward Dinner on April 28, 2007 was hosted by Joan and Bob .

Our dinner party highlighted four fresh spring vegetables – artichokes, carrots, peas and asparagus and hence the play on words - Spring Four Ward.

It was a lovely spring night as we gathered at the Janshego residence and everything went smoothly until we were finishing up the entire. Then the dining room table broke loose in the middle and it was quite a juggling act as we saved the remaining dishes which were still on the table. (We were glad this didn't happen when the soup was served).

But all is well that ends well – as we enjoyed Linda Gersten's delicious dessert in the living room.

Our menu follows:

- Blue Cheese Dip
- Holly's Boursin, Salmon and Caviar Spread
- Imperial Crab Balls
- Asparagus Soup
- Pea Salad with Radishes and Feta Cheese
- Chicken and Artichoke Fricassee with Morel Mushrooms
- Panna Cotta (cooked Cream w/Caramel and Berry Sauces)

Blue Cheese Dip

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

Blue cheese adds the zip to a cottage cheese dip with two variations.

- 1-1/2 Cups fat-free small-curd cottage cheese
- 3 Tablespoons crumbled blue cheese
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 2 Tablespoons milk
- 2 Teaspoons lemon juice
- 2 Teaspoons grated onion
- 1 Medium bell pepper

Salt to taste

Garlic powder to taste

Cut-up fresh vegetables, if desired

In blender, place all ingredients except bell pepper and fresh vegetables. Cover; blend on medium speed, stopping blender occasionally to scrape sides, until smooth.

Cover and refrigerate 1 hour to blend flavors.

Cut off top of bell pepper and hollow out. Spoon dip into pepper. Serve with fresh vegetables. Makes 1-1/2 cups.

Variations:

Dill Weed Dip: Omit the blue cheese. Add 1/4 teaspoon each of dried dill weed, dried oregano leaves and garlic salt.

Curry Dip: Omit the blue cheese and parsley. Add 2 teaspoons sweet-and- sour sauce and 1/2 teaspoon curry powder. Makes 1-1/2 cups.

Holly's Boursin, Salmon and Caviar Spread

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

Ingredients:

- Crackers (we usually use Carrs water crackers- pepper or roasted garlic flavor)
- Smoked-Kippered Salmon (not lox) Boursin
- Cheese Black caviar
- Chives

Spread Boursin onto cracker. Top with flaked salmon. Sprinkle with chives and top with small dollop of caviar.

Imperial Crab Balls

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

- 1 lb Fresh crab or 2 cans (61/2 oz.) crab meat
 - 1 Beaten egg
 - 1 Cup mayonnaise
 - 1/2 Teaspoon dry mustard
 - 1/2 Green pepper chopped
 - 1/4 Small onion chopped
 - 1 Cup unsalted cracker crumbs
- Salad oil for frying

Combine all except cracker crumbs. Shape into bite size balls and roll in cracker crumbs. Fry in deep fat at 350 degrees for about 6 minutes or until gold brown. Makes enough appetizers for about 20 people.

Springtime Asparagus Soup (Zuppa di Asparagi)

(Prepared by Lindsay and David)

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

Ingredients :

- 2 Bunches Asparagus, cleaned and trimmed
- 2 Cups whole Milk
- 2 Cups Water
- Salt to taste
- Freshly ground Pepper to taste
- 1/4 Cup Heavy Cream
- 2 Tablespoons Parmigiano Reggiano Cheese
- 4 Tablespoons Parsley, finely chopped

Preparation:

Place asparagus, milk, and water in a large saucepan.

Add salt and pepper and stir.

Bring to a boil over high heat.

Cook, uncovered, for 8 to 10 minutes, or until asparagus is tender.

Pour soup into blender.

Remove center spout from lid, to prevent it from bursting.

Place lid on blender, and hold a kitchen towel over the center hole.

Puree soup until it is blended.

Whip soup for 1 minute and return it to the saucepan.

Add heavy cream and stir to mix well.

Heat soup on low until warm.

Stir In parmigiano reggiano cheese.

Pour into clear glasses or coffee mugs, and top with parsley.

Pea Salad with Radishes and Feta Cheese

(Prepared by Lindsay and David)

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

- 2 Teaspoons cumin seeds
- 2 Tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 Teaspoons honey
- 1/4 Cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 4 Cups fresh shelled peas (from about 4 pounds peas in pods) or 1 pound frozen petite peas
- 1 Bunch radishes, trimmed, halved, thinly sliced
- 1 Cup crumbled feta cheese (about 4 ounces)
- 3 Cups fresh pea tendrils, coarsely chopped, or pea sprouts* (optional)

*Available at natural foods stores and Asian markets.

Heat small skillet over medium heat. Add cumin seeds and toast until aromatic and slightly darker, about 2 minutes. Cool; grind finely in spice mill. Whisk lime juice, honey, and cumin in small bowl. Gradually whisk in oil; stir in dill. Season dressing with salt and pepper. DO AHEAD Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill. Bring to room

temperature.

Cook peas in pot of boiling salted water until almost tender, about 5 minutes for fresh (or about 2 minutes for frozen). Drain; rinse under cold water, then drain well. Transfer to large bowl. Add radishes, feta, and dressing; toss. Season with salt and pepper. If using pea tendrils or sprouts, divide among bowls. Divide salad among bowls. Serve. Serves 4 to 6.

CHICKEN AND ARTICHOKE FRICASSEE WITH MOREL MUSHROOMS

(Prepared by Joan and Bob

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

Crème fraîche is the secret ingredient that teases out the artichokes' sweet richness, and it brings this delicious spring braise together.

1-1/2 Lemons
12 Baby artichokes
6 Cups water
2 Tablespoons all purpose flour plus additional for dredging
2 Teaspoons salt
1 Bay leaf
2 Tablespoons butter
1 Tablespoon olive oil
4 Chicken thighs
4 Chicken drumsticks
4 ounces fresh morel mushrooms
2 Medium carrots, peeled, thinly sliced
2 Large shallots, thinly sliced
2 Tablespoons chopped fresh thyme, divided
1 garlic clove, minced
1/4 Cup dry white wine
1/2 Cup low-salt chicken broth
1/4 Cup crème fraîche

Fill large bowl with water. Squeeze juice from 1 lemon into water; add lemon halves. Tear outer leaves from 1 artichoke until only pale green leaves remain. Cut top 3/4 inch from top; trim end of stem. Cut in half lengthwise. Rub cut sides of artichoke with lemon half; transfer to bowl with lemon water. Repeat with remaining artichokes.

Bring 6 cups water, 2 tablespoons flour, 2 teaspoons salt, and bay leaf to boil in large saucepan. Add artichoke halves and cook until just tender, about 5 minutes. Drain.

Melt butter with oil in heavy large deep skillet over medium heat. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Dredge chicken in flour, shaking off excess. Cook chicken until golden brown, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to plate. Add mushrooms, carrots, and shallots to skillet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until vegetables begin to soften, about 4 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon thyme and garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add wine; bring to boil. Add broth and artichokes; bring to boil.

Return chicken to skillet, reduce heat to medium low, cover, and simmer 20 minutes. Turn chicken, cover, and simmer until cooked through, about 15 minutes longer. Transfer chicken and vegetables to platter. Whisk crème fraîche into sauce in skillet; bring to boil. Season with salt and

pepper. Pour sauce over chicken, sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon thyme, and serve. Serves 6 to 8.

Panna Cotta (cooked Cream with Caramel and Berry Sauces

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly

Spring Four Ward Dinner, April 28, 2007

COOKED CREAM

4 Tablespoons cold water
4 Tablespoons un-flavored gelatin
1 Quart heavy cream
1-1/2 Cups sugar
2 Tablespoons vanilla extract

CARAMEL SAUCE

2 Cups sugar
2/3 Cup water
2 Teaspoon sweet white wine
1/2 Cup heavy cream
1 Teaspoon unsalted butter

BERRY SAUCE

1 Pound strawberries
6 Ounce blackberries
6 Cup sugar
1 Ounce kirschwasser

To make the cooked cream, pour the water into a heatproof glass or metal bowl. Sprinkle the gelatin over the water and let stand for 10 minutes, without stirring, to soften. Bring a small saucepan half filled with water to a gentle simmer, and set the bowl of gelatin over, not in, the water. Stir until the gelatin dissolves, no more than 1 minute. Remove the bowl from the saucepan.

In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, combine the cream and sugar. Heat, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved; do not allow to boil. Remove from the heat and add the vanilla and the gelatin mixture, whisking until well combined. Pour into a 10 dessert cups, cover, and refrigerate overnight.

To make the caramel sauce, in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over low heat, combine the sugar, water, and wine and heat, stirring frequently and being careful the mixture doesn't boil, until the sugar has dissolved. Raise the heat to medium and bring to a boil. Do not stir, but swirl the pan from time to time. If sugar crystals form on the sides of the pan, brush them down with a wet pastry brush. Watch the mixture carefully, making sure it does not burn. Once the mixture begins to turn amber, after about 8 minutes, remove from the heat and stir in the cream. It will bubble vigorously and splatter (you may want to use oven mitts to protect your hands).

When the cream is well incorporated into the caramel sauce, beat in the butter. If any bits of hard caramel appear, return the pan to medium heat and stir until they melt. The caramel should be slightly warm or at room temperature when served.

To make the berry sauce, puree 1 cup mixed berries in blender and strain out seeds. Combine this with the sugar

and kirschwasser until sugar is dissolved. Slice the strawberries and add all the berries to the puree.

To un-mold the cooked cream, immerse the base of each dish in hot water for 15 seconds. Run a knife between

the side of the dish and the firmed cream. Invert a serving plate over the dish and invert the dish and the plate together.

Lift off the dish and spoon some of the sauce over the top. Serve the remaining sauces in bowls at the table.
