

Seasons Greetings



www.gourmetcouples.com

December 2007

NEWS LETTER

#87

GOURMET COUPLES SCHEDULE FOR 2007

January 5, 2008 - 12th Night Party

Nine couples celebrated the Holiday Season Brunch at the Market Inn in Washington D.C. The food was spectacular as always. We all had a wonderful get together.

Cheryl and Dick have graciously agreed to host our Twelfth Night Party.

Please bring a copy of your recipe to share with others. Please type or make a clear copy

Although our party is not a religious observance, the name and date are based on the Eve of Epiphany, the 12th night after Christmas. It commemorates the visit of the three wise men to Bethlehem, the baptism of Jesus and the miracle of Cana. In England it is an occasion of great feasting and masked balls, and in other lands, day of gift-giving. In early America Twelfth Night was called Old Christmas and was celebrated with the grandest parties of the year.

In keeping with this tradition, we'll celebrate with an elegant evening. The food will be bite-size appetizers and desserts prepared in advance. The club will provide champagne, nonalcoholic punch, and coffee. For the gift exchange, each couple should bring one gift related to food or drink costing \$25-\$35, wrapped to disguise what it is. Popular gifts in past years have included cookbooks, liqueurs, homemade delicacies, sets of wine glasses, etc. Pick something nice, that you would be happy to receive as a gift.

NOTE: Please remember to bring a copy of your recipe and any serving pieces needed.

Due to the expected large turnout, guests are not invited to this party. If you plan to attend, fill in the coupon below, enclose your party fee of \$12 per couple, and mail as soon as possible, but no later than December 22, 2007.

Gourmet Couples Dues are Coming Due. Save a stamp, your 12th Night Party Fee and dues may be included in the same check. Please make the check payable to: **Gourmet Couples.**

It was fantastic and a good time was had by

all.

Dick and Dorothy were the hosts and prepared the Beef Braciolo.

Shelly & Linda made the sumptuous Dessert.

David & Alice prepared the Pasta al Limone alla David (a dish to die for)

and Sandy & Chuck prepared a salad of mixed greens with marinated anchovies and the vegetable os Saut ed Spinach and Red Bell Peppers.

A great time was had by all!!

Canap s with Gorgonzola and Pine Nuts

(Prepared by Alice and David)

Italian Dinner, November 10, 2007

4 Tablespoons butter, softened to room temperature

5 Ounces creamy Gorgonzola, cut into small pieces

2 Tablespoons chopped fresh basil or parsley

1-1/2 Tablespoons chopped pine nuts

Black pepper in a grinder

1-1/2 Tablespoons whole pine nuts

6 slices good-quality, firm white bread trimmed of its crust.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Put the butter, Gorgonzola, basil or parsley, chopped pine nuts, and several grindings of pepper in a bowl. With a wooden spoon, mash all the ingredients until they form a smooth, dense cream.

Mix the whole pine nuts into the creamy mixture.

Spread the mixture over the bread slices leaving a rim of about 1/2 inch uncovered.

Place the bread on a baking sheet and toast in the upper level of the preheated oven until the bread becomes colored a light brown at the edges.

Cut each slice of bread diagonally into 2 triangles and allow to cool for a moment before serving.

Mixed Greens With Marinated Anchovies

(Prepared by Sandy and Chuck)

Italian Dinner, November 10, 2007

- 2/3 Cup plus 1/4 Cup olive oil
- 1/4 Cup chopped fresh oregano
- 2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 3 Garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1/2 Teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 2 2-ounce cans anchovies packed in oil or two 3.75 ounce cans sardines packed in oil, drained well
- 12 1/2-inch-thick baguette slices
- 1 5-ounce bag mixed baby greens
- 2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Blend 2/3 cup olive oil, oregano, lemon juice, garlic, lemon peel, and crushed red pepper in medium bowl; transfer 1/4 cup marinade to small bowl and reserve. Mix anchovies into remaining marinade. Let stand 2 hours at room temperature.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Brush bread slices on both sides with reserved marinade; arrange on baking sheet. Bake until toasts are golden, about 10 minutes.

Place greens in large bowl. Add balsamic vinegar and remaining 1/4 cup olive oil; toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide greens among 4 plates. Top each salad with anchovies; garnish each with 3 toasts.

Pasta al Limone alla David

(Prepared by Alice and David)
Italian Dinner, November 10, 2007

- 1 Poundspaghetti (linguine)
- 2 to 3 Tablespoons coarse salt (for the pasta water)
- 10 Tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 Tablespoons lemon zest
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice (fresh)
- 3/4 Cup heavy cream (or as needed to thicken)
- 1/2 Cup white wine
- 3/4 Teaspoon salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 Tablespoons sugar
- 1/3 Cup packed fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 to 1-1/2 Cups freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

6 Sprigs fresh basil for garnish
Add coarse salt to 2 gallons of rapidly boiling water and cook until al dente. Drain.

Meanwhile, melt butter in a large sauté pan. Add juice, zest, salt and pepper. Heat gently 1 minute. Add wine and simmer off the alcohol - 2 minutes. Slowly add cream and heat for 1 more minute, stirring constantly. Stir in sugar. When thickened, toss with just drained spaghetti (linguine or fettucini) until well coated. Add basil and cheese and toss until evenly coated. Serve in warm pasta bowls and garnish with basil sprigs. Serves 6

NOTE: You can substitute oranges for lemons in this recipe and it becomes Pasta a L'arancia. A nice variation.

Vichyssoise A La Ritz

(Prepare by Alice and David)
Dinner, November 10, 2007

- 4 Leeks (white part only) - sliced
- Medium Onion - sliced
- 4 Tablespoons butter
- 5 Medium Potatoes - thinly sliced
- 4 Cups Chicken Stock
- 1 Teaspoon Salt
- 3 Cups Milk
- 2 Cups Cream
- Chopped Chives

In a deep kettle, brown the leeks and onions very lightly in the butter. Add the potatoes, stock and salt and boil 35 minutes, or until very tender. Crush and rub through a fine sieve or puree in a food processor.

Return the mixture to the kettle, add the milk and 1 cup of the cream and bring to a boil. Cool and rub again through a fine sieve. Chill.

Add the remaining cream. Chill thoroughly and serve garnished with chives. (yield 8 or more servings)

Beef Braciola

(Prepared by Dorothy and Dick)
Italian Dinner, November 10, 2007

Butterfiled flank steak is filled with a mixture of fresh herbs and cured meats, then rolled up and braised in wine. Cut the prep time by asking your butcher to butterfly the steak for you. Serve with a side of soft polenta.

- 1 Flank steak (about 11/2 pounds), butterflied
- 4 Tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1/4 Cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1 3-ounce package thinly sliced panceti
- 1/4 Cup pine nuts, toasted
- 1/4 Cup golden raisins
- 4 Whole sweet Italian sausages (about 3/4 pound)
- 3 Cups beef broth
- 1 750-ml bottle dry red wine
- 1 26-ounce bottle marinara sauce

Open flank steak on work surface. Sprinkle steak with salt and pepper, then rub with 1 tablespoon olive oil, parsley, oregano, thyme, and sage. Arrange pancetta slices evenly atop herbs. Sprinkle pine nuts and raisins over. Arrange sausages crosswise about 2 inches from 1 short end of steak. Beginning at short end near sausages, roll up steak into log. Tie string around steak at 2-inch intervals. do ahead Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover steak and chill.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Heat remaining 3 tablespoons oil in wide ovenproof pot. Add steak and cook until browned all over, about 7 minutes. Add beef broth and wine, then marinara sauce; bring mixture to boil. Cover and transfer to oven. Roast until sausages are cooked through and steak is tender, about 1 hour 45 minutes. Transfer

braciolo to work surface; tent with foil to keep warm.

Boil sauce in pot until reduced to 4 cups, about 15 minutes. Slice braciolo into 1-inch slices. Pour sauce into large deep platter. Arrange braciolo slices over sauce on platter and serve. Serves 6 TO 9

Crostada with Chocolate, Hazelnuts & Orange

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly)

Italian Dinner, November 10, 2007

For the Tart Shell:

1 Batch (12 ounces) Sweet Tart Dough (recipe follows), chilled

For The Chocolate Layer 5 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into chunks.

For The Main Filling 1/3 cup hazelnuts, toasted in the oven, skins rubbed off. A medium-size orange, for zest (see recipe instructions) 2/3 cup sugar, 6 tablespoons soft butter, 2 eggs, 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour 3 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped in very small pieces, (about 1/2 cup), 2 tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Cointreau or Grand Marnier

For Serving (Optional) Whipped cream

Recommended Equipment A 9-inch tart mold, preferably a fluted metal ring with a removable bottom, a baking stone or oven tiles A food processor

For the Tart Shell:

1 Batch (12 ounces) Sweet Tart Dough (recipe follows), chilled

For The Chocolate Layer

5 Ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into chunks

For The Main Filling

1/3 Cup hazelnuts, toasted in the oven, skins rubbed off
A medium-size orange, for zest (see recipe instructions)

2/3 Cup sugar

6 Tablespoons soft butter

2 Eggs

1 Tablespoon all-purpose flour

3 Ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped in very small pieces (about 1/2 cup)

2 Tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Cointreau or Grand Marnier

For Serving (Optional) Whipped cream

Making the Filling:

Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven with a baking stone on it, if you have one. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Roll and press the dough to form the tart shell. Put the shell in the refrigerator to chill.

Put the 5 ounces of chocolate chunks in a bowl, and set over a pot of very hot water (barely simmering). Stir as the chocolate begins to melt, enabling it to become molten at the lowest temperature. When completely smooth, pour the chocolate into the tart shell, and spread it to cover the dough bottom completely.

Put the hazelnuts in the food processor, and pulse to chop them small bits-don't turn them into a powder or paste.

Empty the nuts into a bowl, and wipe out the food processor (you don't have to wash it).

To prepare the orange zest for the filling, rinse and dry the orange, remove only the outer, colored zest in strips, about 2 inches long, with a vegetable peeler. Stack up a few strips at a time and slice them lengthwise into very thin slivers with a sharp paring knife. Then cut the slivers crosswise into tiny bits, like glitter or small confetti; you should have about 2 tablespoons.

Now you'll blend the main filling in the processor, adding the ingredients separately; frequently scrape down the sides of the bowl to make sure everything is processed evenly. First blend the sugar and butter, processing about 30 seconds, until smooth. With the machine running, drop in the eggs and process for a minute or more, until smooth and slightly thickened (be sure to scrape the sides). Drop in the flour and blend until smooth; scrape the bowl.

Evening in Provence Dinner

We enjoyed a delightful "Evening in Provence" on November 10 at the home of Joan and Bob Janshego with the following menu:

Olive and Roasted Bell Pepper Tartines

Oven-roasted Tomato and Fresh Thyme Tartines

Leek Soup

Eggplant Tian with Tomato Coulis and Herb-Marinated Goat Cheese

Bacon Batter Bread

Beef Daube with Egg Noodles

Plum Almond Crumble with Vanilla Bean Whipped Cream

The consensus was that the Beef Daube was the favorite. So it gets a star. It was nice to have former members Esfir and Josif Malinsky join us. We hope to see them again soon.

Olive and Roasted Bell Pepper Tartines

(Prepared by Esfir and Josif)

Evening in Provence Dinner, November 10, 2007

2 Large red bell peppers

8 3 to 4 inch pieces country bread (such as baguette, bâtarde, and/or seeded wheat; about 1/2 inch thick)

Purchased olivada (black olive paste) or tapenade

Extra-virgin olive oil

Grated Parmesan cheese

Char peppers directly over gas flame or in broiler until blackened on all sides. Enclose in paper bag; let stand 10 minutes. Peel and seed peppers, then cut into thin strips.

Can be made 1 day ahead. Wrap and refrigerate. Toast bread. Spread each piece with olivada. Top with pepper strips. Drizzle with oil, then sprinkle with salt and pepper. Garnish tartines with Parmesan cheese and serve.

MAKES 8

Oven-Roasted Tomato and Fresh Thyme Tartines

(Prepared by Esfir and Josif)

Evening in Provence Dinner, November 10, 2007

- 2 Pounds red and/or yellow plum tomatoes, sliced 1/3 inch thick
- 1/2 Teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 Teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves plus whole sprigs for garnish
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 8 3 to 4 inch pieces country bread (such as baguette, bâtarde, and/or seeded wheat; about 1/2 inch thick)

Preheat oven to 200 degrees F. Arrange tomato slices in single layer on rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt, then sugar and black pepper. Scatter garlic and thyme leaves over. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil.

Roast tomatoes 1 hour. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil. Continue roasting until tomatoes begin to wrinkle, about 1 hour longer. Cool tomatoes on sheet.

DO AHEAD Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.

Toast bread. Divide tomatoes among bread pieces; sprinkle with juices from baking sheet. Garnish with thyme sprigs. . MAKES 8

Vichyssoise A La Ritz

(Prepare buy Lindsey and David)

Evening in Provence Dinner, November 10, 2007

- 4 Leeks (white part only) - sliced
- Medium Onion - sliced
- 4 Tablespoons Butter
- 5 Medium Potatoes - thinly sliced
- 4 Cups Chicken Stock
- 1 Teaspoon Salt
- 3 Cups Milk
- 2 Cups Cream
- Chopped Chives

In a deep kettle, brown the leeks and onions very lightly in the butter. Add the potatoes, stock and salt and boil 35 minutes, or until very tender. Crush and rub through a fine sieve or puree in a food processor.

Return the mixture to the kettle, add the milk and 1 cup of the cream and bring to a boil. Cool and rub again through a fine sieve. Chill.

Add the remaining cream. Chill thoroughly and serve garnished with chives. (yield 8 or more servings)

Bacon Batter Bread (Two Loaves)

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Evening in Provence Dinner, November 10, 2007

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 Pound uncooked bacon or enough to make 1/3 cup crumbled fried bacon
- 2 Tablespoons bacon drippings (from the above)
- 1 Cup whole wheat flour
- 4 Cups all-purpose or bread flour
- 2 Packages dry yeast
- 2 Teaspoons salt
- 1/4 Teaspoon ground coriander

- 1/2 Cup nonfat dry milk
- 2 Cups hot tap water (120 -130 degrees F.)
- 1/4 Cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 Egg, room temperature

BAKING PANS

Two medium (8-1/2 x 4-1/2) inch loaf pans, greased or Teflon. If glass, reduce oven heat degrees 25 degrees F.)

PREPARATION:

Cook bacon to make 1/3 cup of crumbled bacon, and reserve it and 2 tablespoons of the drippings.

In a mixer bowl measure the whole wheat flour, 3 cups of all-purpose or bread flour, yeast, salt, ground coriander, milk, drippings and water. Blend at low speed in the electric mixer for 30 seconds, or for the same length of time with a large wooden spoon. Add brown sugar, egg and bacon. Stir. Increase mixer speed to high for 3 minutes or 200 strokes with the spoon. Stop the mixer and add the remaining flour. Blend it well.

FIRST RISING:

50 Minutes

Serape down the sides of the bowl, cover it tightly with plastic wrap and put in a warm (80 - 85 degrees F) place until the batter has doubled in volume.

FORMING:

Turn back the plastic covering and stir down the batter. Lift it with spoons into the pans. Push into the corners of the pans with a spoon, and smooth the tops.

SECOND RISING: 30 Minutes

Cover pans with the plastic or wax paper and return the pans to the warm place. The batter will rise to the edge of the pans.

BAKING:

30 Minutes

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Place the pans in the oven and bake until the loaves are a deep brown. The loaf is done when a metal skewer or a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean and dry. If moist particles cling to the probe, return the loaf to the oven for an additional 10 minutes. Test again.

FINAL STEP:

Remove bread from the oven. Carefully turn the hot loaves out onto a metal rack to cool before serving or freezing.

Beef Daube with Egg Noodles

(Prepared by Joan and Bob)

Evening in Provence Dinner, November 10, 2007

- 3-3/4 Pounds well-trimmed boneless beef chuck, cut into 1-1/2-inch cubes
- All purpose flour for coating meat, plus 2 tablespoons
- 6 Tablespoons (3/4 stick) butter, divided
- 3 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Cups chopped onions
- 1-1/2 Cups chopped leeks (white and pale green Parts

only; from 2 medium)
 1-1/3 Cups chopped carrots
 1 Large celery stalk, chopped
 4 Garlic cloves, chopped
 2-1/3 Cups (about) beef broth, divided
 10 Juniper berries*
 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
 1 Turkish bay leaf
 2 750-ml bottles dry red wine
 1/2 Cup (packed) chopped canned tomatoes in juice
 1 Tablespoon tomato paste
 2 8.8 ounce packages egg pappardelle or 1 pound wide egg noodles
 6 Tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley, divided

Place beef on sheet of foil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; toss. Sprinkle with flour; toss to coat, then shake off excess. Mix 2 tablespoons flour and 2 tablespoons butter in small dish to smooth paste.

Heat oil in heavy wide pot over medium-high heat. Add half of beef. Sauté until brown on all sides, about 8 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Repeat with remaining beef. Add onions, leeks, carrots, celery, and garlic to pot. Sauté until vegetables begin to soften, about 3 minutes. Add 2 cups broth, juniper berries, thyme, rosemary, and bay leaf and bring to boil, scraping up brown bits. Boil until broth is reduced to glaze, about 12 minutes. Return beef and juices to pot. Add wine, tomatoes with juice, and tomato paste; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until beef is tender, about 1 hour 15 minutes.

Using slotted spoon, transfer beef to bowl. Spoon off and discard excess fat from top of sauce; bring sauce to boil. Whisk in butter-flour paste. Continue boiling until sauce is thick enough to coat spoon, whisking occasionally, about 15 minutes. Return beef and any juices to pot. Thin sauce with more beef broth if desired. Season daube to taste with salt and pepper. Can be made 3 days ahead. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and keep chilled. Rewarm before serving.

Cook noodles in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender but still firm to bite. Drain; return to pot. Add 4 tablespoons butter and 4 tablespoons parsley; toss. Season with salt and pepper.

Divide noodles among plates. Spoon daube over. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons parsley and serve. Serves 8.

*Available in the spice section of most supermarkets.

Plum-Almond Crumble with Vanilla Bean Whipped Cream

(Prepared by Paula and Joe)

Evening in Provence Dinner, November 10, 2007

ALMOND TOPPING

1 Cup whole almonds (about 5 ounces)
 1 Cup all purpose flour
 1/4 Teaspoon salt
 1/2 cup (1 stick) chilled unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
 1 Cup sugar

2 Large eggs

PLUM FILLING AND CREAM

4-1/2 to 5 Pounds black plums, halved, pitted, cut into 3/4-inch wedges
 2/3 Cup sugar
 1-1/2 Cups chilled heavy whipping cream
 5 Tablespoons powdered sugar
 1 Large vanilla bean, split lengthwise

WASTE NOT: After scraping the vanilla bean seeds into the cream, toss the bean into the processor with 2-1/2 cups sugar and blend. The vanilla sugar is great in coffee or sprinkled over yogurt (Oust be sure to strain before using).

FOR ALMOND TOPPING:

Blend almonds, flour, and salt in processor until nuts are chopped to small pieces (not powder). Add butter; blend, using on/off turns, until coarse meal forms. Add sugar; blend 3 seconds. Add 1 egg; blend just to combine. Add second egg; blend, using on/off turns, until moist clumps form. Transfer to bowl, cover, and chill until ready to use (up to 1 day).

FOR PLUM FILLING AND CREAM:

Toss plums and sugar in large bowl. Let stand 1 hour, tossing occasionally. Combine cream and powdered sugar in medium bowl. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean halves. Whisk until peaks form. Cover and chill (up to 3 hours), rewhisking if necessary before using.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Spread plum filling in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Drop topping over in small clumps. Bake until plums are tender and topping is crisp and golden brown, about 50 minutes. Cool at least 10 minutes. Spoon warm crumble into bowls, top with whipped cream, and serve. Serves 8

The dinner party on November 17, 2007 was hosted by Audrey and John. Many thanks to Audrey and John for agreeing to fill in as hosts on such short notice and for being so gracious. Our theme was Festive Fall Feast. We began by enjoying wine and cheeses while sitting by the warm and inviting fire at the fireplace. Following this we adjourned to the dining room and enjoyed the pleasure of good company and a delicious dinner which consisted of vegetable soup with corn and and pepper garnish, cheese puff overs, fillets of salmon and sole in phyllo, orzo with broccoli pesto, and pineapple rum trifle for dessert. One of the highlights of our dinner conversation was hearing about Barbara Piquet and Ron Villafranco's experience and fun of attending Santa Claus School

Garden Vegetable Soup with Corn and Red Pepper Garnish

(Prepared by Barbara and Ron)

Festive Fall Feast, November 17, 2007

2 Tablespoons olive oil
 3 Garlic cloves, minced
 3 Medium leeks, white part only, cleaned and chopped

- (about 3 cups)
 4-1/2 Cups chicken broth
 1 Medium (6 ounce) potato, chopped (1 cup)
 1 Medium (8 ounce) yellow
 crookneck squash, chopped (1-3/4 cups)
 1-1/2 Teaspoons dried tarragon
 1 Package (16 ounces) frozen corn kernels
 1 Teaspoon ground cumin
 1/2 Teaspoon salt, or to taste

Vegetable Garnish

- 1 Cup reserved corn from soup, defrosted (Optional - not used)
 1 Large red bell, pepper, chopped by hand into 1/4 inch dice
 8 Large green onions, chopped (about 1 cup)
 1 Large yellow crookneck squash, cut into matchstick strips by hand or with julienne blade of a food processor

To Make Soup: In a 4-quart soup pot over medium heat, heat olive oil. Add garlic and leeks and sauté, stirring, for 1 minute. Cover pot with wax paper and lid, reduce heat to low and cook, covered, for 10 minutes, or until very soft, stirring occasionally. Add broth, potato, squash, and tarragon. Reserve 1 cup of the corn for garnish, and add the rest. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, until potatoes are soft, about 20 minutes. Cool slightly and puree in batches in the blender. Stir in cumin and salt. (Soup may be refrigerated up to 2 days or frozen up to 1 month.)

To Prepare Garnish:

Place all ingredients in a microwave safe pie dish or shallow casserole. Cover with vented plastic wrap. (May be refrigerated up to 8 hours.)

Before Serving:

Heat soup in saucepan until hot. Adjust seasonings, if needed. Microwave garnish for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring once, or until vegetables are hot and cooked through but still crunchy. Divide soup among bowls and add a spoonful of vegetables in the center. Serves 8

Orzo with Olives, Broccoli and Basil

(Prepared by Audrey and John)

Festive Fall Feast, November 17, 2007

- 1/3 Cup olive oil
 1/4 Cup minced shallots
 2 Garlic cloves, minced
 3 Cups small broccoli florets
 1 1/2 Cups sliced fresh shiitakes mushroom caps
 10 Ounces orzo
 1 Large ripe tomato, chopped
 20 Kalamazoo olives, pitted & coarsely chopped
 1 Cup basil leaves, lightly packed
 1 Tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
 1/2 Teaspoon salt, or more, to taste
 Fresh-ground black pepper to taste

In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat, and add the shallots. Sauté them for a few

minutes, until they soften. Add the garlic, broccoli, and shiitakes. Cook the mixture stirring, for 1 minute being careful not to burn the garlic. Then add 3/4 cup water, and let the vegetables simmer for about 3 minutes or until the broccoli softens slightly and most of the water is evaporated. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the orzo, and boil the pasta, stirring occasionally, until it is just tender. Drain it, and keep it hot.

Add the tomato, olives, basil, thyme, and remaining olive oil to the bowl of broccoli. Add the orzo, and combine well. Stir in the lemon juice and add the salt and pepper to taste. Spoon the mixture onto plates, and serve. Serves 4

Variations:

Filletts of Salmon and Sole in Phyllo

(Prepared by Pat and Jack Maslin)

Festive Fall Feast, November 17, 2007

Sun-dried Tomato Filling

- 12 Sun-dried tomatoes
 2 Tablespoons regular or light sour cream
 4 Tablespoons regular, light, or fat-free mayonnaise
 1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
 1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon madeira wine
 1 Teaspoon dry mustard
 1 Teaspoon Dijon mustard
 1 Teaspoon dried tarragon

18 ounces sole or flounder fillets, about 1/2 to 3/4 inch thick

Salt

12 Ounces salmon fillets, skinned, about 3/8 inch at thickest part

12 Tablespoons dry bread crumbs (see page 10)

6 Sheets phyllo dough, at room temperature (half a 1 pound package)

No-stick cooking spray

Garnish (optional)

6 Sheets phyllo dough, at room temperature, for phyllo roses (recipe follows)

Fresh tarragon or parsley stems and leaves

To Prepare Filling:

Rehydrate tomatoes by placing in a 1-cup glass measure. Cover with water and microwave, uncovered, on high (100%) for 2 to 3 minutes, or until very soft. Cool slightly, remove to cutting board, and chop into small pieces. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, madeira, mustards, and tarragon. Stir in tomatoes. (Filling may be refrigerated up to 3 days.)

To Prepare Fish:

Rinse fish and pat dry. Place half the sole fillets on a work surface to make 6 equal portions, cutting and patching them if necessary. Sprinkle with salt and spread each with 2 heaping teaspoons filling. Measure thickness of salmon fillets. If thicker than 4 inch, cover with wax paper and pound very lightly. Do not be concerned if some parts are slightly thinner. Arrange salmon fillets over the sole, cutting to fit. Sprinkle

with salt and spread with remaining filling. Top with remaining sole.

To Wrap in Phyllo:

Place 2 sheets of phyllo on work surface. Keep remainder covered so it doesn't dry out. Spray 1 sheet with cooking spray. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons bread crumbs. Top with second sheet and spray. Cut in half crosswise. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon bread crumbs over each half, leaving a 1-inch border. Place a fish "sandwich" in the center, fold a short end over, fold in sides, and fold up remaining end like a wrapped package. Spray top and sides. Place, seam side down, on greased baking sheet at least 2 inches apart. Do not crowd. Repeat with remaining fish and phyllo. (Fish may be refrigerated overnight covered with plastic wrap.)

To Bake Fish:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Bake chilled fish for 22 to 28 minutes, or until edges of phyllo are golden and a knife inserted in the center of the fish feels hot against your lips. The center of the phyllo may be pale, but the roses will cover it. If fish has not been refrigerated after preparing, bake for 15 to 20 minutes. If using 2 baking sheets, rotate their positions after 12 minutes. Transfer packets with a spatula to plates and top each with a rose, if using, and tarragon or parsley stems and leaves. Makes 6 servings.

Phyllo Roses

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Spray 1 sheet of phyllo with cooking spray. Cut crosswise into 3 inch-wide strips. Holding the bottom edge of 1 strip, crinkle and roll from 1 end to form center of rose. Loosely crinkle second strip around the outside to make ruffled petals, squeezing the base to hold them in place. Use as many strips as desired. Place on greased baking sheet. If the rose does not stand upright, cut a portion off the bottom with scissors. Repeat to make as many roses as needed, allowing one per serving. Bake for 3 to 5 minutes, or until golden. (Roses may be stored in an airtight container at room temperature up to 4 days or frozen. Reheat at 400 degrees F. for 2 minutes while baking fish.)

Tropical Rum Trifle

(Prepared by Barbara and Jim)

Festive Fall Feast, November 17, 2007

Make the Coconut Cream Custard first; while it's chilling, prepare the remaining ingredients.

- 2 Mangoes, peeled and cut into 1/2 inch cubes*
- 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple chunks in syrup, undrained
- 1/3 Cup coconut-flavored rum
- 1 (10.75-ounce) frozen pound cake, thawed and thinly sliced
- 1-1/3 Cups sweetened flaked coconut, toasted
- 2/3 Cup chopped macadamia nuts, toasted
- 1 Cup whipping cream
- 1/4 Cup powdered sugar
- 1/4 Teaspoon vanilla extract

Garnishes: mango, star fruit, toasted Coconut, toasted macadamia nuts

Stir together first 3 ingredients in a bowl. Cover and chill 20 minutes.

Remove fruit from bowl with a slotted Spoon, reserving syrup mixture.

Brush pound cake slices with syrup mixture Arrange half of slices in bottom of a 4 quart bowl or trifle bowl. Top with half each of mango mixture, banana Slices, Coconut Cream Custard, coconut, and macadamia nuts. Repeat layers.

Beat whipping cream until foamy gradually add sugar, beating until soft peaks form. Add vanilla; beat until blended. Spread evenly over top of trifle Cover and chill 1-1/2 hours. Garnish if desired.

NOTE: For testing purposes only, we used Malibu Caribbean Rum with Coconut Flavor. Makes 10 to 12 servings Substitute 1 (24-ounce) jar refrigerated mango, drained and cut into 1/2 inch cubes, if desired.

Coconut Cream Custard:

- 1 Cup sugar
- 1/3 Cup cornstarch
- 2 Cups milk
- 1 (14-ounce) can coconut milk
- 6 Egg yolks

WHISK together all ingredients in heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly; boil whisking constantly, 1 minute or until cool. Makes 4 CUPS

Which Dish?

Trifle recipes traditionally prepared in a large bowl can be assembled in individual serving glasses. Look under the recipe title for the number of servings; you'll need about that many glasses. For example, if the recipe makes 12 servings, you'll need 12 glasses.