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quick and easy dinner parties





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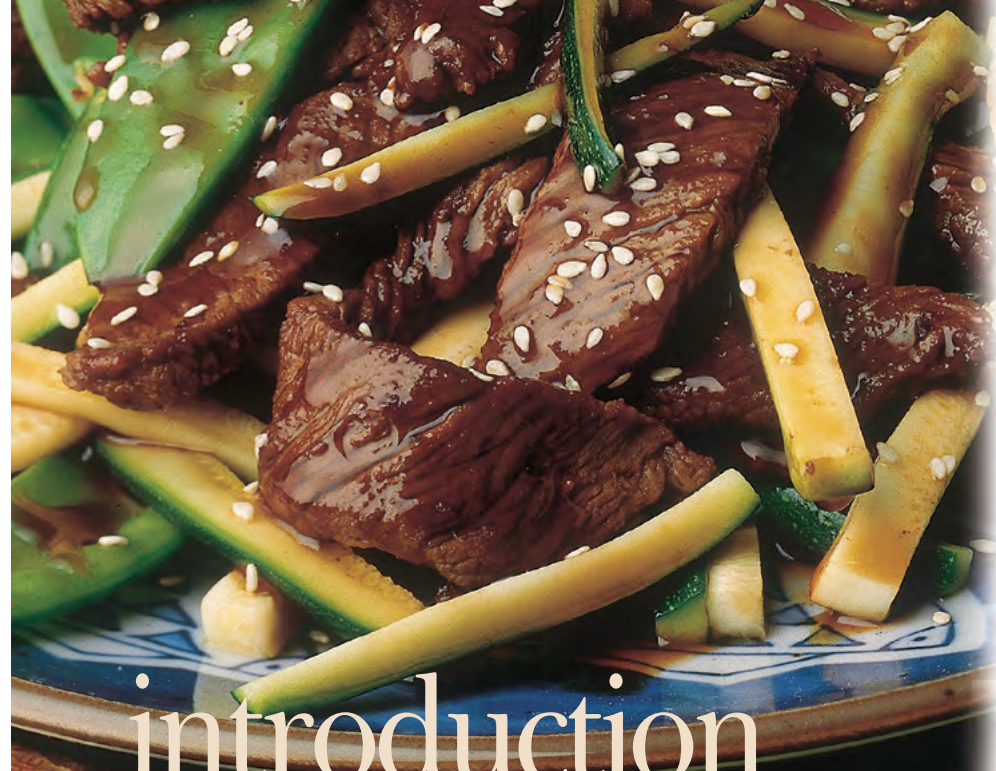
Design and lay out

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introduction

Want to host a stress-free dinner party? In this book you will discover delicious recipes intended to make hosting more fun and relaxing. You'll be able to deliver on taste and presentation... and above all: you'll be able to enjoy the party along with your friends and family.



quick and easy dinner parties



The menu is an essential part of every meeting, for it provides the setting to chat with our guests in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Sharing a well-served table with our family or friends is a special moment that should always be savored without having to spend the whole day in the kitchen. Follow these tips to achieve a perfect dinner party.

Plan ahead. Think about the whole menu and pick recipes that can be paired together harmoniously. Remember to ask your guests if they have any specific preferences or dietary concerns such as allergies. It is always a good idea to pick a couple of dishes that you can make either partially or entirely beforehand. Once you have decided on your menu, write down a shopping list with all the necessary ingredients so that you don't forget anything.

Serve snacks upon arrival. Your guests could turn up earlier than expected or you could run a little behind with the food... either way, you should have something for them to nibble on as you welcome them



into your home. Crackers, cheeses, bread, dips, olives and a little wine or beer will do the job.

Consider the drinks. For beverages with alcohol, calculate 1 bottle of wine per 2 guests, 3 beers per guest, 3 cocktails per guest and 1 bottle of Champagne per 6 guests. For non-drinkers, calculate 1 liter of water per 3 guests and 3 non-alcoholic drinks per guest.

Lay your table as early as possible. As you probably won't have time to spare right before your guests start to arrive, the best option is to get the table sorted ahead of time. Lay out the plates, the cutlery, glasses and a centerpiece. This way you will be able to focus on finishing the menu on time.

Think about desserts. If you're serving cake, pies or pastry, calculate 1 slice per guest. For ice cream, calculate 5 ounces per guest. And for mousses and puddings, calculate 4 ounces per guests. If you're going to serve many of these options, reduce each estimate by half.

Difficulty scale

■ □ □ | Easy to do

■ ■ □ | Requires attention

■ ■ ■ | Requires experience

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Herald Tribune

blini

with herbed yogurt

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 10 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

> 200 g/7 oz natural yogurt, flavored with 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill and 1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint

blini

> 1 teaspoon dry yeast
> 1 teaspoon sugar
> 1½ cups/375 ml/12½ fl oz milk, warmed
> ½ cup/130 g/4 oz buckwheat flour
> ½ cup/125 g/4 oz plain flour
> 1 egg white
> freshly ground black pepper

method

1. To make blini, place yeast, sugar and ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz of the milk in a small bowl. Stand for 5 minutes or until frothy.
2. Place buckwheat and plain flours in a large bowl. Mix to combine. Make a well in the center. Pour yeast mixture and remaining milk into well. Mix until just combined.
3. Place egg white in a separate clean bowl. Beat until soft peaks form. Fold egg mixture into batter. Season with black pepper to taste.
4. Heat a lightly oiled frying pan over a medium heat. Place tablespoons of mixture in pan. You should be able to cook 5-6 blini at a time in a 20-23 cm/8-10 in frying pan. Cook for 1-2 minutes or until bubbles appear on the surface. Turn over. Cook second side for 30 seconds until golden. Place on absorbent kitchen paper. Keep warm in a low oven while cooking the remaining mixture.
5. Serve blini warm or cold topped with a spoonful of yogurt. If desired add semi-dried tomatoes on top.

.....
Makes 20

tip from the chef

For a delicious sweet version, add 2 tablespoons sugar to batter. And instead of yogurt, use ganache (a half-and-half mix of cream and chocolate melted over a low heat).



seafood

appetizers



■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 10 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To make parcels, heat oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat and cook garlic, onion and ginger for 3-4 minutes. Add fish, coconut and cream (a) and stir for 4-5 minutes or until fish is just cooked; season with white pepper, cool. Place 2 teaspoons mixture on each crêpe, gather up edges and tie with a chive to form a parcel (b). Serve at room temperature.

2. To make rolls, process chopped salmon, cream, lemon juice, horseradish relish, cream cheese and black pepper to taste until smooth. Place 2 teaspoons filling along one side of each smoked salmon slice, then roll up (c). Place rolls seam side down on a large serving platter and top each roll with a dill sprig.

.....
Makes 20 each

ingredients

fish parcels

- > 1 tablespoon oil
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 1 small onion, finely chopped
- > 1 teaspoon finely grated

fresh ginger

- > 185 g/6 oz firm white fish fillets, cut into cubes
- > 1 tablespoon desiccated coconut
- > 1 tablespoon cream
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 20 crêpes
- > 20 long chives, blanched

smoked salmon rolls

- > 155 g/5 oz smoked salmon, chopped
- > 3 tablespoons cream
- > 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- > 1 tablespoon horseradish relish
- > 250 g/8 oz cream cheese
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 20 slices smoked salmon
- > 20 sprigs fresh dill

tip from the chef

Crêpes can be made in advance and frozen if you wish. For extra taste and color, as shown in picture, add 2 teaspoons curry powder to crêpe batter. Rolls can be made 2-3 hours ahead of serving and stored, covered, in the refrigerator.



chicken tacos

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 8 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > 12 taco shells, warmed
- > 8 lettuce leaves, shredded
- > 1 red pepper, thinly sliced
- > 125 g/4 oz tasty cheese (mature Cheddar), grated
- > 1 avocado, stoned, peeled and sliced
- > ½ cup/125 g/4 oz sour cream

chicken filling

- > 2 teaspoons oil
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 2 spring onions, chopped
- > 3 tomatoes, chopped
- > 1 kg/2 lb cooked chicken, skin removed and flesh shredded
- > 2 tablespoons taco seasoning mix
- > 4 tablespoons bottled tomato salsa

method

1. To make filling, heat oil in a frying pan, add onion, spring onions and tomatoes and cook, stirring, for 4 minutes. Add chicken, taco seasoning mix and salsa and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes longer or until heated through.
2. Spoon filling into taco shells and top with lettuce, red pepper, cheese, avocado and sour cream.

.....
Makes 12



tip from the chef

To remark the Mexican character of this tasty recipe, sprinkle chopped fresh coriander over cream.



risotto

primavera



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. Heat margarine in a large frying pan over moderate heat. Add garlic, onion, red pepper and carrots, cook for 1 minute. Add tomatoes and parsley and cook for a further 2 minutes.
2. Sprinkle rice over vegetables and stir for 1 minute. Add turmeric, celery and water, cook, stirring occasionally, until water is absorbed and rice is cooked.
3. Sprinkle risotto with extra parsley to serve.

ingredients

- > 1 tablespoon light margarine
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 1 red pepper, seeded and chopped
- > 2 carrots, cut into thin strips
- > 1½ cups canned Italian peeled tomatoes, and juice
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- > 2 cups short-grain rice
- > ¼ teaspoon turmeric
- > 2 celery sticks, chopped
- > 3 cups water
- > 2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley, extra

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

This risotto turns into a gourmet plate if it is enriched with seafood. In that case the number of servings will be greater and the caloric difference will not be big. It is a very useful plate when you have guests.



eggplant soup

■□□ | Cooking time: 25 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 1 kg/2 lb eggplant, halved
- > 4 red peppers, halved
- > 1 teaspoon olive oil
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 4 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- > 3 cups/750 ml/1¼ pt vegetable stock
- > 2 teaspoons crushed black peppercorns

method

1. Place eggplant and red peppers, skin side up, under a preheated hot grill (a) and cook for 10 minutes or until flesh is soft and skins are blackened. Peel away blackened skin and roughly chop flesh.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add garlic and tomatoes (b) and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add eggplant, red peppers, stock (c) and black pepper, bring to simmering and simmer for 4 minutes. Remove pan from heat and set aside to cool slightly.
3. Place vegetables and stock in batches in food processor or blender and process until smooth. Return mixture to a clean pan, bring to simmering over a medium heat and simmer for 3-5 minutes or until heated through.

.....
Serves 6

tip from the chef

This soup can be made the day before and reheated when required. To garnish soup, top small toasts with Brie slices and sage leaves. Place under a preheated grill and cook for 1-2 minutes or until cheese just melts.



a



b



c

chicken cocktail

balls in plum sauce



■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 2 hours 55 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. In a food processor place all chicken ball ingredients except frying oil and process together quickly. With wetted hands shape into small balls. Place on a flat tray in a single layer and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. Heat oil, at least 5 cm deep in a frying pan, or half full in a deep fryer, to 180°C/350°F. Deep fry for about 3 to 4 minutes. Remove and drain on absorbent paper. Place a cocktail stick in each ball and arrange on platter.
3. To make sauce, place all ingredients in a small saucepan and bring slowly to the boil while stirring. Simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. Place dipping sauce in a bowl and serve with the chicken balls.

ingredients

- > 500 g/1 lb ground chicken
- > 10 shallots, finely chopped
- > ¼ teaspoon five spice powder
- > 1½ tablespoons honey
- > 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- > 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- > 1½ cups/90 g/3 oz fresh breadcrumbs
- > oil for frying

plum sauce

- > 1 cup/250 g/8 oz plum jam
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz white vinegar
- > ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- > ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- > ⅛ teaspoon hot chili powder

.....
Serves 4

tip from the chef

When accompanied by white rice, al dente, it makes for a complete meal. The rice makes a good match with the plum sauce, compensating the strong taste.



tomato basil salad

■□□ | Cooking time: 10 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 large tomatoes, sliced
- > 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- > 1 red onion, sliced into rings
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 2 teaspoons olive oil
- > 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
- > ½ teaspoon cracked black peppercorns

method

1. Cut each tomato slice in half and arrange alternately with basil leaves around the edge of each salad plate.
2. Place onion rings in center of each salad and pour over combined garlic, olive oil, lime juice and pepper.

.....
Serves 4



tip from the chef

In order to make the fragrance more intense, blend the olive oil with 1 tablespoon of chopped basil before adding it to the dressing.



salmon cutlets

with pineapple salsa



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 10 minutes - Preparation time: 25 minutes

method

1. Preheat barbecue to a medium heat. Cook salmon cutlets on lightly oiled barbecue for 3-5 minutes each side or until flesh flakes when tested with a fork.
2. To make salsa, place pineapple, spring onions, chili, lemon juice and mint in a food processor or blender and process to combine. Serve at room temperature with salmon cutlets.

.....
Serves 4

ingredients

> 4 salmon cutlets, cut 2½ cm/1 in thick

pineapple salsa

- > 250 g/8 oz roughly chopped fresh pineapple
- > 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- > 1 fresh red chili, seeded and finely chopped
- > 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- > 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint

tip from the chef

If fresh pineapple is unavailable use canned crushed pineapple in natural juice, drained, in its place. This salsa is delicious served with any fish or barbecued chicken.



cajun

chicken fettuccine

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons sweet paprika
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 2 teaspoons crushed black peppercorns
- > 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- > 1 tablespoon ground coriander
- > ½ teaspoon chili powder
- > 6 boneless chicken breast fillets, sliced
- > 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- > 750 g/1½ lb fettuccine

tomato salsa

- > 6 ripe tomatoes, chopped
- > 2 fresh red chillies, seeded and finely chopped
- > 1 green pepper, chopped
- > 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- > 3 tablespoons balsamic or red wine vinegar

method

1. To make salsa, place tomatoes, chillies, green pepper, sugar and vinegar in a bowl and toss to combine. Set aside.
2. Place paprika, garlic, black peppercorns, cumin, coriander and chili powder in a bowl and mix to combine. Add chicken and toss to coat with spice mixture. Heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add chicken and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until chicken is tender. Remove chicken from pan, set aside and keep warm.
3. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain well and place in a serving dish. Add chicken, toss to combine and serve with salsa.

.....
Serves 8

tip from the chef

If planning ahead, the salsa can be prepared up to a day in advance. The chicken can be prepared and tossed in the spice mixture several hours in advance, leaving only the cooking of the chicken and pasta to do at the last minute.





sesame

beef with snow peas

■□□ | Cooking time: 5 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. Toss steak in cornflour to coat, shake off excess and set aside.
2. Heat a wok or large frying pan over a high heat. Add vegetable and sesame oils and steak and stir-fry for 2 minutes.
3. Stir in soy sauce, oyster sauce and hoisin sauce and stir-fry for 1 minute longer.
4. Add snow peas and sesame seeds and stir-fry for 1 minute or until snow peas are just cooked. Serve immediately.

ingredients

- > 1 kg/2 lb rump steak, trimmed of all visible fat and cut into wide strips
- > ¼ cup/30 g/1 oz cornflour
- > 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- > 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- > 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- > 2 tablespoons oyster sauce
- > 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
- > 300 g/9½ oz snow peas
- > 3 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted

.....
Serves 6-8

tip from the chef

If you wish to serve fried rice as a side dish, heat a little oil in a wok and briefly stir-fry 6 chopped spring onions, 3 chopped rashers bacon, 1 chopped red pepper and 250 g/8 oz shelled prawns. Add 90 g/3 oz sweet corn kernels, 500 g/1 lb cooked rice and 3 tablespoons soy sauce and continue stir-frying. Add a thin omelette cut into strips, stir-fry for 1 minute longer and serve.



spaghetti with sardines and raisins

■□□ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > 410 g/13 oz spaghetti
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 2 spring onions, sliced
- > 2 tablespoons raisins
- > 2 x 110 g/3½ oz canned sardines in tomato sauce

method

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add spaghetti and cook until just tender, drain.
2. Heat oil in a medium saucepan over moderate heat. Add garlic, spring onions and raisins, cook for 2 minutes.
3. Stir in sardines and spaghetti, toss well and serve immediately.

.....
Serves 4



tip from the chef

Another option for this sweet and sour plate is to use tuna in tomato sauce instead sardines.



spinach, green

pea and ricotta gnocchi



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Steam or microwave spinach until tender. Drain and squeeze to remove excess liquid. Set aside.
2. Boil, steam or microwave peas until tender. Drain and combine with spinach. Chop mixture finely (a).
3. Place ricotta and spinach mixture in a saucepan. Season to taste with black pepper and nutmeg. Add 15 g/½ oz butter and cook over a very low heat, stirring frequently until butter melts and all excess liquid evaporates. Remove from heat.
4. Beat egg yolk (b), then half the Parmesan cheese, breadcrumbs and flour into cooked mixture. The consistency should be firm enough to hold its shape, but soft enough to give a light-textured gnocchi. Using wellfloured hands, take heaped teaspoons of mixture and roll lightly into small ovals (c).
5. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, then reduce heat. Drop in a few at a time and cook for 4-5 minutes or until they rise to the surface. Remove from pan and drain. Cover and keep warm.
6. Melt remaining butter in a saucepan and cook until lightly browned. Pour butter over gnocchi, sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese and serve.

ingredients

- > 60 g/2 oz fresh or frozen spinach
- > 60 g/2 oz fresh or frozen green peas
- > 60 g/2 oz ricotta cheese, drained
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > ground nutmeg
- > 30 g/1 oz butter
- > 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten
- > 30 g/1 oz grated fresh Parmesan cheese
- > 1 tablespoon dried breadcrumbs
- > 2 tablespoons flour



a



b



c

.....
Serves 1



chicken

and chili tamales

■■■ | Cooking time: 60 minutes - Preparation time: 30 minutes

ingredients

> 30 dried corn husks

tamale dough

> 125 g/4 oz butter, softened

> 750 g/1½ lb fresh masa

> 2 tablespoons baking powder

> ¾ cup/185 ml/6 fl oz chicken stock

chicken and green chili filling

> 1 tablespoon vegetable oil

> 2 fresh green chilies, chopped

> 1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves

> 1 clove garlic, crushed

> 250 g/8 oz finely chopped chicken

> 1 tablespoon flour

> 1 tablespoon tomato paste (purée)

method

1. Place corn husks in a bowl, pour over warm water to cover and soak for 30 minutes.

2. To make dough, place butter in a bowl and beat until light and creamy. Place masa and baking powder in a bowl, then stir in stock and mix to combine. Gradually beat masa mixture into butter and continue beating to make a smooth dough.

3. To make filling, heat a frying pan over a high heat, add oil, chilies, oregano and garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in chicken, flour and tomato paste (purée) and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until chicken is cooked and mixture reduces and thickens.

4. Drain corn husks and pat dry with absorbent kitchen paper. Take 2 tablespoons of tamale dough and press to flatten, place on a corn husk, then top with 1 tablespoon of filling. Take another 2 tablespoons of dough, press to flatten, then place over filling and press edges of dough to enclose. Fold corn husk around dough parcel to enclose, then wrap other husk around the parcel in the opposite direction and tie to secure. Repeat with remaining corn husks, dough and filling to make 15 tamales.

5. Place tamales in a steamer over boiling water and steam for 45 minutes or until cooked through.

.....
Makes 15





ratatouille

■□□ | Cooking time: 40 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat, add onions and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until onions are lightly browned. Add green peppers and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes longer.
2. Add zucchini, eggplant, tomatoes, oregano, basil and marjoram and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes or until mixture reduces and thickens and vegetables are well cooked. Season to taste with black pepper. Serve hot, warm or at room temperature.

ingredients

- > ¼ cup/60 ml/2 fl oz vegetable oil
- > 2 onions, chopped
- > 2 green peppers, diced
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 4 zucchini, diced
- > 2 eggplant, diced
- > 2 x 440 g/14 oz canned tomatoes, undrained and mashed
- > 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- > 1 teaspoon dried basil
- > 1 teaspoon dried marjoram
- > freshly ground black pepper

.....
Serves 6

tip from the chef

Red peppers, mushrooms and fresh herbs are all tasty additions to this popular dish. With the addition of canned beans this becomes a great main meal for vegetarians. Drain and rinse the beans and add to the vegetable mixture in the last 5 minutes of cooking.



roasted flank steak

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 5 minutes - Cooking time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > 1 kg/ 2 lb. flank steak
- > 1 teaspoon salt
- > 1 tablespoon black pepper
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > potato chips
- salad greens

method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Rub steak on both sides with salt and pepper.
2. Heat oil in a large nonstick saucepan over medium-high heat. Add steak and cook 1 minute on each side or until browned.
3. Transfer saucepan to oven and cook steak 8 minutes for medium-rare or to desired degree of doneness. Transfer steak to a cutting board, tent with foil to keep warm and let stand for 5 minutes before cutting steak diagonally across the grain into thin slices. Serve immediately over salad greens with potato chips.

.....
Serves 4

tip from the chef

To prepare homemade potato chips, place potato slices into a large bowl with water and salt. Let the potatoes soak for 30 minutes. Rinse and drain. Heat oil in a deep fryer to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 and fry potato slices in batches, until golden. Remove and drain on paper towels. Season with salt.





smoked

salmon pizza

■□□ | Cooking time: 25 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. Divide dough into four portions and shape each to form a 15 cm/6 in round. Place rounds on lightly greased baking trays, brush with oil and bake at 200°C/400°F/Gas 6 for 15 minutes or until crisp and golden.
2. Reduce oven temperature to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Top pizzas with smoked salmon and black pepper to taste and bake for 8 minutes or until salmon is hot.
3. Just prior to serving, top pizzas with crème fraîche or sour cream and caviar (if using) and sprinkle with thyme.

ingredients

- > 1 quantity basic pizza dough
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 200 g/6½ oz smoked salmon slices
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 4 tablespoons crème fraîche or sour cream
- > 4 teaspoons caviar (optional)
- > 2 tablespoons chopped fresh lemon thyme

.....
Serves 4

tip from the chef

If lemon thyme is unavailable you can use ½ teaspoon dried thyme and ½ teaspoon finely grated lemon rind. Sprinkle thyme over pizza bases at the beginning of cooking and sprinkle lemon rind over pizzas just prior to serving.



chicken

breasts in curry sauce

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 5 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons butter
- > 4 boneless chicken breast fillets
- > ½ cup coconut milk
- > 1 cup cream
- > ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- > ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- > 2 teaspoons medium curry powder
- > 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

method

1. Cut chicken fillets in halves (a). Melt butter in a large frying pan over moderate heat, add chicken fillets and cook until golden on both sides (b), but pink inside. Transfer fillets to a baking dish and cook in a moderately low oven for 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, add coconut milk, cream (c), coriander, cumin and curry powder to frying pan and cook until sauce is reduced by half.
3. Arrange chicken fillets on a serving plate, pour curry sauce over the top and sprinkle with the basil.

.....
Serves 4



tip from the chef

Coconut milk is not the liquid inside the coconut, it is made by soaking the grated flesh of a coconut in hot water or scalded milk then straining the combination.



a



b



c



smoked

salmon soufflés

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 35 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. Grease two 1 cup/250 ml/8 fl oz capacity ramekins and sprinkle base and sides with 30 g/1 oz Parmesan cheese.
2. Melt butter in a small saucepan over a medium heat. Stir in flour and cook for 2 minutes. Remove pan from heat and gradually whisk in milk and cream (a).
3. Return pan to heat and cook, stirring constantly, for 4 minutes or until sauce boils and thickens. Remove pan from heat and set aside to cool slightly.
4. Add dill, egg yolks, Gruyère cheese, remaining Parmesan cheese and salmon to sauce and mix to combine (b).
5. Place egg whites in a bowl and beat until stiff peaks form. Fold egg white mixture into salmon mixture (c). Pour soufflé mixture into ramekins and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 20-25 minutes or until soufflés are puffed and golden. Serve immediately.

ingredients

- > 45 g/1½ oz grated Parmesan cheese
- > 15 g/½ oz butter
- > 2 tablespoons flour
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz milk
- > ¼ cup/60 ml/2 fl oz cream
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- > 3 eggs, separated
- > 60 g/2 oz grated Gruyère cheese
- > 60 g/2 oz smoked salmon, shredded

.....
Serves 2

tip from the chef

This recipe can be completed to the end of step 4, several hours in advance. If making in advance, allow the sauce mixture to cool slightly, then place plastic food wrap directly on top of the mixture –this will prevent a skin forming.



cheese- filled peppers

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 large red peppers
- > 2 large green peppers
- > 315 g/10 oz ricotta cheese, drained
- > 2 spring onions, chopped
- > 1 tablespoon finely grated orange rind
- > 2 tablespoons slivered almonds, toasted
- > 2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
- > ½ cup/30 g/1 oz breadcrumbs, made from stale bread
- > 60 g/2 oz grated Parmesan cheese
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 2 egg whites

method

1. Cut red and green peppers in half lengthwise, remove seeds and membrane and place in a lightly greased baking dish.
2. Combine ricotta cheese, spring onions, orange rind, almonds, chives, breadcrumbs, half the Parmesan cheese and black pepper to taste in a bowl.
3. Place egg whites in a bowl and beat until stiff peaks form. Fold egg white mixture into ricotta mixture and spoon into pepper halves.
4. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese and bake at 200°C/400°F/Gas 6 for 15 minutes or until puffed and golden.

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Serves 4

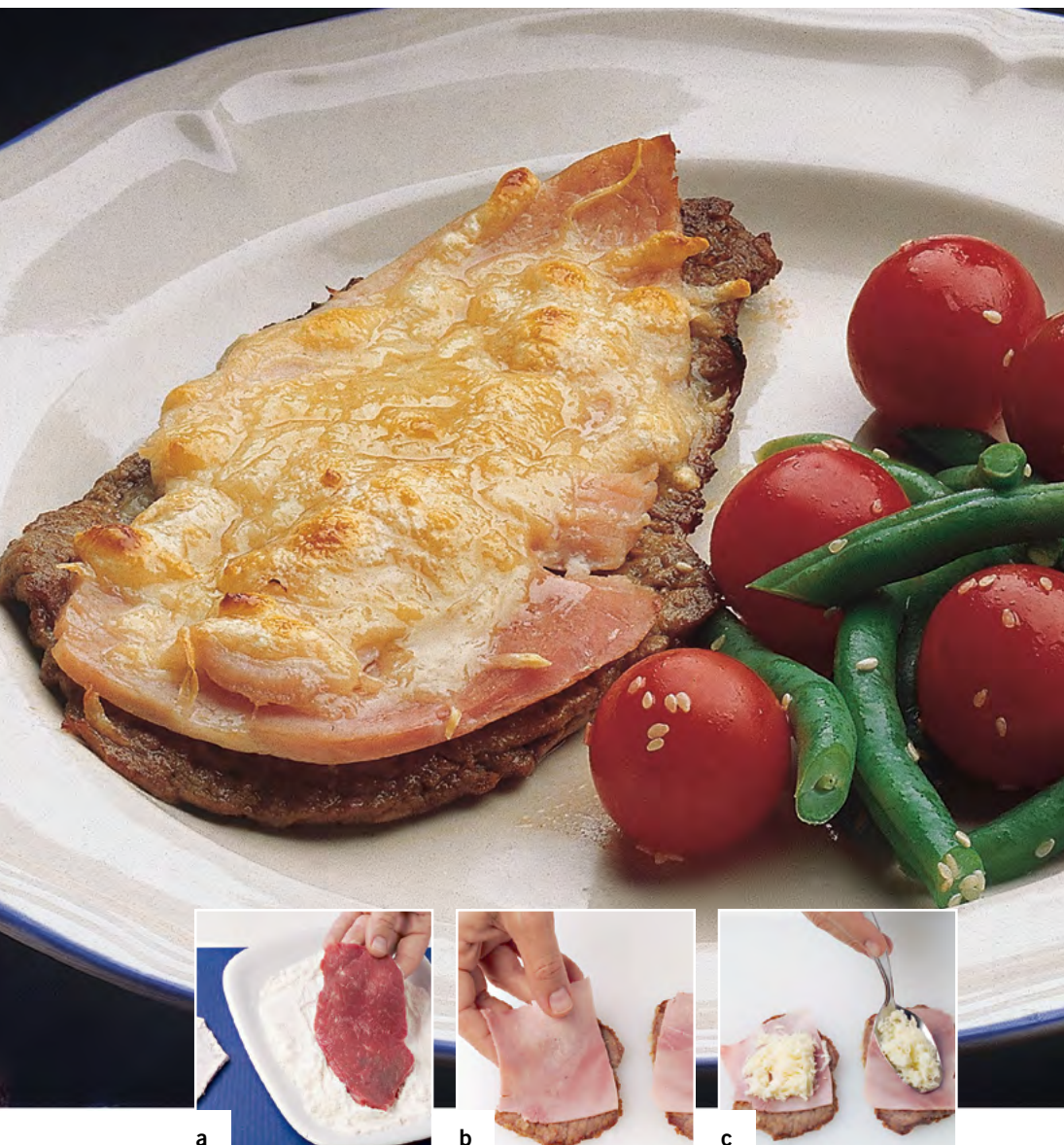


tip from the chef

This is a very attractive and colorful dish, perfect for a vegetarian menu.



saltimbocca



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 45 minutes - Preparation time: 5 minutes

method

1. Lightly flour veal scaloppino (a).
2. Heat oil in a frying pan over moderate heat, add veal, cook 30 seconds each side, remove from heat.
3. Place ham on top of scaloppino (b), top with mozzarella cheese (c). Bake in a moderately hot oven for 8-10 minutes, or until cheese is melted. Serve immediately.

ingredients

- > 1 tablespoon flour
- > 1 veal scaloppino, tenderized
- > ½ tablespoon olive oil
- > 1 slice lean ham
- > 2 tablespoons grated mozzarella cheese

.....
Serves 1

tip from the chef

If desired, serve with a bean and artichoke salad. To make salad, combine cooked green beans with halved canned artichoke hearts and canned lima or butter beans. Combine 1 tablespoon olive oil, ½ tablespoon red wine vinegar and freshly ground black pepper to taste, pour over salad and toss to combine. Scatter with thin strips of red pepper.



polenta

with bolognese

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 75 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 3 cups milk
- > 3 cups water
- > 3 teaspoons salt
- > 2 cups polenta
- > 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- > 1 tablespoon butter
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 500 g/1 lb veal mince
- > 1 cup dry white wine
- > 1 tablespoon dried basil
- > 1½ cups canned tomatoes
- > 1 cup tomato purée
- > 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- > 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

method

1. Combine milk and water in a large saucepan, add salt and bring to the boil; reduce heat and simmer. Very slowly pour polenta (a) into simmering mixture, stirring very quickly. Cook, stirring constantly, for 15 minutes.
2. Remove from heat, stir in cheese and pour polenta into a foil-lined and greased 20 cm/8 in removable base flan tin (b). Bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes.
3. Melt butter in a large saucepan over moderate heat. Add onion and garlic, cook for 2 minutes. Add veal and brown it (c). Add wine and cook over high heat for 10 minutes. Add basil, tomatoes, tomato purée, tomato paste and Worcestershire sauce. Simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Serve Bolognese over a slice of polenta.

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Serves 6-8

tip from the chef

Do not hesitate in trying this classic Italian dish with a full-bodied red wine.





mustard-crusted steaks

■□□ | Cooking time: 5 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. To make crust, place mustard, garlic, honey and mayonnaise in a small bowl and mix to combine. Spread mustard mixture over steaks.
2. Heat oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add steaks and cook for 2 minutes each side or until cooked to your liking.

ingredients

- > 4 lean beef fillet steaks
- > 2 teaspoons vegetable oil

mustard crust

- > 4 tablespoons wholegrain mustard
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 1 tablespoon honey
- > 2 tablespoons mayonnaise

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

An unusual accompaniment is broccoli with browned garlic. To make, divide a large head of broccoli into small flowerets, then boil, steam or microwave it until just tender. Refresh under cold running water. Divide a head of garlic into individual cloves and peel each clove. Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a frying pan, add garlic and cook, stirring, for 5-7 minutes or until brown. Take care that the garlic does not burn. Add broccoli to pan and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes or until heated. To complete the meal add mashed potatoes and sprinkle with fresh thyme.



creamy corn and crab soup

■ □ □ | Cooking time: FALTA

ingredients

- > 440 g/14 oz canned creamed corn
- > 1¾ cup/440 ml/14 fl oz water
- > 185 g/6 oz crabmeat
- > 1½ teaspoons cornflour blended with 1 tablespoon water
- > 1 egg, lightly beaten
- > 1 teaspoon vinegar
- > ¼ teaspoon sugar
- > freshly ground black pepper

method

1. Place corn and water in a saucepan and bring to the boil over a medium heat. Stir in crabmeat and cornflour mixture and bring to simmering.
2. Remove from heat, stir in egg, vinegar and sugar and season to taste with black pepper. Serve immediately.

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Serves 4



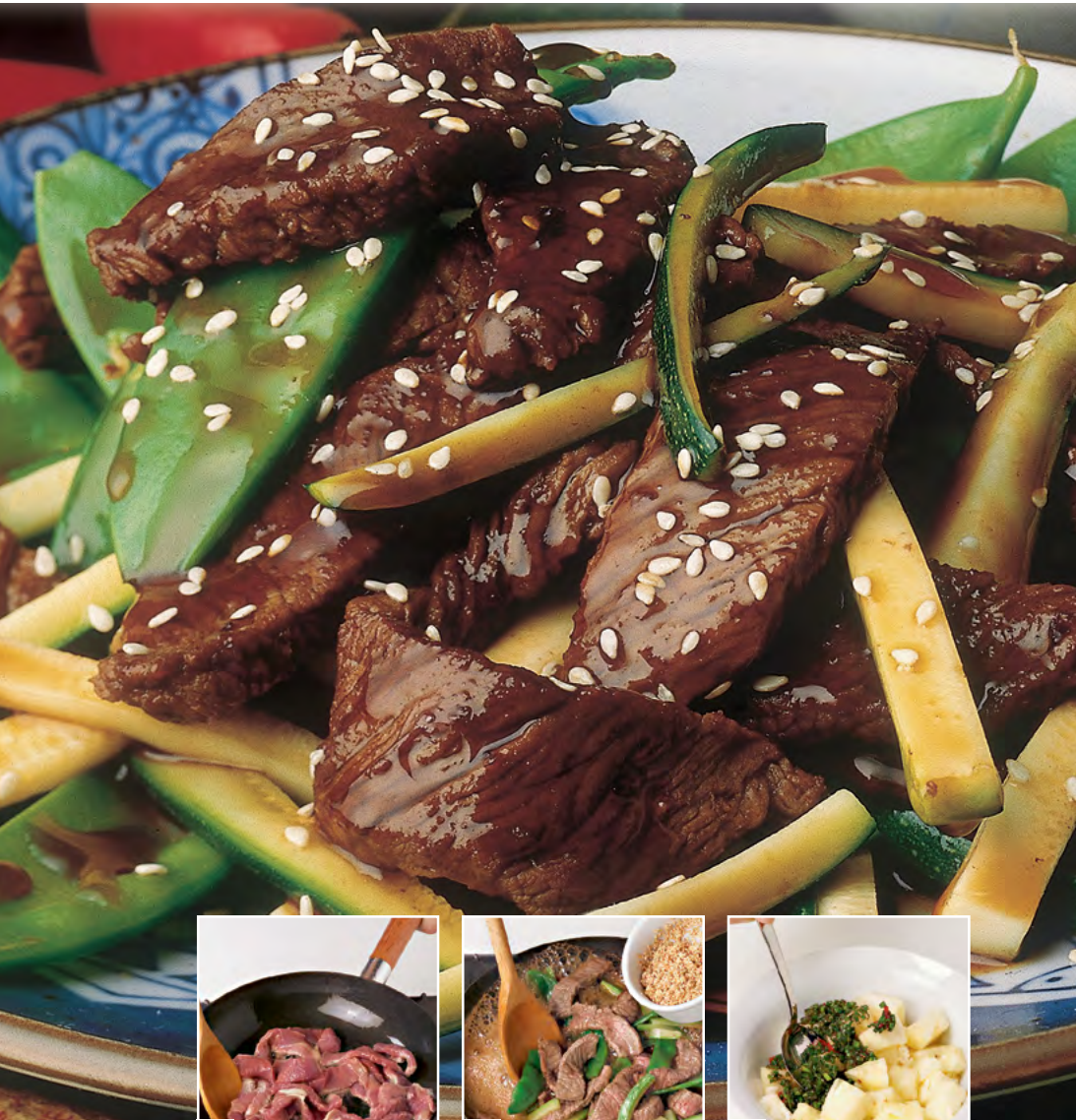
tip from the chef

For something different make this soup using pork mince instead of the crabmeat.



honey

beef with salsa



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 10 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Heat oil in a wok over a medium heat, add sesame seeds and garlic and stir-fry for 2 minutes or until seeds are golden. Remove seed mixture from wok and set aside.
2. Add beef to wok and stir-fry for 2 minutes or until brown (a). Add snow peas, zucchini, honey and soy and oyster sauces. Return sesame seed mixture to wok (b) and stir-fry for 3 minutes or until sauce thickens.
3. To make salsa, place pineapple, chili, sugar, chives and lime juice in a bowl and toss to combine (c). Serve with beef.

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Serves 4

ingredients

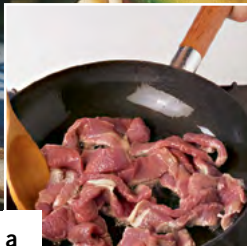
- > 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- > 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 500 g/1 lb lean beef strips
- > 185 g/6 oz snow peas, trimmed
- > 2 zucchini, chopped
- > 3 tablespoons honey
- > 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- > 1 tablespoon oyster sauce

pineapple salsa

- > ½ fresh pineapple, peeled, cored and chopped
- > 1 fresh red chili, chopped
- > 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- > 2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
- > 2 tablespoons lime juice

tip from the chef

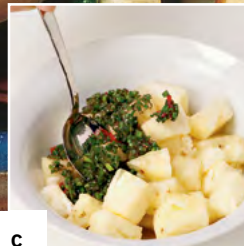
When handling fresh chilies do not put your hands near your eyes or allow them to touch your lips. To avoid discomfort and burning wear rubber gloves.



a



b



c

steak

bordelaise

■□□ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 6 fillet or rib-eye steaks
- > 6 spring onions, chopped
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 1 cup/250 ml/8 fl oz beef stock
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz dry red wine
- > freshly ground black pepper

method

- 1.Heat a nonstick frying pan over a medium heat, add steaks and cook for 3-4 minutes each side or until cooked to your liking. Remove steaks from pan, set aside and keep warm.
- 2.Add spring onions, garlic and 2 tablespoons stock to pan and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes. Remove spring onions from pan and set aside. Add remaining stock and wine to pan, bring to the boil and boil for 5-10 minutes or until sauce reduces and thickens. Return spring onions to pan and season to taste with black pepper. Serve sauce with steak.

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Serves 6

tip from the chef

This dish takes little time or effort to prepare and is excellent for mid-week entertaining. It is delicious served with potato gratin and glazed vegetables.



pasta putanesca



■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 45 minutes - Preparation time: 5 minutes

method

1. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain, set aside and keep warm.
2. To make sauce, heat oil in a saucepan over a low heat, add garlic and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and bring to the boil, then stir in anchovies, black olives, capers, oregano and chili powder and simmer for 3 minutes longer. Spoon sauce over hot pasta, sprinkle with parsley and Parmesan cheese and serve.

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Serves 6

ingredients

> 500 g/1 lb linguine or thin spaghetti

putanesca sauce

- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 5 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 4 x 440 g/14 oz canned peeled Italian plum tomatoes, drained and chopped
- > 6 anchovy fillets, coarsely chopped
- > 60 g/2 oz stoned black olives
- > 2 tablespoons capers, drained and chopped
- > 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- > ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- > ½ bunch parsley, coarsely chopped
- > 30 g/1 oz grated Parmesan cheese

tip from the chef

The reserved juice from the tomatoes can be frozen and used in a casserole or soup at a later date.



tomato

pesto chicken

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 1 onion, cut into eighths
- > 4 boneless chicken breast fillets, each cut into 3 pieces
- > 1 cup/250 ml/8 fl oz tomato purée
- > freshly ground black pepper

tomato pesto

- > 1 bunch fresh basil
- > 125 g/4 oz sun-dried tomatoes
- > 4 tablespoons grated fresh Parmesan cheese
- > 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- > 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz olive oil

method

1. To make pesto, place basil leaves, sun-dried tomatoes, Parmesan cheese, garlic and pine nuts in a food processor (a) and process until smooth. With machine running, gradually add ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz oil and process until mixture forms a smooth paste.
2. Heat remaining oil in a wok over a high heat, add onion and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add chicken and stir-fry for 5 minutes or until tender (b). Add tomato purée and stir-fry for 5 minutes or until heated through. Season to taste with black pepper (c). Serve with pesto.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

For a complete meal serve with boiled pasta of your choice or crusty bread and a tossed salad of mixed lettuce leaves.





peach cheesecake

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 0 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To make base, place biscuit crumbs, hazelnuts and butter in a bowl and mix to combine. Press into base of a 20 cm/8 in springform tin. Refrigerate until firm.
2. To make filling, place cream cheese, sugar and peaches in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Transfer peach mixture to a bowl and whisk in cream. Stir gelatin mixture and passion fruit pulp into peach mixture.
3. Pour filling into prepared tin and refrigerate for 4 hours or until filling is set. Just prior to serving, decorate with peach slices and passion fruit pulp.

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Serves 8

ingredients

- > peach slices for garnish
- > passion fruit pulp for garnish

hazelnut base

- > 125 g/4 oz plain sweet biscuit crumbs
- > 170 g/5½ oz finely chopped toasted hazelnuts
- > 75 g/2½ oz butter, melted

peach filling

- > 250 g/8 oz cream cheese, softened
- > ½ cup/100 g/3½ oz caster sugar
- > 4 peaches, peeled and chopped
- > 300 ml/9½ oz cream
- > 4 teaspoons gelatin dissolved in 2 tablespoons boiling water, cooled
- > ⅓ cup/90 ml/3 fl oz passion fruit pulp

tip from the chef

If fresh peaches are unavailable, drained canned peaches can be used instead.



honey custard

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 35 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 cups milk
- > ¼ cup honey
- > 2 teaspoons vanilla essence
- > 4 eggs, beaten
- > honey to drizzle
- > 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

method

1. Scald milk; do not boil. Remove from heat, stir in honey and vanilla.
2. Mix 3 tablespoons of hot milk mixture into beaten eggs, mix well. Pour egg mixture into remaining warm milk and whisk for 30 seconds.
3. Pour mixture through a sieve into four ¾-cup capacity greased ramekins. Place ramekins in a 5 cm/2 in deep baking dish and surround with 2 cm/¾ in deep boiling water.
4. Bake custards in a moderate oven for 30 minutes. Drizzle honey over the top of custards and sprinkle with cinnamon before serving.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

For a super attractive presentation, decorate with caramel drippings and caramelized apple slices.





almond

ricotta cheesecake

■□□ | Cooking time: 35 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. To make pastry, place flour in a bowl and rub in butter, using the fingertips, until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Using a knife, mix in egg yolk and water to form a firm dough. Wrap in plastic food wrap and chill for 1 hour. Roll out pastry and line a 23 cm/9 in springform tin. Trim edges.
2. To make filling, combine ricotta, sugar, almonds and lemon rind in a bowl. Beat in vanilla and eggs one at a time.
3. Spoon filling into pastry in tin and bake at 200°C/400°F/Gas 6 for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 and bake for 30 minutes longer, or until filling is firm.
4. To make topping, whip cream and amaretto together until soft peaks form. Just prior to serving turn out cake and spread with topping.

ingredients

pastry

- > 250 g/8 oz flour, sifted
- > 125 g/4 oz butter
- > 1 egg yolk
- > 1 tablespoon iced water

filling

- > 750 g/1½ lb ricotta cheese
- > 125 g/4 oz sugar
- > 90 g/3 oz ground almonds
- > 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- > ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- > 4 eggs

topping

- > 250 ml/8 fl oz cream
- > 1 tablespoon amaretto liqueur

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Serves 8

tip from the chef

A light baked cheesecake that can be served warm or chilled. This cake looks great decorated with chocolate leaves.



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quick and easy dinner parties

