

COOKING AT REN

March 22, 2012

Garden Pea Soup with Morel Creama

3/4 ounce dried morel mushrooms
3/4 cup very hot water
1 1/2 tablespoon plus 1 1/2 teaspoon unsalted butter
3 medium shallots, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons dry white wine
5 1/4 cups chicken stock
vegetable stock
3/4 cup heavy cream
Salt
Cayenne pepper
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
7 1/2 cups frozen peas (2 1/2 pounds), thawed
2 tablespoons chopped mint, plus small leaves for garnish

In a small bowl, cover the dried morels with the hot water. Set aside until the morels are softened, about 15 minutes. Lift the morels out of the soaking liquid and rinse under water to remove any grit. Set aside a few small morels for garnish and coarsely chop the rest. Reserve the soaking liquid.

In a small saucepan, melt 1 1/2 tablespoon of the butter. Add the chopped morels and half of the shallots and cook over moderately high heat until the shallots are lightly browned, about 4 minutes. Add the white wine and cook until evaporated, about 2 minutes. Add 3/4 cup of the stock and the reserved morel soaking liquid, stopping when you reach the grit at the bottom of the bowl. Boil until reduced by half, about 5 minutes. Add the cream and simmer over moderately low heat until thickened, about 5 minutes. Season the morel cream with salt and cayenne and remove from the heat.

Transfer the morel cream to a blender and puree until smooth. Return the morel cream to the saucepan and keep warm.

In a large saucepan, heat 3 tablespoons of the olive oil. Add the remaining sliced shallots and cook over moderate heat until they are softened, about 3 minutes. Add the rest of the chicken stock and bring to a boil over high heat. Add all but 1/3 cup of the peas. Add 1 tablespoon of the chopped mint and simmer over moderate heat until the peas are just tender, about 4 minutes.

Working in batches, puree the pea soup in a blender and pass it through a sieve set over a bowl, pressing on the solids. Return the soup to the pot, reheat gently and season with salt and cayenne.

In a small skillet, melt the remaining 1 1/2 teaspoon of butter. Add the reserved whole morels and peas and season with salt. Cook over moderately high heat until hot, about 1 minute.

Ladle the pea soup into bowls. Swirl in the warm morel cream and scatter the whole morels and peas over the soup.

Serves 10

Spinach Salad With Corn Bread Croutons

12 ounces baby spinach
1 cup sliced red onion
3 1/2 cups Corn Bread
Croutons
4 tablespoons cider vinegar
3 teaspoons minced shallot
4 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon
zest
2 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
3 teaspoons honey
Pinch of ground cloves
1/2 cup canola oil
2 tablespoon extra-virgin olive
oil
2 tablespoon flat-leaf parsley
2 teaspoon thyme leaves
Salt and Pepper

In a bowl, toss the spinach,
onion and Corn Bread
Croutons.

In a blender, puree the vinegar,
shallot, mustard, lemon zest
and juice, honey and cloves.
With the machine on, slowly
blend in the canola and olive
oils. Add the parsley and
thyme; pulse until chopped.
Season the dressing with salt
and pepper and toss with the
salad. Season with salt and
pepper and serve.

Corn Bread Croutons

3 1/2 cups diced corn bread
2 1/2 Tbl canola oil

In a bowl, toss Corn Bread with
canola oil. Bake in a preheated
375° oven for about 10 minutes,
until the croutons are golden
and crisp. Let cool.

Salmon Spicy Chili Glaze With Spring Vegetables

Nonstick vegetable oil spray
 1/2 cup Asian sweet chili sauce
 6 tablespoons soy sauce, divided
 4 tablespoons finely grated
 peeled fresh ginger, divided
 10 6-ounce salmon fillets with
 skin
 6 tablespoons vegetable oil
 8 garlic cloves, minced
 16 ounces sugar snap peas,
 trimmed
 3 tablespoons rice wine or dry
 Sherry
 6 cups pea tendrils or pea
 sprouts (about 12 ounces)
 2 teaspoon sesame oil

Line rimmed baking sheet with
 foil. Coat with nonstick spray.

Whisk chili sauce, 4 tablespoons
 soy sauce, and 2 tablespoon
 ginger in small bowl. Place
 salmon fillets, skin side down,
 on prepared sheet. Spoon chili
 sauce marinade over and let
 stand at room temperature 30
 minutes.

Preheat broiler. Spoon any
 marinade remaining on baking
 sheet over salmon fillets. Broil
 salmon without turning until
 almost opaque in center, 6 to 10
 minutes, depending on
 thickness of fillet.

Meanwhile, heat vegetable oil
 in heavy large skillet over
 medium-high heat. Add
 remaining ginger and minced
 garlic; stir until aromatic, about
 30 seconds.

Add sugar snap peas and stir
 until crisp-tender, about 2
 minutes. Add remaining soy
 sauce, rice wine, and pea
 tendrils and stir just until
 wilted, about 1 minute. Drizzle
 with sesame oil.

Spoon warm pea mixture over
 salmon fillets and serve.

Orange Glazed Carrots

4 pounds large long carrots,
peeled
4 cups orange juice
3 teaspoons (packed) dark
brown sugar
4 tablespoons butter
4 teaspoons honey
1/2 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
Chopped chives

Run vegetable peeler down length of carrots, shaving off long ribbons. Cook in large saucepan of boiling salted water 2 minutes. Drain and gently pat dry.

Stir orange juice and sugar in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves. Boil until reduced to scant 2 cup, about 10 minutes. Add carrots and butter; simmer until carrots absorb most of orange syrup, about 8 minutes.

Add honey and vinegar. Mix gently. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer carrots to serving bowl. Sprinkle with chives.

Serves 10

Grilled Pound Cake With Spiced Chocolate Sauce and Fruit

Whipped Cream

1 cup heavy cream
3 tablespoons powdered sugar
1 tablespoon dark rum
1/2 tea pure vanilla extract

Spiced Chocolate Sauce

3/4 cup heavy cream
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon pure ancho chile powder
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Fruit Salad

2 large mango, peeled and cut into 1/3-inch wedges
2 medium papaya—halved, seeded, peeled and cut into 1/3-inch wedges
2 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh basil
2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Pound Cake

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
Ten 1 1/4-inch slices of homemade or fresh bakery pound cake (about 12 ounces)

In a medium bowl, using an electric mixer, softly whip the heavy cream. Add the powdered sugar, rum and vanilla and whip the cream until firm peaks form. Refrigerate the whipped cream.

In a medium saucepan, bring the heavy cream to a simmer over moderately high heat with the cinnamon and chile powder. Add the chocolate chips and vanilla. Remove from the heat and let stand for 1 minute, then whisk to blend; keep warm.

In a medium bowl, toss the mango and papaya with the basil and vanilla.

Light a grill or preheat a grill pan. Butter both sides of the pound cake slices. Grill the pound cake over moderate heat, turning once, until golden, about 2 minutes per side. Top each with some of the warm chocolate sauce and the fruit salad. Top each serving with a dollop of the rum whipped cream.

Serves 10

Ginger Beer Float

2 pint mango sorbet
4 cups chilled fresh orange juice
4 bottles chilled ginger beer
6 ripe passion fruits, halved (optional)

Scoop 1/2 cup of mango sorbet into each of glasses and then add 1/2 cup of the orange juice to each glass. Pour in the ginger beer, scoop the seeds from the passion fruits on top and serve immediately with long straws.

Serves 10