

COOKING AT REN

March 12, 2012

Roasted Grape Tomatoes

2 pints grape tomatoes
6 garlic cloves, smashed
2/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon
olive oil
1/4 tea crushed red pepper
Kosher salt and freshly ground
black pepper
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 sprig fresh oregano
Six 3/4 inch slices of ciabatta

Preheat the oven to 400°. On a large rimmed baking sheet, toss the tomatoes with the garlic, crushed red pepper and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

Roast the tomatoes for about 20 minutes, until they burst and their skins begin to shrivel, stirring once halfway through.

Pour the remaining 2/3 cup of olive oil into a medium bowl. Crush the rosemary and oregano between your fingers and submerge them in the oil.

Add the tomatoes and their juices, stir gently and let stand for 30 minutes.

Reduce the oven temperature to 350°. Arrange the ciabatta on a baking sheet and toast for 10 minutes, or until crisp.

Spoon the tomatoes and some of the infused oil over the ciabatta, sprinkle with salt and serve.

Serves 6

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Ricotta Gnudi

1 pound whole cow's-milk ricotta cheese
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus more for serving
1 large egg, lightly beaten
2 teaspoons unsalted butter, melted
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
All-purpose flour

In a large bowl, combine the ricotta, the 1/4 cup of Parmigiano, the egg, butter and nutmeg. Sprinkle 1 cup of the flour over the ricotta mixture and fold it in. Dust the dough lightly with more flour and shape into a ball. On a lightly floured work surface, roll the dough out to a rope and cut it into pieces. Gently roll the pieces into balls and transfer to a floured baking sheet.

In a large pot of boiling salted water, boil the gnudi until tender and cooked through, about 6 minutes; drain. Add the gnudi to the skillet and stir gently to coat with the sauce. Cook over moderate heat for 2 minutes. Spoon the gnudi and sauce into bowls. Drizzle with oil, sprinkle with cheese and serve

Serves 6

Mushrooms

Extra-virgin olive oil
1 pound mushrooms, thickly sliced
Salt
8 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons thyme leaves
1 stick unsalted butter, diced

In a large skillet, heat 1/4 cup of the oil. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and cook over high heat until the liquid evaporates and the mushrooms are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Add the garlic and thyme and stir over low heat for 30 seconds. Add 1/2 cup of water and the butter, raise the heat to moderate and stir until the butter is melted. Season with salt.

Sausage and Peppers

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 large red onion, cut into 2-inch chunks
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into 2-inch chunks
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into 2-inch chunks
4 fresh hot Italian sausages
4 fresh sweet Italian sausages
1 cup milled or crushed canned Italian plum tomatoes
1 1/2 cups dry red wine
Pinch of dried oregano
Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic, onion, and peppers, and cook, stirring, until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add the sausages, and cook about 4 minutes more, until sausages begin to brown. Add the tomatoes, wine, oregano, and a large pinch of salt.

Cover, bring to a simmer, and simmer gently about 25 minutes, until the peppers are very soft. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Serves 6

Broccoli Rabe with Garlic

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
 10 cloves garlic thinly sliced
 1/2 tea crushed red pepper
 2 lbs broccoli rabe thick stems
 trimmed
 Salt and Pepper

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the broccoli rabe and cook until just tender but still bright green about 3 mins drain and coarsely chop.

In a large deep skillet, heat the oil. Add the garlic and red pepper and cook over low heat until the garlic is golden about 3 mins. Add the broccoli rabe and cook over high heat stirring until hot about 4 mins season with salt and pepper.

Rosemary Polenta

1 quarts milk
 3 Tbl chopped fresh rosemary
 1 1/2 cups polenta
 1 1/2 cups cream
 3 Tbl unsalted butter
 3/4 tea salt
 1/4 tea pepper
 1 cups grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

In a 6-quart soup pot, bring milk and 1 cup water to a simmer over medium-high heat. Remove pot from heat; stir in rosemary, cover, and let stand 5 minutes. Strain milk mixture through a fine sieve set over a bowl. Discard rosemary.

Pour milk back into pot and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Add polenta and cook, whisking constantly, until thick, about 20 minutes (reduce heat slightly, if necessary).

Whisk in cream, butter, salt and pepper until mixture is smooth and butter is melted. Stir in cheese and immediately pour into a warm, deep serving platter.

Roasted Berry Panzanella with Zabaglione

1/4 cup plus 1 Tbl sugar
 1 Tbl hot water
 3 Tbl extra virgin olive oil
 One 3/4 lb loaf sourdough
 crust removed cut into 1 inch
 pieces (about 10 cups)
 1 cups raspberries
 1 cups blackberries
 1 cups blueberries
 2 Tbl orange juice
 3/4 cup plus 2 Tbl Moscato d'
 Asti
 8 large egg yolks
 1 Tbl mint

Preheat the oven to 350°. In a small bowl, mix 1 tablespoon of the sugar with the hot water, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Add 2 tablespoons of the olive oil and stir to combine.

Arrange the bread cubes on a large rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle the bread cubes with the sugar-syrup-and-olive-oil mixture and toss to coat. Bake until the bread cubes are crisp and golden brown, about 10 minutes.

Combine the berries in a wide shallow 2 quart dish. Bake the berries until the fruit is warm and just beginning to release its juices, about 8 minutes. Remove the berries from the oven.

In a medium stainless steel bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the remaining 1/4 cup of sugar and 3/4 cup of Moscato. Fill a large bowl with ice water. Set the bowl with the eggs over a medium saucepan filled with 1 inch of barely simmering water (you can also use a double boiler).

Remove the zabaglione from the heat and whisk in the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Carefully set the bowl in the ice bath and whisk the zabaglione until chilled, about 5 minutes.

To serve, add the bread cubes and mint to the fruit in the bowl and toss well. Transfer the panzanella to shallow bowls, top each one with a large dollop of zabaglione and serve right away.

Serves 6-8

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Cooking At Ren **Meet The Chef**

Chef Mark Wright dining restaurants cooking is an
has been cooking in the Chicago experience that
since his area. He combines anyone can enjoy
childhood. He his passion for given the right
received his formal food with his inspiration.
training from two desire to educate
renowned culinary and delight with
programs and has every meal he
worked at several prepares. His
restaurants fine philosophy is that