

These are the recipes I used for this fall's class Slightly Gourmet. I promised the folks I would post them on doc store.

F 905

Recipes Slightly Gourmet class, Fall 2012

Session One:

Crab stuffed shrimp with grits:

Buy the jumbo shrimp, 20 plus to the pound. Peel, leaving the tail tip intact, clean and devein. Preheat oven to 375 degrees and spray a baking sheet with cooking spray. Set aside. Butterfly the shrimp. Pick over the crabmeat. I bought a pound of lump crab but this was for 10 people and I could have gone with a cheaper quality crabmeat. Pick over the crabmeat, looking for pieces of scale; you can use a flashlight to pick out any such shells. Place the shrimp on the baking sheet.

Make the crab stuffing with one sleeve of crushed Ritz crackers, ½ tsp Old Bay seasoning, ¼ to ½ tsp Cajun seasoning, a pinch of kosher salt and ¼ tsp black pepper and 1 tsp. chopped fresh parsley. Stir in 1 stick of butter, melted, and the crabmeat and toss lightly. Form the stuffing into oblong balls using about a heaping tablespoon for each shrimp and lay on the butterflied shrimp. Bake at 375 degrees for twenty minutes.

Sautéed kale: The kale was washed very well and the stems removed, then chopped coarsely for sautéing with garlic in olive oil. The whole veggie cooked down in no time and was a nice pairing with the seafood.

Coconut custard pie: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a packaged pie shell found in the dairy case (Pillsbury) bring the dough to room temp and unroll it over a pie plate. Trim the dough and flute the edges.

Meanwhile make the filling: In a large bowl, beat together one stick softened butter, one cup sugar, and two eggs. Blend in 2 tablespoons flour and then add one-cup milk, only do so ½ cup at a time. Add one-cup coconut and one tsp vanilla. Pour filling into unbaked pie shell and sprinkle top with additional coconut just enough to lightly cover the top. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes until set.

Session Two:

Rock Cornish Game Hens with an orange marmalade glaze

These hens nowadays are quite plump and one can easily feed two persons, especially for lunch. With ten people, I bought five hens and after washing them, removing their inner packages, I removed the backbone with a kitchen scissor and flattened the birds, placing them skin side up in a large roasting pan. The reason I didn't cook them whole is that they take longer to bake than if flat and time was crucial in this 90-minute class. The five birds were seasoned with salt and pepper and placed in the oven at 375 degrees for 20 minutes, and then we took them out and spread orange marmalade over them and returned to the oven until they were a golden color and the juices between legs and back ran clear. Removed from the oven, we cut the birds into two halves for serving.

Rice Pilaf: using long grain Uncle Ben's original rice, not flavored.

For the rice pilaf we sautéed some onion and garlic in olive oil and then added our rice (two cups), sautéing it until the rice achieved a nice golden color. Then we added chicken broth and water (four cups altogether), amount based on a two to one ratio with the rice amount. We covered the skillet and turned the heat down low until the rice granules were nice and plump, albeit a little nutty.

Trader Joe's ready to bake cookies. Available in the freezer section of TJ's, we did bake these while the other items were also in the oven and they burnt because the temps for each item weren't alike. They still tasted very good and we recommend these cookies.

Session Three:

Stuffed pork chops

Ordinarily, stuffed pork chops are made with double chops, at least 1 1/2 inches thick and split by the butcher to leave a pocket for the filling. They take a long time to bake and we didn't have that so I devised an alternate method using thin cut pork chops in pairs with the stuffing inside, sandwich style.

I was also concerned that overcooking might dry out the chops, so the night before class, I soaked the chops in brine to give them more interior moisture. I dried them off and brought them to class.

Then, in a large skillet, and a little oil, I browned each chop on one side. Then laid them in a roasting pan seared side down. Meanwhile, I had reconstructed Stovetop Stuffing Mix for Pork and placed the stuffing on nine of the chops and covered them with another chop, seared side up. Salt and pepper, lots of it. We then tied the packages with kitchen twine, and spread the remainder of the stuffing around the chops, covered the pan with foil and baked them for about 45 minutes, checking ten minutes before that time was up to see if they were ready to come out. Very important not to over cook. Allow to rest for ten minutes.

Cooked apple slices: We prepared far too many apples for our pie so took the excess and cooked them up in a pot on the stove. Since we had already seasoned them for the pie, they only had to cook for about 20 minutes until they were soft. This was a nice side dish for the pork.

Creamed peas and onions: We used two packages of frozen peas and one package of frozen small white onions. We made a white sauce of 3T butter, 3T flour and when those had cooked for two minutes, gradually added 1 - ½ cups of milk, stirring all until the sauce was thickened, then seasoned with salt and pepper. The vegetables cooked quite fast, so we drained off the water and mixed the hot peas and onions with the cream sauce. We added some crushed and chopped mint for extra flavor along with salt and pepper.

Rustic apple and caramel pie: While we used one piecrust from the package at the first session, we still had another to use for the rustic pie. We unrolled it, laid it on a cookie sheet, and tried to roll it a little thinner. Meantime class members had peeled and chopped a whole bag of small apples and we mixed those with a handful of flour, sugar, cinnamon, and lemon juice (maybe, not sure on this) and piled up as much as we could in the center of the pie dough, leaving about a two inch border without apples. We then pulled the edges up and around the fruit and molded it to the fruit, leaving a large circle of fruit exposed. Put a few chunks of butter on that, sprinkled some sugar on the pie dough and baked the pie for around 35 minutes. When it was browned and came out, I drizzled some caramel sauce over the whole thing and topped with whipped topping.

(I made the caramel sauce from a package of caramels I had at home by unwrapping them and heating them in a double boiler with a little water to make the sauce syrupy. However, I had to add more water before I put the sauce on the pie and so liquefied it in the microwave.)

Session Four:

Ham slices sautéed with peaches

I bought two large ham slices and after putting them into the big electric skillet, cut them into serving size pieces. They made their own fat so no oil was needed. Once they started to brown, I took two cans of sliced peaches and poured all, including the liquid of one and only the fruit from the other into the pan with the ham. It was quite liquidy but in about twenty minutes the liquid boiled down, forming nice syrup and caramelizing the ham. The result was moist and flavorful ham. I had also added some nutmeg to the pan, but would have preferred cinnamon, which I didn't have.

Stuffed potato shells with cheesy, horseradish filling

Each student was presented with an already baked potato, still slightly warm. They were asked to slice them crosswise and scoop out the potato to a half-inch from the skin, tossing the potato flesh into a large bowl. Then they were asked to salt and pepper each side and smear melted butter on both sides, laying the shells skin side up on a cookie sheet. We baked these in the oven for fifteen minutes at 375 degrees and took them out when they were crisp and golden.

Meantime we made the filling from half of the potato flesh, ½ cup of shredded parmesan cheese, 1 full cup of shredded muenster, and one full cup of shredded cheddar, a cup of sour cream and two tablespoons of horseradish. Salt and pepper. When the shells emerged from the oven and cooled enough to handle, we turned them right side up and put several tablespoons of the filling on each. Then returned to the oven for fifteen more minutes or until the cheese had obviously melted. A dollop of horseradish and chopped chives, or scallions finished the product.

(Keep in mind that this recipe for the filling was for ten potatoes. Reduce for a smaller number.)

Baked acorn and butternut squash: These were actually made in the class the week earlier but with all that was in the oven that week, they just didn't cook through; so we put the pan into the freezer to finish at the next, this session. It took a while, even so, for them to thaw but were ready to eat with the rest of the meal.

There were two large acorn squashes and one butternut squash. Students split them and cut again into several pieces, scooping out the seeds and gunk. They were placed in a baking pan cut side up with salt and pepper. Then about a half inch of water was poured into the bottom of the pan and all was covered with foil. Into the oven for however it took for them to pierce nicely with a knife. Remove from oven and pour a little maple syrup and a chunk of butter on each piece and serve. (We had thought to scoop out the flesh and puree in the food processor with cream but time was too short.)

Spinach and artichoke hearts salad: Easy salad. Take a package of washed baby spinach and a drained can of artichoke hearts (not marinated) and slice the artichokes into two pieces. Combine with a lovely vinaigrette dressing and enjoy.

Fruit and cheese platter: This was a presentation of a board containing three cheeses, fontina, Roquefort and chevre along with dried apricots, nuts, dried cherries, fresh grapes, a sliced baguette, and other sundry bits and pieces. Each person to choose for themselves what they wanted for dessert.