

Holiday Salad

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 4 serving

User Rating: ★★★★★

2 lemons, juiced, plus 1/2 lemon
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup and 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
5 medium heads Belgian endive, ends trimmed and cut into 1-inch circles
1 medium green apple, peeled, cored, and cut into 1-inch cubes
1/4 pound Gruyere cheese, rind removed and diced into 1-inch cubes
1/2 avocado, diced into 1-inch cubes
2 tablespoons dried cranberries, or the seeds of 1 small pomegranate
2/3 cup defrosted corn kernels or 1/2 ear corn, cooked and kernels removed
In a small bowl whisk together the lemon juice, salt, pepper and olive oil. Set aside.

Put the endive and apples into a large decorative serving bowl. Squeeze the juice of half a lemon into the bowl and toss to coat the endive and apples so they don't turn brown. Add the cheese and avocado, and then add the cranberries and corn.

Pour the dressing over the salad just before serving and toss to coat.

Braciolo

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

User Rating: ★★★★★

1/2 cup dried Italian-style bread crumbs
1 garlic clove, minced
2/3 cup grated Pecorino Romano
1/3 cup grated provolone
2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley leaves
4 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 (1 1/2-pound) flank steak
1 cup dry white wine
3 1/4 cups Simple Tomato Sauce, recipe follows, or store-bought marinara sauce
Stir the first 5 ingredients in a medium bowl to blend. Stir in 2 tablespoons of the oil. Season mixture with salt and pepper and set aside.

Lay the flank steak flat on the work surface. Sprinkle the bread crumb mixture evenly over the steak to cover the top evenly. Starting at 1 short end, roll up the steak as for a jelly roll to enclose the filling completely. Using butcher's twine, tie the steak roll to secure. Sprinkle the braciolo with salt and pepper.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil in a heavy large ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add the braciolo and cook until browned on all sides, about 8 minutes. Add the wine to the pan and bring to a boil. Stir in the marinara sauce. Cover partially with foil and bake until the meat is almost tender, turning the braciolo and basting with the sauce every 30 minutes. After 1 hour, uncover and continue baking until the meat is tender, about 30 minutes longer. The total cooking time should be about 1 1/2 hours.

Remove the braciolo from the sauce. Using a large sharp knife, cut the braciolo crosswise and diagonally into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Transfer the slices to plates. Spoon the sauce over and serve.

Simple Tomato Sauce:

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 small onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
2 (32-ounce) cans crushed tomatoes
4 to 6 basil leaves
2 dried bay leaves
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, optional

In a large casserole pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic and saute until soft and translucent, about 2 minutes. Add celery and carrot and season with salt and pepper. Saute until all the vegetables are soft, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, basil, and bay leaves and reduce the heat to low. Cover the pot and simmer for 1 hour or until thick. Remove bay leaves and taste for seasoning. If sauce tastes too acidic, add unsalted butter, 1 tablespoon at a time, to round out the flavor.

Pour half the tomato sauce into the bowl of a food processor. Process until smooth. Continue with remaining tomato sauce.

If not using all the sauce, allow it to cool completely and then pour 1 to 2 cup portions into plastic freezer bags. Freeze for up to 6 months.

Yield: 6 cups
Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 1 hour, 10 minutes

Sauteed Broccoli Rabe

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes
Yield: 4 to 6 servings
User Rating: ★★★★★

4 bunches (12 to 16 ounces each) broccoli rabe (rapini), stems trimmed
1/4 cup olive oil
3 garlic cloves, chopped
1/2 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper flakes
1/3 cup raisins
Salt
2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted

Working in batches, cook the broccoli rabe in a large pot of boiling salted water until crisp tender, about 1 minute per bunch. Transfer the broccoli rabe to a large bowl of ice water to cool. Reserve about 1/4 cup of the cooking liquid. Strain the cooled broccoli rabe and set aside.

Heat the oil in a heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and red pepper flakes, and saute until the garlic is golden, about 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add the broccoli rabe and toss to coat. Add the reserved cooking water, the raisins, and cook until the broccoli rabe is heated through and the stems are tender, about 4 minutes. Season with salt, to taste. Just before serving, toss the mixture with the pine nuts.

Prosciutto-Wrapped Breadsticks

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Inactive Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes
Yield: 2 dozen
User Rating: ★★★★★

1 (11-ounce) container refrigerated breadstick dough (recommended: Pillsbury)
1/3 cup grated Parmesan
24 paper-thin slices prosciutto
Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Line a heavy large baking sheet with a silpat (nonstick baking mat) or parchment paper. Tear the dough along the perforations into strips. Using a pizza cutter or a large sharp knife, cut each dough strip in half lengthwise to form thin strips. Working with 1 dough strip at a time, roll each dough strip in the Parmesan cheese and twist. Transfer the dough strips to the prepared baking sheets.

Bake until the breadsticks are golden brown and crisp, about 20 minutes. Cool the breadsticks completely on the baking sheet.

Before serving, wrap 1 slice of prosciutto around each cooled breadstick. Arrange the prosciutto-wrapped breadsticks on a platter.

Recipe courtesy Giada De Laurentiis

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