



A Taste of Spring

By Chris Duke

Anna's Gourmet Goodies

SALAD

Edamame and Black Beans over Clover Sprouts

MAIN COURSE

Roasted Lamb Chops with Barley, Oats and Olives

DESSERT

Pears and Raspberries with Apricot/Grand Marnier Sauce

If spring lamb is on your menu list for the coming weeks, then I hope you'll find some new ideas for preparing this wonderful peak season delicacy. If not, then perhaps you'll be inspired to venture down to your local market and see what the butcher has to offer.

This menu is fairly easy to prepare and is a feast for the eyes and the taste buds. The portions here are based roughly on dinner for two. So do some shopping, set aside an afternoon, open a bottle of wine, relax and get cooking.

Edamame and Black Bean Salad

Ingredients:

- ½ cup edamame (fresh soybeans)
- ½ cup black beans
- ¼ cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- Clover sprouts
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 4 raspberries
- ¼ tsp. granulated garlic
- Salt



I purchased frozen shelled edamame. Cook them per instructions on the package and set aside to cool. Rinse the black beans under cold water. Add the olive oil, vinegar, garlic and raspberries to a small bowl or miniature food processor. Whisk or blend until smooth. Add salt to taste.

Combine the edamame, black beans and chopped pepper in a bowl. Add the oil and vinegar mixture and toss to coat. Cover and set aside in the refrigerator to chill. Serve on top of the sprouts and garnish with thin red pepper slices.

Roasted Lamb Chops with Barley and Oats



Ingredients:

(2) 8 oz. lamb chops
¼ cup barley
¼ oat groats
2 cups vegetable stock
¼ cup chopped kalamata olives
Salt
Fresh ground pepper
Extra virgin olive oil

You should be able to find oat groats at most stores that sell bulk grains. Oat groats are simply whole oat kernels with the tough outer hull removed. Add the oats, barley and vegetable stock to a sauce pan, bring to a boil, reduce and simmer until tender, approximately 35 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. I used loin chops with the bone in, cut about 1 ½ inches thick. Rinse the lamb chops and pat dry. Coat with olive oil, season both sides with salt and pepper, cover with plastic and let sit in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes.

Heat an ovenable skillet (cast iron if you have one) and coat the bottom lightly with olive oil. Put the chops in the skillet, searing each side for about 1-2 minutes. Put the pan in the oven and roast the chops until done to an internal temperature of 160 degrees for medium, or about 15-18 minutes.

Remove the chops from the oven and the pan, place on a cool plate, cover with foil and let rest for about 10 minutes. The chops will continue to cook to an internal temp of 170-180 degrees.

Add the chopped olives to the oat and barley mixture, plate and serve with the lamb chops.

Raspberries and Pears in Baked Wonton cups

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Fresh raspberries
- 1 pear – slightly ripe
- 2 tbsp. apricot all fruit spread
- Grand Marnier (optional)
- Wonton wrappers
- Butter
- Salt



Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Separate the wonton wrappers. You'll need three wrappers to make a cup using a standard, non-stick muffin pan. This recipe makes about 3 cups. Place the first wrapper in the muffin cup with the corner towards the center of the bottom of the pan. Moisten with water and add the next two wrappers, pressing them together to form a cup. Brush with butter and sprinkle lightly with salt. Bake until golden brown or about 6-7 minutes.

Peel, core and chop the pear into small chunks. I like to use a Bosc, but any ripe pear will do. Heat the apricot fruit spread in a saucepan until warm and fluid. Add a small splash (or a big one if you prefer) of Grand Marnier and continue to whisk. Add the pears and cook over medium heat for about 4 minutes, or until the pears begin to soften. Remove from the heat, add the raspberries and stir to coat, being careful not to break the raspberries. Spoon into the wonton cups, sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar and serve.

If you have questions about this recipe or would like to see something in the future, please drop a note to chris@annasgourmetgoodies.com.

Bon Appetit!

Chris