



## A Valentine's Day Menu

By Chris Duke

Anna's Gourmet Goodies



### APPETIZER

*Heart Shaped Wontons with Tomato and Rosemary*

### MAIN COURSE

*Stacked Salmon and Scallops with Wild Rice, Asparagus and Shallot Sauce*

### DESSERT

*Chocolate Brownie with Mascarpone and Framboise*

One of the greatest ways to show love for that special person (or persons) in your life, is to prepare a memorable meal for them. This dinner takes a bit of planning and preparation, but I think you'll find the end result worth the effort. As with my other recipes, I've tried to add enough descriptive text to help you understand how to make the dish. There's nothing worse than trying a recipe and not being able to figure out how to get it to come out looking like the pictures. And if you're a seasoned chef, you can skip the text and get right to it.

Everyone has their own style of working in the kitchen, but here's an idea for the order of preparation. First, prep, cut and mix everything including the mascarpone. Next, start the rice since it takes about an hour to cook. Bake the appetizers and cover them in foil to keep them warm. Make the shallot sauce and set aside. Finally, cook the seafood while steaming the asparagus. These should be done, plated and served.

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.

### *Heart Shaped Wontons with Tomato and Rosemary*

#### Ingredients:

- Wonton wrappers
- Cherry tomatoes
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Fresh rosemary
- Kosher salt
- Fresh ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Separate the wonton wrappers and stack on a cutting board. Place a 2.5" heart-shaped cookie cutter in the center of the wontons and press down to cut out the hearts.

You'll use ½ of a cherry tomato for each heart, so cut as many as you'll need into quarters, lengthwise. Place in a bowl, drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Add some chopped rosemary (you can use dried – but fresh is so pungent it's worth it!), about a teaspoon for every 8 hearts. Stir and let sit for about 15 minutes.



Place one heart wonton on a non-stick baking sheet (or parchment paper on a regular sheet pan). Wonton wrappers are thin – so make sure you have them fully separated. Spoon two quarter pieces of tomato in the center. Brush around the edges with water, and place another wonton on top. Using your fingers, press down the edges to seal. You might need to pick it up to make sure the edges are pinched together. Brush the tops of the finished wonton with olive oil and sprinkle lightly with kosher salt. Using a toothpick or small fork, pierce a small hole in the center to let the steam escape.

Bake for 9-12 minutes, or until the edges start to turn brown. Remove from the oven and cool for a few minutes before serving.

### *Stacked Salmon and Scallops with Wild Rice, Asparagus and Shallot Sauce*

#### Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup wild rice
- 1 ½ cups vegetable stock
- 1 ounce shitake mushrooms
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Fresh ground pepper

Clean and chop the mushrooms. Heat a sauté pan over medium heat, and then coat the bottom with olive oil. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper, and cook until moist and tender, or about 2-3 minutes.

Bring the stock to a boil, add the rice and the mushrooms. Cover, reduce heat to low and simmer for about one hour. Wild rice is very hard, takes a long time to cook, and will begin to crack open when cooked. Add more liquid if necessary to keep it moist.

Salmon fillet (large enough to cut out (4) 2" circles)  
4 large scallops  
French gruyere cheese  
½ to 1 cup white wine  
Extra virgin olive oil  
Kosher salt  
Fresh ground pepper

Wash the salmon and scallops and pat dry with a paper towel. Using a boning or fillet knife, remove the skin from the salmon. If you don't have a sharp knife, ask your fishmonger to do this for you. Use a 2" round metal cookie cutter to cut the (4) round medallions from the salmon. If you don't have a cookie cutter, improvise by using a small glass and cutting around the edge with a sharp knife. The goal is to get them about the size of the scallops – but please, don't use a micrometer for this.

Brush both sides of the salmon and scallops with olive oil and season lightly with salt and pepper. Heat a pan over medium heat, and then coat the bottom with olive oil. Place the salmon in the pan and sear one side over medium to high heat for about a minute. Add ¼ cup of wine, turn down to medium heat, cover, and cook for about two minutes. You do not want to over cook salmon (or any fish), so check them with a knife if you are not sure. The inside should be opaque pink – not translucent looking.

Remove the salmon from the heat and cover with foil to keep warm. Repeat this process with the scallops.

¼ pound of fresh asparagus  
Fresh lemon (optional)

I like to steam asparagus in a bamboo steamer. If you don't have a one of these, or a basket type steamer, you can cook them in a skillet with water. Use enough water to cover them about halfway up the stalk, and then add water as necessary during the cooking process. You want to end up with cooked, but firm asparagus, not green mush.

Wash the asparagus and trim off the bottom ends. Cook until bright green and just tender with a fork. Remove from the heat.

¼ cup finely chopped scallops  
¼ cup heavy cream

2 tbsp white wine  
Extra virgin olive oil  
Kosher salt  
Fresh ground pepper

Heat a small saucepan over medium heat. Coat the bottom with olive oil. Add the shallots and sauté until they are translucent. Do not brown them! Reduce the heat, add the cream, and stir until it begins to thicken. If it gets too thick, add a little more wine!

#### Plating it up

Spoon some rice mixture into the center of the plate. Place the scallops on top of the rice. Slice a thin strip of the gruyere cheese and lay on top of the scallop. Don't worry if it extends a bit over the edge. Lay a salmon medallion on top of the cheese. Top with a spoonful of the shallot sauce. For a little color, I garnished mine with thin strips of red bell pepper.



Carefully arrange the asparagus on each side of the rice, or any other pattern that strikes your fancy!

#### *Chocolate Brownie with Mascarpone and Framboise*

#### Ingredients:

(2) Chocolate brownies  
Fresh raspberries  
½ to 1 ounce Framboise (raspberry wine)  
4 ounces Mascarpone cheese  
2 tbsp sugar

Bake up your favorite chocolate brownie recipe, or order a box from Anna's Gourmet Goodies. (You didn't think I was going to give you the secret recipe for our brownies – did you?) I sliced ours in half, but if yours are thin you can use two.



Set the cheese out to soften at room temperature for 30-45 minutes. Put the mascarpone cheese in a mixing bowl, add the sugar, and whip until softened and creamy. If you can't find mascarpone, or Italian cream cheese, you can substitute regular cream cheese. Add the Framboise and continue to mix until well blended.

Warm the brownies slightly, place the first layer on a plate and spread with the cheese mixture. Add another layer, and then top with more mascarpone. Top with a few raspberries. Optionally, you can drizzle the brownies with a little Framboise for an extra kick of flavor.

Bon Appetit!

Chris