

FOOD

Apricot-Pistachio Charoset

This recipe produces a slightly dry, chunky charoset. If you prefer a more moist version, add extra wine, a tablespoon at a time, until you achieve the desired consistency. Makes about 2 cups.



Ingredients

- 1 cup minced dried apricots, preferably Californian
- 1 cup unsalted shelled pistachio nuts (not dyed red), chopped and lightly toasted
- 1/3 cup sweet white wine, such as Bartenura Moscato d'Asti or Herzog Late Harvest Riesling
- 1 tablespoon plus one teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon shredded fresh mint
- 10 threads saffron, crumbled

Preparation

In large bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. Wait approximately 20 minutes before serving to allow apricots to absorb liquid.

Note: Bartenura Moscato d'Asti and Herzog Late Harvest Riesling are available at www.queenannevine.com.

Frisée and Apple Salad with Dried Cherries and Walnuts

Though simple, this is a sophisticated, elegant salad that would pair well with almost anything. Preparation time is 15 minutes. Total cooking time is 15 minutes. Makes 4 servings



Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons minced shallot
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/2 cup (generous) dried tart cherries (one 3-ounce package)
- 1 medium Gala apple, cored, thinly sliced
- 1 large head of frisée, torn into bite-size pieces (about 6 cups)
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped toasted walnuts

Preparation

1. Whisk first 4 ingredients in small bowl to blend. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in dried cherries. Toss frisée and apple slices in large bowl. Add cherry dressing and toss to coat. Divide among 4 plates; sprinkle with walnuts and freshly ground black pepper and serve.
2. Test-kitchen tip: The recipe says to season the dressing to taste, but how do you know when you've added enough salt and pepper? It's easy: Just dip a small piece of lettuce (in this case, frisée) into the dressing and try it out.

Nutritional Information

Calories (kcal) 284.77; %Calorie from Fat 62.5; Fat (g) 19.78; Saturated Fat (g) 2.01; Cholesterol (mg) 0; Carbohydrates (g) 24.75; Dietary Fiber (g) 6.09; Total Sugars (g) 14.37; Net Carbs (g) 18.66; Protein (g) 4.51

Kumquat Compote with Sauternes and Ginger

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons Sauternes or Late Harvest Riesling
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 6 whole cloves
- 1/2 vanilla bean, split
- 1/2 pound kumquats, quartered lengthwise, seeded
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped crystallized ginger



A simple dessert sauce that is absolutely delicious spooned over scoops of vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt. Makes about 1 1/3 cups.

Preparation

1. Combine Sauternes, sugar, water and whole cloves in heavy medium saucepan. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; add bean. Bring mixture to boil.
2. Add kumquats and boil until tender, about 5 minutes. Transfer kumquats to medium bowl using slotted spoon. Continue boiling syrup until reduced to generous 3/4 cup, about 3 minutes.
3. Discard bean. Pour syrup over kumquats. Mix in crystallized ginger.
4. Cover and refrigerate compote until chilled, about 3 hours. (Can be prepared 3 days ahead.)



Maple-Pecan Pie

This super-easy pie from the Harvest Market is loaded with maple flavor. Makes 8 servings.

Ingredients

- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- 3/4 cup (packed) golden brown sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 9-inch frozen deep-dish pie crust
- 1 1/2 cups coarsely chopped pecans

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°F. Whisk first 7 ingredients in medium bowl to blend. Place unbaked crust on baking sheet. Spread nuts over crust. Pour filling over. Bake until filling is set and slightly puffed, about 1 hour. Transfer pie to rack and cool completely.

Pecan Harvest Loaf

I did not "grind" the pecans, that would be a waste. Coarsely chopped...that's it. When sliced, it is very pretty with all the pecans evenly distributed.



Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/3 cups toasted pecans, coarsely ground
- 5 ounces butter
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 recipe Lemon Glaze
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon strong brewed coffee

Preparation

1. Grease an 8 x 4-inch loaf pan and preheat the oven to 350°F. Sift the flour with the baking powder and salt. Add the ground pecans and mix well. Cream the butter and sugars and add the egg yolks, milk, coffee, and vanilla. Beat the egg whites until stiff but not dry. Add the flour and pecans to the wet ingredients. When just combined, fold in the egg whites.
3. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 45 to 50 minutes, until done. (Insert a straw or cake tester into the center of the loaf. If it comes out clean, it's done, or if loaf has a springy feel when you press on it.) Allow to cool slightly, then glaze with Lemon Glaze.

Nuts for your Health

Many people were scared away from nuts during the low-fat craze of the last few decades, but now nuts are making a comeback. Nuts are excellent sources of protein, minerals, "good" monounsaturated fats and other nutrients, and they're good for the heart.

Large-scale studies, including the Physician's Health Study, the Iowa Women's Health Study and the Harvard Nurses Health Study, found that eating nuts lowered heart disease risk. Other studies have shown that nuts help lower bad "LDL" cholesterol. The healthiest nuts: Walnuts, Almonds, Cashews, Pecans, Brazil Nuts and Macadamia Nuts.

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