



Tequila Queso Fundido with Artichoke Hearts

serves 4-6

1 tbl olive oil
2 tomatoes, cored, seeded and cut into 1/4-inch dice
2 jalapenos, ribs removed, seeded and minced
1 small white onion, diced small
1 can artichoke hearts, drained, squeezed dry and chopped
kosher salt
3 tbl tequila
1/2 lb Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
1/4 cup chopped cilantro
tortilla chips, for serving

— preparation —

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil. Add the diced tomatoes, minced jalapenos, diced onion, and a large pinch of salt and cook over moderately high heat, stirring often, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in artichoke hearts and incorporate well. Pour in the tequila and cook, stirring frequently, until the skillet looks nearly dry, about 2 minutes.

Reduce the heat to low. Add the cheese and cook, stirring constantly, until fully melted, about 30 seconds. Quickly transfer the queso fundido to a serving bowl. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve immediately, with tortilla chips.

Quick Paella with Tequila, Shrimp and Chorizo

serves 6

- 3 tbl olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, ribs and seeds removed, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, ribs and seeds removed, diced
- 1/2 lb Spanish-style chorizo, cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 3 cups long-grain rice
- 1/2 cup tequila
- 4 1/2 cups chicken stock, (or water)
- 1/8 tsp crumbled saffron threads
- 1 1/2 lbs medium shrimp, cleaned
- 1 1/2 cups frozen peas
- 1/2 cup Spanish green olives, for garnish

— preparation —

Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet or stockpot over high heat until just smoking, then sauté garlic, onions and peppers, stirring, until garlic and onions are golden, about 2 minutes.

Add chorizo and cook, stirring, until it is lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Add rice, tequila, broth, and saffron and cook, covered and undisturbed, over high heat until most of liquid is absorbed, about 20 minutes.

Stir in shrimp and peas and divide into individual baking dishes or a large baking dish, cover and put in heated 350 degree oven for 10 minutes, until the shrimp is cooked through and the rice has a toasted crust. Garnish with sliced olives and serve.

Scallop Ceviche with Tequila, Oranges and Jalapeno

serves 4-6

1 cup fresh lime juice
1 lb fresh scallops, cut into quarters
1/2 white onion, cut into small dice
2 oranges, peeled, cut into supremes and halved
1 medium tomato, cut into 1/4 inch dice
1/2 jalapeno, ribs and seeds removed and minced
1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus sprigs for garnish
1/4 cup tequila
1-2 tbl Mexican bottled hot sauce, such as Valentina or Bufalo
2 tbl olive oil
1 cucumber, peeled and diced small
salt
lime slices, for garnish
tortilla chips for saltine crackers, for serving

— preparation —

Toss scallops with 1/2 cup lime juice, cover and refrigerate for about 30 minutes.

In a small strainer, rinse chopped onion under cold water, then shake off excess liquid. Add to scallop bowl along with blood oranges, tomato, jalapenos, chopped cilantro, tequila, hot sauce, olive oil, and cucumber. Mix gently, taste and season with salt, usually about 1/2 teaspoon. Cover and refrigerate up to a few hours, or serve immediately.

Spoon the ceviche into sundae glasses, martini glasses or small bowls. Garnish with sprigs of cilantro and slices of lime. Serve with tortilla chips or saltines.

Chocolate Bread Pudding with Tequila-Infused Cherries and Cinnamon Whipped Cream

serves 8

for bread pudding:

1 cup dried cherries
1/2 cup tequila
butter to prepare baking dish
4 cups cubed day-old baguette or brioche
2 cups milk
1 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup sugar
1/8 tsp salt
10 oz bittersweet chocolate, chopped
6 large eggs
1/2 tsp vanilla extract

for whipped cream:

1 cup heavy cream
1 tbl sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp vanilla extract

— preparation —

For the bread pudding:

Cover dried cherries with tequila and soak for 30 minutes. Drain, reserving tequila soaking liquid. Generously butter a 9-inch x 13-inch glass baking dish. Put cubed bread in dish.

Heat milk, heavy cream, sugar, and salt in a 2-quart saucepan over moderate heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved and mixture is hot but not boiling. Remove from heat and add chocolate, then let stand for 2 minutes. Whisk until smooth and cool slightly. Lightly beat eggs together in a large bowl with vanilla and the retained tequila soaking liquid. Slowly add eggs to chocolate mixture, whisking until combined. Sprinkle drained cherries over dry bread cubes, distributing evenly throughout the dish. Pour chocolate mixture over bread and let soak at room temperature, pressing bread down until it completely absorbs chocolate mixture, about 1 hour. Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 325 degrees. Bake until edge is set but center still trembles slightly, about 45 minutes. Cool in baking dish on a rack (pudding will continue to set as it cools.) Serve warm topped with cinnamon whipped cream.

For the whipped cream:

In the bowl of a standing mixer, beat heavy cream until soft peaks form. Add sugar, vanilla and cinnamon, beating to combine. Serve on top of warm chocolate bread pudding.



The Aphrodisiac Cocktail

makes 1 cocktail

1 oz. Agavero

1 oz. 1800 Tequil

splash passionfruit nectar

splash pomegranate juice

pomegranate seeds, for garnish

— preparation —

Pour all ingredients in a shaker with ice. Shake briskly and strain into chilled up glass. Garnish with 5 fresh pomegranate seeds.