

Fast & Fab with Le Creuset

February 2010

Menu:

Quick Sausage Cassoulet

Pomegranate Pork & Sweet Potato Stew

Charred Broccoli with Lemon-Chili Vinaigrette

Creamy Baked Whole Wheat Pasta with Chard

Quick Sausage Cassoulet

serves 8 people

olive oil
8 links raw sausage , any pork, duck or chicken combination
6 slices bacon, cut into small strips
1 large white onion, diced
2 large carrots, peeled and diced small
2 tbl chopped garlic
1 sprig rosemary
1 28-oz can whole canned tomatoes, drained and roughly chopped
1 cup white wine
5 cans white beans, rinsed and drained very well
salt and pepper
2 cups chicken stock, as needed

For the topping:

3 cups coarse breadcrumbs
1 lemon, zested
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
3 tbl olive oil

***** Preparation ******

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Poke the sausages a few times with a knife and place in a large skillet drizzled with olive oil. Cook over high heat for 5 minutes until browned on all sides. Add 1/2 cup water, cover and cook for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. In another large skillet, cook the bacon over medium-high heat. When mostly cooked, add the onions, carrots, garlic and rosemary. Cook for about 15 minutes until vegetables are slightly soft and some are browned. Add the tomatoes and wine. Simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add the beans. Taste and season with salt and pepper as needed. Drizzle a shallow baking dish or Dutch Oven with olive oil and add in half of the bean mixture. Slice the sausages and add them on top of the beans, along with any juices from the pan. Add the rest of the beans and enough stock to come up about 1-inch BELOW the beans. Bake for 30 minutes, uncovered

For the topping:

Toss together the breadcrumbs, zest, parmesan and olive oil.
Top the beans generously with the breadcrumb mixture and return to the oven.
Bake for another 30 minutes or until crispy and bubbling.
Let cool 20 minutes before serving.

Pomegranate Pork & Sweet Potato Stew

serves 6

8 cups cubed pork shoulder , (cut into approx 2-inch cubes, discarding large pieces of fat)
salt and pepper
1 tbl ground coriander
1 tbl mild chili powder
1/2 cup flour
olive oil
1 white onion, diced
3 carrots, peeled, cut into 1-inch rounds
2 tbl chopped garlic
4 sprigs thyme
2 cup pomegranate juice
3 cups chicken stock, as needed
1/4 cup honey
4 cups large-diced sweet potatoes, (or yukon gold potatoes)

***** Preparation ******

Heat a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Season the pork with plenty of salt and pepper. Sprinkle with the coriander and chili powder. Dredge in flour and shake off the excess. Add olive oil to lightly coat the bottom of the pan. Add the pork, working in stages as needed so it is not crowded in the pan, and brown on all sides. Remove the pork and set aside.

Add the onion, carrots and garlic. Cook, stirring, for about 1 minute. Add the pork back in. Add the thyme and pomegranate juice. Scrape up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Add enough chicken stock to cover the pork by about 1-inch. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 40 minutes.

Add in the honey and the diced potatoes. Add more stock as needed to cover the ingredients by about 1-inch of liquid. Cover and cook for another 20 minutes or until pork and potatoes are tender.

Taste and season with salt and pepper as needed.

Charred Broccoli with Lemon-Chili Vinaigrette

serves 4-6 people

1 bunch broccoli, cut into long florets
1 lemon, cut into thin slices, pits removed
1 garlic cloves, peeled
1 tsp red chili flakes
1 tbl honey
2 tbl white wine vinegar
1/3 cup olive oil
salt

***** Preparation ******

Heat a grill pan over high heat.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add a small handful of salt. Add the broccoli and cook for 30 seconds. Remove with a slotted spoon and pat dry. Toss lightly with olive oil.

Grill the broccoli until charred on each side and set aside.

Toss the lemon slices with olive oil and grill until marked on both sides.

In a blender, combine the lemon, garlic, chili, honey, vinegar, olive oil and a pinch of salt. Blend until smooth.

Toss the broccoli with the vinaigrette and serve.

Creamy Baked Whole Wheat Pasta with Chard

makes 1 9x13-inch casserole dish

1 lb whole wheat penne, (look for 100% farro pasta -- it tastes the best!)

salt and pepper

3 tbl butter

1 white onion, thinly sliced

2 tbl chopped garlic

1 bunch chard, stems cut into small pieces, leaves roughly chopped (or use kale)

1 cup sliced sun-dried tomatoes

2 cups greek yogurt

1 egg

3/4 cup toasted sliced almonds

1 1/2 cup crumbled feta

chopped basil, for garnish

***** Preparation ******

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Add a small handful of salt. Add the pasta and stir. Cook according to the package instructions -- be sure to cook until just tender. Drain and rinse.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the butter. Add the onion and cook for 10 minutes until very soft and beginning to golden. Add the garlic and the chard stems. Cook for a couple minutes. Add the chard leaves and cook until just beginning to wilt. Stir in the sun-dried tomatoes and remove from the heat. Season well with salt and pepper.

In a large bowl, whisk together the yogurt and the egg. Add the pasta, veggies and the almonds and toss to combine.

Fill a casserole dish with the pasta and top with feta cheese.

Bake for about 20 minutes until golden and bubbly.

Serve topped with fresh basil.