

# Spring Wine Dinner

## March 2010

### Menu:

Stuffed Lamb with Apricot-Onion Marmalade  
Baked Polenta with Artichokes and Parmesan  
Spring Salad with Snap Peas, Asparagus and Mint  
Chive-Gruyere Drop Biscuits

### Wines:

Clos Margarite Sauvignon Blanc (New Zealand)  
Chateau Saint Pierre Rose (France)  
Oakridge Old Vine Zinfandel (California)

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## Stuffed Lamb with Apricot-Onion Marmalade

serves 8

### for the lamb:

olive oil  
6 scallions, sliced (white and green parts)  
1 tbl chopped rosemary  
1/2 cup toasted pinenuts  
5 pieces sliced bread, day-old, odds and ends are best  
1 cup chopped parsley  
salt and pepper  
1 boneless leg of lamb, 2 - 2 1/2 lbs  
1/4 cup Dijon mustard

### for the marmalade:

1 tbl butter  
1 white onions, sliced into thin half-rings  
1 cinnamon stick  
1/2 tsp red chili flakes  
1 cup sliced dried apricots  
1 orange, zested and juiced  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1 cup water

### \*\*\* Preparation \*\*\*\*

#### For the lamb:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add olive oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Add the scallions and rosemary. Cook until scallions are softened. Remove from heat and add the pinenuts. Pulse the bread in a food processor to create irregular breadcrumbs. Add to the pan. Add the parsley to the pan. Mix together and season with salt & pepper.

Unwrap the lamb (removing any netting) and unfold on a cutting board. Season the inside generously with salt and pepper. Spread with the dijon mustard. Fill with the bread mixture and roll back into it's original shape. Using kitchen twine, tie the lamb at one-inch intervals. Place in a roasting pan and roast for 45 min - 1 hour. A meat thermometer should read 130 degrees at the thickest part. Remove and let rest for 15 minutes before slicing to serve.

#### For the marmalade:

Heat a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the butter. When melted, add the onions and cook until soft. Add the cinnamon stick, chili flakes, apricots, orange zest and juice, sugar and water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 15-20 minutes until most of the water has evaporated and mixture is thickened. Remove from heat, season with salt and pepper and let cool slightly before serving with the sliced lamb.

## **Baked Polenta with Artichokes and Parmesan**

### **serves 6-8**

2 tbl butter

2 tbl chopped garlic

4 cups canned or frozen artichoke hearts, defrosted, drained and pat dry

salt and pepper, as needed

6 cup chicken stock, (or water for a vegetarian version)

1 1/2 cups polenta or fine cornmeal

1 cup cream

1 cup grated parmesan

chopped chives, for garnish

### **\*\*\* Preparation \*\*\*\***

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Butter a 9x13 casserole dish (or similar)

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the butter. When melted, add the garlic. Cook until just fragrant and add the artichoke hearts. Cook until beginning to brown and remove from heat. Season with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, heat the chicken stock in a pot. Once boiling, add the artichoke mixture and remove from heat. Whisk in the polenta and immediately pour into the baking dish. Bake, uncovered, for 20-30 minutes or until polenta has soaked up most of the liquid. Remove from oven and carefully whisk in the cream and parmesan cheese. Top with chives and serve.

## **Spring Salad with Snap Peas, Asparagus and Mint**

### **serves 4-6**

1 lb snap peas, stringed and sliced on the bias  
1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and sliced on the bias into 1-inch pieces  
2 scallions, sliced on the bias (greens only)  
2 bunches watercress  
1 lemon, zested and juiced  
1/4 cup mint, finely sliced  
olive oil  
salt and pepper  
shaved parmesan, for garnish

### **\*\*\* Preparation \*\*\*\***

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add a small handful of salt. Add the snap peas and asparagus. Cook for 30 seconds and drain. Rinse well with cold water and pat dry.

Combine the blanched vegetables with the scallions. Add the watercress leaves (cut the leaves off the stems and leave whole), lemon zest and juice, mint and olive oil to lightly coat. Season well with salt and pepper. Toss and serve immediately topped with shaved parmesan.

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## Chive-Gruyere Drop Biscuits

**makes about 1 dozen**

1 1/2 cups flour  
1/8 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp baking powder  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/3 cup grated gruyere cheese  
1/2 stick butter, cold, cut into small pieces  
1/4 cup finely chopped chives  
1/4 cup half and half, plus more as needed

### **\*\*\* Preparation \*\*\*\***

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In a food processor, combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, gruyere and butter. Pulse until mixture looks like sand. Dump into a bowl and stir in the chives and half and half. Dough should be similar to cookie dough (not thick enough to roll out) and still a little sticky.

Drop large tablespoons of dough onto a baking sheet and bake for 12 minutes or until golden.

Let cool slightly before serving.