

Camembert & Bacon Frittata with Parsley Pesto Drizzle

makes a 9x11-inch pan

for the frittata:

3 slices bacon, cut into small pieces
1 cup diced white onion
8 eggs
1 1/2 cup ricotta cheese
6 oz brie, cut into small pieces
1/4 cup 1/4 cup chopped parsley
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 tsp baking powder

for the pesto:

1 cup parsley leaves
1 lemon, zested
1 garlic clove
salt and pepper
olive oil, as needed

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

For the Frittata:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Heat medium skillet over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook until almost crisp. Add the onions and continue to cook until onions are very soft. Set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and the ricotta. Use a slotted spoon to add in the bacon-onion mixture, leaving behind the excess oil in the pan. Add the rest of the ingredients to the bowl and stir.

Spray a 9"x11" baking pan with non-stick spray and pour in the egg mixture. Bake for about 20 minutes or until puffed in the center. Remove and let cool slightly.

For the pesto:

In a small food processor, combine the parsley, garlic, lemon zest and a pinch of salt and pepper. Pulse to chop. Add just enough olive oil to create a pesto-like consistency. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

Serve the frittata cut into squares, topped with a drizzle of the pesto.

Wild Mushroom Ragu

makes about 4 cups

4 oz. dried wild mushrooms
2 tbl butter
1 white onion, diced
2 large caps portabello mushrooms, stemmed and gills scraped out
olive oil
4 garlic cloves, chopped
1/2 cup white wine
2 tbl tomato paste
1/3 cup heavy cream
1/3 cup chopped parsley
1 lb cooked pasta, for serving
salt and pepper

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

In a small bowl, pour about 2 cups boiling water over the dried mushrooms and set aside for at least 20 minutes.

Heat a large skillet over high heat. Add the butter. When melted, add the onions. Cook over medium heat until softened. Add the chopped portobellos and a little olive oil to moisten the pan. Cook over high heat until mushrooms are golden. Add the garlic and tomato paste and cook for about 1 minute. Add the white wine and simmer while scraping the bits off the bottom of the pan.

Remove the dried mushrooms from the water and chop and add to the pan. Add the mushroom water, leaving behind any grit on the bottom of the bowl. Simmer for about 10 minutes. Add the cream and cook until slightly thickened. Season with salt and pepper and add the chopped parsley.

Toss with warm pasta -- add more olive oil as needed.

Spanish Spice-Rubbed Chicken Breasts with Oranges and Parsley

serves 6

2 tbl smoked paprika
1 tbl garlic powder
1 tbl ground cumin
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp black pepper
1 orange, zested
6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
3 oranges
1/2 cup parsley leaves
olive oil

*** Preparation ****

In a small bowl, combine the smoked paprika, garlic powder, cumin, salt, pepper and orange zest. Add enough olive oil to create a paste. Rub the paste onto the chicken breasts and set aside.

Heat a grill pan or outdoor grill. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place the chicken onto the grill and cook until well-marked on both sides. Place chicken onto a baking sheet and finish cooking in the oven for about 10 minutes or until cooked through. Let rest for about 10 minutes.

To cut the oranges:

Cut the top and bottoms off. Cut off the skin and pith. Cut the oranges into thin slices and toss with the parsley leaves, a bit of olive oil and some salt and pepper.

To serve, slice the chicken and top with the oranges and parsley.

Mashed Potatoes with Goat Cheese and Herbs

serves 6-8

3 lbs yukon gold potatoes

5 oz. soft goat cheese

1/2 cup milk

2 tbl butter

1/3 cup chopped herbs, mix of parsley and chives

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

Cook potatoes in a large saucepan of boiling salted water until tender, about 12 minutes; drain well.

Using a ricer or potatoes masher, mash well.

Add the cheese, milk, and butter, mix well. Mix in the chopped herbs, season to taste with salt and pepper.

Caramel Croissant Bread Pudding

makes 12 individual servings

8 stale croissants, if using fresh, dry out the croissants in a 300 degree oven for 15-20 minutes and let cool

3 cups sugar

3 tablespoons water

1 1/2 cups heavy cream, at room temperature

2 cups whole milk, at room temperature

3 tablespoons bourbon

6 extra large eggs, lightly beaten

pinch salt

To serve:

fresh berries, for garnish

1 cup heavy cream

2 tbl powdered sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

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

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Tear the croissants into pieces and pack into 8 ramekins.

In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water. Stir to dissolve sugar. Place over medium-high heat and cook until sugar is an amber color - about 5 minutes.

Lower heat to very low and add the cream all at once. Stir until bubbling subsides. Add the milk and bourbon and salt. Whisk over low heat until any solid bits have dissolved.

Remove from heat. Add a spoonful of the hot liquid to the eggs and whisk. Add the egg into the pot and whisk. Pour the caramel mixture over each of the ramekins, pressing down the croissant pieces so they soak up the mixture. Let stand for 10 minutes.

Bake for 20 minutes.

Let cool slightly before serving.

Whip the heavy cream with the powdered sugar and vanilla. Serve topped with whipped cream and fresh berries.