

Mother's Day Brunch

May 2010

Menu:

Breakfast Bruschetta with Chive Butter, Eggs
& Tomato Relish

Ricotta & Poached Apricot Tarts

Creamy Dill Fingerling Potato & Asparagus Salad

Best-Ever Buttermilk Biscuits

Breakfast Bruschetta with Chive Butter, Eggs & Tomato Relish

serves 4

4 tbl unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus a little more for the pan
2 tbl chopped chives
3 roma tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 avocado, diced
1 tsp finely chopped shallot
1 tbl chopped fresh dill
1 tsp lemon juice
salt and pepper
6 eggs
2 tbl milk or cream
4 slices country bread or sourdough, toasted

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

In a small bowl, mash together the butter and chives and a pinch of salt. Set aside.

In another bowl, toss together the tomatoes, avocado, shallots, dill, lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Beat together the eggs, cream and some salt and pepper. Heat a small skillet over medium heat. Add a pat of butter. When melted, add the eggs and scramble, stirring constantly, until softly set.

To serve, spread the butter on the warm toast and top with some of the scrambled eggs and then the relish. Serve immediately.

Ricotta & Poached Apricot Tarts

serves 9-12

3 cups dried whole apricots
2 cups muscat wine
1 cinnamon stick
1/4 cup honey
1 1/2 cups ricotta cheese
1 eggs, lightly beaten
1 lemon, zested
1 tsp vanilla paste
1/4 cup white sugar
1 sheet frozen puff pastry, defrosted in the fridge -- still cold
1 egg, beaten with 1 tbl water

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

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

In a small pot, combine the apricots, muscat, cinnamon and honey. Place over high heat. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes until apricots are plump and liquid is thick. Remove and set in the fridge to cool for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, beat together the ricotta, egg, lemon zest, vanilla and sugar.

Cut the dough into 3 even rectangles and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Using a fork, poke holes down the center of each tart, leaving a 1/2-inch border without holes. Divide the ricotta mixture between the three tarts, again leaving the border free. Arrange the apricots attractively, overlapping just slightly, on top of the ricotta -- some of the ricotta will still be showing. At this point, place the tarts back in the fridge for 15 minutes if the dough has gotten warm. Brush the edges with egg wash and then bake for 20-25 minutes until golden. Let cool for 5 minutes before slicing and serving.

Creamy Dill Fingerling Potato & Asparagus Salad

serves 6

1 bunch asparagus, trimmed of woody ends
olive oil, as needed
3 lbs fingerling potatoes, halved lengthwise
1/2 cup sour cream
1 lemon, zested
1 tbl chopped fresh dill
salt and pepper
lemon slices, for garnish

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

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Toss the asparagus lightly in olive oil, salt and pepper and place on a baking sheet. Toss the potatoes with olive oil, salt and pepper and place on another baking sheet, cut-side down. Bake asparagus for 10 minutes until golden in some places and potatoes for 20 minutes until tender and golden. Let both cool slightly.

Meanwhile, stir together the sour cream, lemon zest, dill, plenty of black pepper and salt as needed. Toss the potatoes with this mixture.

To serve, arrange the asparagus in a line on a large platter and place the potato mixture in a pile over the bottom of the asparagus. Garnish with sliced lemons. Serve room temperature or cold.

Best-Ever Buttermilk Biscuits

Makes 1 Dozen

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups cake flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tbsp cream of tartar
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp sugar
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, cold, cut into small pieces
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 cup buttermilk, plus more as needed

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

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Place the flours, baking soda, cream of tartar, salt and sugar in a food processor. Pulse to combine. Add the butter and shortening and pulse until butter is in small pieces. Empty mixture into bowl. Add buttermilk and stir to combine - add a bit more buttermilk if needed to moisten. Empty the mixture onto a floured work surface and bring together with your hands - fold over just a couple times and do NOT knead or overwork. Press into a square about 3/4-inch thick. Cut into 12 pieces and place on a lined baking sheets. Bake for 12 - 15 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

SERVING SUGGESTION:

Sear some sliced black forest ham in a hot pan. Split the warm biscuits, butter lightly and fill with the ham. Serve warm.