

Peaches under Meringue: *Crown broiled peaches with pillows of meringue and a bit of honeyed crunch.*

yield: Makes 4 servings

active time: 10 min

total time: 10 min

Ingredients

- 2 ripe peaches, halved and pitted
- 3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sugar, divided
- 1 large egg white
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped sesame candy or crushed amaretti

Preparation

1. Preheat broiler.
2. Put peaches, cut side up, on a baking sheet and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon sugar (total). Broil 4 to 5 inches from heat until tops begin to brown, 2 to 4 minutes.
3. Beat egg white with a pinch of salt in a deep bowl using an electric mixer at medium-high speed until foamy. Gradually add remaining 3 tablespoon sugar, beating until white holds stiff, glossy peaks. Fold in sesame candy.
4. Place a dollop of meringue on each peach half and broil 30 seconds. Turn off broiler and leave peaches in oven just until tips of meringue are browned, 30 seconds to 1 minute (watch carefully).

Tangerine, Watercress and Blue Cheese Salad

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1 shallot, minced
- 2 bunches watercress, trimmed
- 1/2 small red onion, halved, thinly sliced
- 4 medium tangerines, peel and white pith removed, fruit cut crosswise into 1/3-inch-thick rounds, seeded
- 1/2 cup (generous) crumbled blue cheese (about 2 ounces)

Preparation

1. Whisk olive oil, orange juice, white wine vinegar and minced shallot in small bowl to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before using.)
2. Combine watercress and onion in large bowl. Toss with enough dressing to coat. Transfer to platter. Arrange tangerine slices over. Sprinkle with blue cheese. Serve, passing remaining dressing separately.

**Bartlett pears or raspberries may be used in place of the tangerines.

Roasted Sweet-Potato Rounds with Garlic Oil and Fried Sage

yield: Makes 8 servings

active time: 25 min

total time: 1 hr

Ingredients

- 3 large garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced into 1/2-inch-thick rounds
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 24 sage leaves

Preparation

Roast sweet potatoes:

1. Preheat oven 450°F with rack in upper third.
2. Purée garlic with oil and 3/4 teaspoon salt in a blender until smooth.
3. Toss sweet potatoes with garlic oil in a large bowl, then spread in 1 layer in a 15-by 10-inch shallow baking pan.
4. Bake until golden in patches and cooked through, 20 to 30 minutes.

To fry sage leaves:

1. Heat oil in a small heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers.
2. Fry sage leaves in 2 batches, stirring, until crisp, 30 seconds to 1 minute per batch.
3. Transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain.

Serve sweet potatoes with sage leaves scattered on top.

Fresh Wild Mushroom Soup

yield: Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) butter
- 2 cups finely chopped onions
- 6 ounces crimini (baby bella) mushrooms, chopped
- 6 ounces fresh white mushrooms, chopped
- 6 ounces fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed, caps chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 3 tablespoons brandy
- 2 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 4 cups beef broth
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Preparation

1. Melt butter in large pot over medium-high heat.
2. Add onions; sauté until golden, about 5 minutes.
3. Add all mushrooms and thyme; sauté until mushrooms begin to brown, about 8 minutes.
4. Add brandy; stir 30 seconds, then mix in flour. Slowly stir in broth; bring soup to boil.
5. Reduce heat; simmer uncovered 10 minutes.
6. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Ladle into bowls.