



LUCY WAVERMAN THE HOME CHEF

Don't waste a sunny day in the kitchen: Prepare for company the night before. In this menu, only the fish demands last-minute attention.

Roasted Asparagus Soup

This soup is intensely flavoured.

1 pound green asparagus, woody ends removed

*2 teaspoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup peeled Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into ½-inch dice
4 cups chicken stock
¼ cup whipping cream
Preheat oven to 450 F.*

Cut asparagus into 1-inch lengths and set tips aside. Toss asparagus stalks with olive oil, salt and pepper and place on a baking sheet. Roast for 8 minutes or until asparagus is tender-crisp and slightly browned.

Melt butter in a pot over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for 4 minutes or until translucent. Add roasted asparagus, potato and chicken stock. Bring to a boil, cover and turn heat to low.

Simmer soup for 10 minutes or until potatoes are soft. Add reserved asparagus tips and simmer 3 minutes more or until just cooked through. Purée soup and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Whisk the cream with a frother or food processor until foamy. Divide soup into 4 bowls and pour foam over each serving. The soup should resemble a bowl of cappuccino. Serves 4 to 6.

Prosciutto-wrapped Sablefish

Sablefish (also known as Alaskan black cod) is firm and buttery. It works wonderfully in this Italian-inspired preparation. Serve with new potatoes.

4 6-ounce pieces of sablefish, skin removed

*Salt and freshly ground pepper
8 slices of prosciutto
1 tablespoon olive oil*

Preheat oven to 450 F.

Season fish with salt and pepper. Wrap 2 slices of prosciutto around each fillet so that just the ends of the fish are exposed.

Heat oil in a large non-stick ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add fish to pan and fry for 1 minute a side or until prosciutto is evenly crisp. Place pan in oven and roast for 10 minutes or until fish is just cooked through. Place fish on plate and serve with roasted tomato dressing (below). Serves 4.

Roasted Tomato Dressing

1½ pounds of tomato, quartered, or cut into eighths if large

*3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons chopped coriander*

Preheat oven to 450 F.

Toss tomatoes with 1 tablespoon olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place tomatoes skin-side down on a parchment-lined baking sheet and roast for 25 minutes or until they are very soft and slightly charred at edges.

Purée tomatoes in a mini-chop

or blender. Stir in remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil, balsamic vinegar and coriander and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve warm. Serves 4.

Strawberry Shortcake

The cake itself is nice and moist in this recipe. You can include 1 cup of dried strawberries in the batter for extra interest and texture if desired.

Shortcake:

*½ cup softened butter
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon grated lemon rind
½ cup buttermilk*

Filling:

*1 pint strawberries
2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup whipping cream
Preheat oven to 350 F.*

Combine flour, baking powder, salt and lemon rind in a bowl.

Beat butter and sugar together with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time. Beat in one-third of flour mixture, half of buttermilk and repeat, finishing with flour mixture.

Bake in a parchment-lined 8-inch round cake pan for 50 minutes or until top is cracked and golden and a tester comes out clean.

Slice strawberries and toss with 1 tablespoon sugar. Let sit for 15 minutes or until berries look juicy. Beat whipping cream with remaining tablespoon of sugar, stopping when small peaks have formed.

Split cake in half. Sandwich with half of berries and cream. Spoon more berries on top when serving. Serves 4-6.

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