

A Glimpse of the Future Food

Assorted dinner rolls with compound butter

Roasted garlic

Roasted pepper

Sweet potato

Canapé of cream cheese + smoked salmon

*Lobster bisque W avocado and figs balsamic
glaze*

Tomato chorizo salad –

Roasted beef + risotto + spring asparagus

Dessert – mystery dessert

Canapé of cream cheese + smoked salmon



Count the different kinds of flavors.

*Making compound butter is easy.
All you need to do is to decide what is
combined with butter.*

Common ingredients would include:

Shallot – minced

*Garlic – minced; here garlic can be raw
or roasted.*

Roasted pepper –

Roasted egg plant –

Bacon

*Herbs: minced rosemary, basil, oregano, mint,
Fruits: strawberry, different kinds of berries
Juice of vegetables:*

The principle is simple.

Soften butter to room temperature. By then you can mix the butter with any ingredient you pick. After thoroughly mixing, re-freeze the mixing till it firms up again and you have your compound butter.

Of course the ingredients you pick need to be worked on first so they should be soft and pliable so they can be incorporated with the butter.

Example:

Roast garlic and roast pepper

Cut off the top of the garlic to show bulbs. Drizzle oil on the cut opening of the garlic. Wrap the garlic with a piece of foil.

Put the prepared bulbs in the muffin tin well.

Pre-heat oven to 400

Deposit the pepper {sweet bell pepper or hot spicy pepper} in one of the well.

Roast for 45 minutes and you have some sweet, tasty garlic that is mushy and can be blended in with the butter.

For the roasted pepper:

Put the roasted pepper in a bag or a container with lid.

The pepper would soften and discard the skin and seeds of the pepper. What is left is also the sensational sweet, fresh taste of pepper.

Mince the pepper first before you mix it with the butter.

Put the mixture on a piece of siren wrap, roll it up and put it back into the fridge. The chill would firm the butter up and you will have a wonderful ingredient for your morning breakfast toast.

Put it on top of a grilled steak and it can be used as a sauce.

Put them in soups or liquids and they can add another dimension to your meal.



Steak it is.

Lobster bisque W avocado and figs balsamic glaze

Lobster bisque starts with seafood chowder. The usually soup ingredients of onions, garlic and potatoes formed the base of the chowder. Milk is also important to serve as a thickener.

Lobster shells or shrimp shells are excellent source for flavor. The flavor would be intensified if you roast the shells first before you put them in the soup.

Another root vegetable that would help the flavor is fennel. Again, this root vegetable demand to be roasted first before it is added to the soup mixture.

Paprika would enhance the color and a spicy taste to the soup.

A little tomato paste would give it the orangey hue and by the time you blend everything with your well trusted immersion blender

The key to this bisque is to cook slowly. You can never rush any cream soup.



Salmon Canapé should be the easiest to make among the appetizer group. The trick to this is to learn how to use a piping bag with the cream cheese. The use of the piping bag is a totally new area where you can use different tips to construct different fancy decorations.

You can use all kinds of base for this cream cheese; starting with the vegetables like cucumber, zucchini, to endives, and going to baguettes and crackers. There are so many varieties you can choose and they all tickle your imagination. The toppings should induce fresh particular taste and they should be colorful to see.



Salmon rose with baguette



Salmon, asparagus spears with cream cheese on crackers



Salmon rosette with figs

I said it before and I say it again; the food world is nothing lack of your imagination and creativity. Nothing can be more rewarding than to watch your own imagination become reality. One more character food has over any other kind of hobby is; you can eat them.

Tomato chorizo salad

Cold salads are many but warm salad is not too common.

Warm salad usually takes its heat from the dressing or sauce. This time we are doing a very simple salad that has some spike.

Ingredients

Tomatoes – you can use any kinds of tomato, heirloom, Mexican hot house, Ontario home grown, Italian Romano, grape tomato, Cut them in chunks, sprinkle a dash of salt and let it sit. The juice would run out of the tomatoes, drain and reserve.



Your variety of tomatoes

Green onions, shallot, flat Italian parsley - now add some fragrance to the tomatoes. Coriander would work too.

Some acidity – you can add a dash of wine vinegar, sherry vinegar, Japanese Mirin (this is a sweet wine but has the character of vinegar), Balsamic glaze.

Then for the hot dressing part

Put some oil in a fry pan, low temperature.

Get a chorizo sausage – the Spanish sausage packed with paprika.

Don't forget to take the casing of the sausage away. Slice up the sausage and deposit in the oil.

Let it cook slowly and eventually the oil would turn a pinkish color. Do not burn the sausage slices.

Take the pan away from the stove top when the sausages are done.

Splash some balsamic vinegar in. [Depending on the age of the balsamic vinegar; some of them might be very sour to the taste, then add a little sugar to tone it down]

Finally, mix the dressing with the tomatoes and you have an instant sensation on your hand.



This one got couscous in it.



Chorizo sausage

Roasted beef + risotto + spring asparagus

Roast beef is pretty stable food and I wrote about [this before](#).
This time I tried the Italian risotto as accompaniment than potato.

Risotto is considered as a difficult food to make since you have to stand by the stove and keep stirring it for 30 minutes before it is done. During this time, temper might flare and I always try to quicken the process by increasing the temperature and ended with something not fit for consumption.

Now the easy method:

Put all the desired ingredients into a SLOW COOKER and the product comes out almost perfect.

The normal ingredients

Shallot – minced

Garlic – minced (you can also use pre-roasted garlic)

Seasoning of salt and pepper

Wine

Broth – chicken or vegetable

Arborio rice (the Italian short grain rice; this is something I think can be replaced by sushi rice, or Chinese short grain sticky rice)

Put everything in the slow cooker –

Set it on high temperature and cook for 2.5 hours

Turn off the slow cooker. The residual heat should keep the risotto warm.

NOW FOR THE KEY OF SUCCESS:

Rice in proportion to broth is [drum roll] 1:3 by volume

More broth will not hurt.

Pre-soak the rice will help.

Add Romano, Pecorino, Parmesan cheese to this mixture liberally.

Of course, do not forget the butter or olive oil which will give it a final shine and the ooziess people pay to see in risotto.

A few pointers should be observed:

- Time your product. This risotto does not keep forever in the clay pot. It will eventually condense and gel up. By then, you have to apply heat and more broth to recover this rice.
- You can also add other herbs and spices into this risotto to give it special flavor.

- For even better appearance and freshness, some root vegetables can be added to the final product for appearance. Vegetables like asparagus thinly slice radish, parsley, and other herbs will do the job.



Now you master the skill to produce the perfect risotto; the next time you have guests over and prepare a big meal, you do not have to stand in front of the stove, getting frustrated while trying to cook and entertain your guest.

Mystery Dessert: Pana Cotta

Pana Cotta is one of the desserts that can be made ahead so you can spend time with your guests. There is little cooking involved, though you need room in your fridge.

It bears a lot of similarity to the mousse. Both use gelatin, both need refrigeration, both use the same toppings. Mousse uses lighter liquids like juice, fruit puree, and it is less creamy than the Pana Cotta.



This is a coconut milk custard – plain but elegant.

1 cup whole milk – sprinkle 1 packet (2½ tsp) unflavored gelatin onto the milk. Let it sit and the gelatin would softened in the milk. Apply medium heat to the milk and let the gelatin dissolve completely but **do not boil**.

Add 2 cups heavy whipping cream

½ cup + 1 Tbsp sugar

Pinch of salt

1 tsp vanilla extract

Mix heavy whipping cream and sugar with the warm milk till the sugar is completely dissolved. The content should be steaming but **not boiling**.

Cool the milk mixture down and add 1 cup of sour cream to it

Divide the milk cream mixture into containers and refrigerate till it is firm.

*This dessert is so easy to make and yet so versatile. You can use different containers to let it firm up. The choice of topping is such big variety that you can really make some presentation out of it.
A berry sauce can add shine to the dessert*



Ingredients for Berry Sauce:

*2 cups berries, divided (I used 1 cup raspberries and 1 cup quartered or halved strawberries)
3 Tbsp granulated sugar
½ Tbsp lemon juice
Heat combined berries till it thickens and become syrupy.*



plain pana cotta with berry sauce



*Nowadays, everyone wants to keep healthy and eat light. This custard cream dessert can certainly replace the heavy New York Style Cheese cake.
There are other variations of pana cotta that you can experiment. The main idea is to reduce your work load when you have guests over for dinner and you can feel at ease and spend your time in entertaining than toiling in the kitchen.*