

From The Kitchen of
Chef Cal Kraft
Culinary Instructor, Author, Public Speaker

Ricotta Stuffed Shells with Lemon and Raspberry Sauce

1 – 12 oz package jumbo shells

Lemon Sauce

1 cup nonfat lemon yogurt
1 8oz pkg light cream cheese, softened
2 tbsp Confectioners sugar
½ tsp grated lemon zest

Sweet Ricotta Filling

1 15oz container low fat ricotta cheese
3 tbsp Confectioners sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp grated lemon zest
¼ cup finely chopped crystallized ginger

Raspberry Sauce

1 10oz package frozen red raspberries in light syrup, thawed
2 tbsp Confections sugar
1 tbsp orange juice or orange liqueur

Garnish

As needed, whole fresh raspberries
As needed, mint leaves
As needed, lemon zest

Prepare pasta according to package directions, adding 1 cup sugar to the boiling water. Drain carefully and set aside in a single layer on a baking sheet. Cover with a lightly dampened towel. Blend lemon sauce ingredients together with an electric mixer until smooth. Hold in refrigerator until ready to assemble. Combine all the ricotta filling ingredients together, except ginger, with a whisk. Stir in ginger. Hold in refrigerator until ready to assemble. Puree raspberry ingredients in food processor or blender. Press through a sieve set over a bowl to remove seeds. Set aside. To assemble, place about 1 tablespoon ricotta filling in each jumbo shell; spoon a puddle of lemon sauce in center of each dessert plate. Place 3 filled shells on sauce, like spokes. Drizzle or decorate with raspberry sauce and additional lemon sauce, if desired. Garnish with fresh raspberries, mint leaves and/or lemon zest.

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RED WINE SHORT RIBS OF BEEF

1 cup red wine, such as Merlot or *Cabernet Sauvignon*
2/3 cup ketchup
3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 cloves garlic (optional), crushed (I use, it adds flavor)
2 tablespoons light or dark brown sugar
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
4 pounds beef short ribs, preferably boneless
2 medium-sized yellow onions, chopped
1 package Polenta, either instant or regular or 1 Bag Egg Noodles

Combine the wine, ketchup, soy sauce, garlic, if using, brown sugar, and pepper in the bowl of a slow cooker, one large enough to hold the meat. Mix until smooth and everything is combined. Add the ribs, submerging them in the sauce. If you have a round cooker, stack the ribs, if you have an oval cooker, space the ribs around so all get covered in sauce. Distribute the onions over the ribs; cover and cook on LOW until tender and the meat starts to separate, 7 to 8 hours. Note: Once or twice during the cooking time check to be sure all the meat is covered in sauce, and if any meat is exposed, be sure to spoon some sauce over it. When finished cooking, I use an immersion blender to smooth out the sauce once I remove the meat from the cooker. Then transfer sauce to a saucepan and keep warm until you are ready to use.

To serve, prepare Polenta as per package directions. When at the consistency of soft oatmeal, make a circle of polenta on your plate, then place on short rib in center. Ladle some of the sauce over the rib and serve. Enjoy with a nice glass of wine, maybe a small green salad, and a piece of rustic bread to soak up all the leftover sauce. This should easily serve 4 to 5. Note: you can also serve this over cooked egg noodles.

As adopted from recipe found in "Not Your Mother's Slow Cooker Cookbook" by Beth Hensperger and Julie Kaufmann

From the Kitchen of
Chef Cal Kraft
Culinary Instructor
Fairfax County Adult Education

Bacon-Wrapped Rumaki:

1 – 2 cans (8-oz ea.) whole water chestnuts, drained
¼ cup soy sauce
1 tablespoon white granulated sugar
1 package of bacon cut in half *
Wooden toothpicks**

In a small bowl combine water chestnuts, soy sauce and sugar, mix well. Let stand at room temperature for 20 – 30 minutes to marinate, or overnight in the refrigerator.

Drain chestnuts, and wrap each one in a piece of bacon sliced in half, then secure with a toothpick. Place on a sheet pan sprayed with cooking spray and with a drain rack or better yet, on a disposable roasting rack; bake at 400 –degrees, till bacon is cooked and crisp (10 to 18 minutes); or under broiler for 4 to 7 minutes, about 4 inches from heat. When baking under the broiler, be sure to stay at the oven as they will burn quickly if not watched. If cooking in the summer, grill them over low heat until the bacon is crisp. If your grill has an upper shelf, you can finish them up there too.

Serve warm.

* = You can alter the taste by altering the type of bacon used. You can use Maple Cured, Apple wood Smoked Bacon or even Turkey Bacon. You want a medium or normal thickness since thick sliced bacon takes longer to cook and is somewhat harder to wrap around the chestnuts.

** = Remember to use only WOODEN toothpicks as plastic ones will melt.