

Lifetime Learning Proudly Presents: **CHOCOLATE – BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER**

In putting this class together, I wanted to present to you chocolate as something other than a dessert item. While we all love the decadent flavor chocolate brings to all those delicious and sweet desserts, are you aware of what a little cocoa powder can do to a nicely grilled steak? Chocolate Orange Waffles for breakfast, why not! Chocolate soup – oh yes, there is chocolate soup and it is heavenly. And, as I mentioned above, a little cocoa powder can turn a steak, chicken or pork into a delicious entree that your guests will rave about for years to come. So, sit back and let's take a look at all the savory things we can do with chocolate.

Chef Cal Kraft, 2023

The recipes I am presenting today are as follows:

For Breakfast:

Chocolate Walnut Strudel
Chocolate Crepes
Chocolate Orange Waffles topped w/ Brown Sugar Pecans
Banana Stuffed French Toast with Chocolate Sauce

For Lunch:

Chocolate Pear-Cherry Salad
Mozzarella, Strawberry Salad w/Chocolate Vinaigrette
Silky and Smooth Chocolate Soup
And just for fun - a Chocolate Martini

For Dinner:

Chocolate-Chipotle Sirloin Steak

Chicken Mole

Chocolate Molasses Pork Roast

Slow cooked Caribbean Pot Roast

Steak au Poivre for 2

Smoky Espresso Steak

Chicken & Olive Mole Casserole

Cocoa-Crusted Beef Tenderloin

*Rosemary Rubbed Filet Mignon with Chocolate Port
Reduction*

The Recipes

BREAKFAST:

Chocolate Walnut Strudel:

½ package Frozen Puff Pastry Sheets (1 sheet)
1 egg, beaten
1 tablespoon water
4 oz. Baker's Semi-Sweet Chocolate
2 tablespoons milk
1 tablespoon butter
½ cup chopped walnuts

Thaw pastry sheet at room temperature 30 minutes; meanwhile pre-heat oven to 375-degrees. Mix egg and water in small bowl, set aside.

Microwave chocolate, milk, and butter in large bowl on high 1½ to 2 minutes, or until chocolate is almost melted, stirring halfway through heating time. Stir until chocolate is completely melted.

Unfold pastry sheet on lightly floured surface (note: I do this on a sheet of parchment paper so it does not stick to surface). Roll into 16 x 12-inch rectangle. Spread chocolate mixture evenly on pastry to within 1½ inch of edges. Sprinkle walnuts over chocolate. Starting at short side, roll up jelly-roll style. Place seam-side down on ungreased cookie sheet covered with parchment paper. Tuck ends under to seal. Brush with egg mixture.

Bake 35 minutes or until golden. Cool 30 minutes on cookie sheet or wire rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar, if desired, slice and serve.

Chocolate Crepes:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1½ tablespoons cocoa powder
¼ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 eggs – room temperature
2¼ cups milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ cup unsalted butter, melted

Sift the flour, cocoa, salt and cinnamon into a bowl. Stir to incorporate and then make a well in the center. In a bowl, beat the eggs, milk, and vanilla. Gradually add to the well in the flour mixture, whisking in flour from the side of the bowl to form a smooth batter. Lastly, stir in the melted butter, cover and refrigerate for one hour. *Note: you have to refrigerate the batter for one hour so it cooks correctly.*

To cook: Coat crepe pan or small 8” fry pan with butter spray; heat over medium heat. Add small ladle of crepe batter, swirl around pan and cook for one to one and half minutes or until slightly brown on bottom. Flip and cook second side 25 – 45 seconds. Remove and place on wax or parchment paper to cool. Repeat with rest of batter, placing paper between cooked crepes. Note: I cut the paper to the size of the plate. To store, wrap entire stack of crepes with plastic wrap tightly and refrigerate or freeze. If frozen, defrost overnight in the refrigerator.

For the filling: Combine 1 cup of Ricotta cheese or low fat cottage cheese with 3 – 4 ounces soft cream cheese in a blender. Add ¼ cup granulated sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract plus 1 teaspoon of orange or lemon zest. Pulse until smooth; cover and refrigerate until needed. Note: You can also add some finely chopped crystallized ginger to the cheese for add flavor.

Assembly: Spread one to two tablespoons of cheese mixture onto crepe. Fold in half and then fold in half again, so you have ¼ shape of crepe. Place on parchment lined baking sheet and warm in 350-degree oven for a few minutes. Meanwhile, melt 1 to 2 tablespoons butter in a small saucepan, add ¼ cup orange, apricot or lemon marmalade and stir until butter is melted and mixture is smooth. Add some julienne orange zest or lemon zest; mix well. Remove crepes from oven, place two on a plate, spoon sauce over crepe, dust with powdered sugar and serve.

Chocolate Orange Waffles Topped with Brown Sugar Pecans:

3 eggs at room temperature or the equivalent in egg substitute
1 cup milk
½ cup melted butter
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
2 cups flour
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 teaspoons sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
1 tablespoon orange zest

Mix the eggs with the milk, melted butter and vanilla. In a separate bowl, mix all the dry ingredients. Then incorporate the wet into the dry and mix to blend. Following your waffle makers instructions, cook the waffles until they are done, crisp but not burnt. Remove and allow them to cool. To freeze, place waffles in a freezer zip bag and freeze. They defrost in a very short time and can be reheated either in a toaster oven, a conventional toaster or in a preheated 300-degree oven on a cookie sheet for about 10 minutes.

Serve with fruit, syrup, ice cream, yogurt or whatever your favorite toppings are.

Toasted Brown Sugar Pecans:

1 cup pecans
¼ cup brown sugar
1 tablespoon butter

Toast pecans in a dry skillet just until fragrant. Now add the butter and brown sugar and continue to cook just until all the nuts are coated. Remove from the heat and serve over the Chocolate Waffles.

Banana/Walnut Stuffed French Toast with Chocolate Sauce:

6 eggs

¼ cup milk

4 very ripe bananas

¼ cup brown sugar, either light or dark

¼ cup chopped walnuts

Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

8 slices egg bread or good quality white bread or Texas Toast

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

Confectioner's sugar to garnish

Chocolate sauce to garnish

In a large shallow bowl, using a fork, beat the eggs until lightly frothy. Stir in the milk and set aside.

Peel the bananas and break into 4 parts. Place into a small bowl, add the brown sugar and mash with a fork. Stir in the walnuts and the nutmeg, mix well. Spread the banana-walnut mixture evenly over half the bread slices, leaving a ¼ inch border uncovered on all edges. Top with the remaining bread slices and press down gently to seal. Place 2 sandwiches in the egg mixture. Turn gently until evenly saturated on both sides. Remove from the bowl and repeat with the remaining 2 sandwiches.

In a frying pan or on a griddle large enough to hold all the sandwiches at once, melt 2 tablespoons of butter over medium heat. Add the sandwiches and fry until the undersides are golden brown, about 2 minutes. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter to the pan in several pieces, distributing evenly, then flip the sandwiches with a spatula and fry until the second sides are browned, about 2 minutes longer. Note: if pan can only accommodate 2 sandwiches at a time, cut the butter amounts in half so you have enough to do all four sandwiches.

Place cooked toast on individual plates and using a small fine mesh sieve, lightly dust the tops with confections sugar and then drizzle with the chocolate sauce. Enjoy!

Chocolate Sauce:

This is a very chocolatey, glossy, bittersweet sauce that's good drizzled over brownies, ice cream, cake, waffles or any other desserts. The cocoa powder – which is low in fat - provides most of the chocolate taste. I only added a small amount of regular chocolate to round out the flavor and add richness. Store the sauce in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Although you can serve the sauce chilled, it will become more fluid and flavorful if you allow it to warm to room temperature.

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
½ cup packed light brown sugar
½ cup hot water
½ cup light corn syrup
1½ ounces unsweetened chocolate chips, chopped
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

In a heavy medium saucepan, stir together the cocoa and sugar until well combined. Stir in the water, then the corn syrup until very smooth and well blended. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, over medium heat. Boil stirring and scraping the pan bottom for 1 minute. Immediately remove the pan from the heat.

Place the chocolate pieces in a small deep bowl. Add about ¼ cup of the hot cocoa mixture and stir until well blended and the chocolate partially melts. Add about ¼ cup more of the cocoa mixture and stir until smoothly incorporated. Now pour everything back into the saucepan and stir until the sauce is completely smooth. Stir in the vanilla. Let cool to room temperature before serving. Refrigerate any leftover sauce.

LUNCH:

Chocolate Pear and Cherry Salad:

¾ cup cut French green beans (haricots verts)
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
1 ounce dark chocolate candy bar, chopped
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
4 cups fresh baby arugula
1 medium pear, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
½ cup frozen pitted sweet cherries, thawed and halved
¼ cup dried cranberries
3 tablespoons coarsely chopped pecans
1 tablespoon minced dried apricots
2 teaspoons thinly sliced fresh mint leaves

Heat oven to 350-degrees: In an 8-inch square baking dish, toss beans with 1 tablespoon olive oil, salt and pepper. “Roast until tender, 12 – 15 minutes. Remove from oven and toss with balsamic vinegar. Cover and refrigerate for about 1½ to 2 hours.

Meanwhile, in a microwave safe container, melt chocolate candy bar, stir until smooth. Pulse melted chocolate, red wine vinegar and remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a blender, until smooth.

Divide baby arugula evenly between 2 salad bowls. Drizzle with chocolate mixture. Top with pears, cherries, cranberries and beans; sprinkle with pecans, apricots and mint leaves – toss to coat everything and serve.
Serves 2

Mozzarella Strawberry Salad with Chocolate Vinaigrette

6 thin slices prosciutto or deli ham, chopped
1 package (5 ounce) spring mix salad greens
1½ cups watercress
1 carton (8 ounces) fresh mozzarella cheese pearls
1½ cups sliced fresh strawberries
¼ cup dark chocolate chips
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
¼ cup olive oil
1½ teaspoons honey
¼ teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

In a small, dry skillet over medium heat, cook prosciutto and/or ham until crisp, do not overcook. Remove to paper towels with slotted spoon, drain and set aside.

Divide salad greens and watercress among six salad plates. Arrange cheese, strawberries, and prosciutto over greens.

In a microwave safe container, melt chocolate: stir until smooth. Whisk in the vinegar, oil, honey, salt and pepper. Drizzle over salads and serve.

Serves 6

Chocolate Soup:

5 cups whole milk – Must be whole milk, not light or 2% (see note)
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 ounces semisweet chocolate, grated or chopped fine
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, at room temperature
Ground cinnamon – a pinch
Brioche or Panettone, torn into pieces or hard, buttery cookies

Note: For thicker soup, use 2½ cups whole milk and 2½ cups half and half

Stir ½ cup of the milk and the flour together in a small bowl until smooth.

Bring the remaining 4½ cups milk just to the simmer in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Ladle 1 cup of the simmering milk over the chocolate in a heatproof bowl; let sit for a minute then whisk to dissolve the chocolate. Stir the chocolate mixture into the simmering milk. Re-stir the flour mixture to ensure that all the flour is mixed with the milk; stir into the chocolate mixture. Stir in the sugar, butter and cinnamon. Return the chocolate mixture to a simmer and cook, stirring, until thickened and smooth, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand a minute or two. Ladle the soup into warm bowls and pass the brioche, panettone or cookies for dunking separately. Serve 6

Chocolate Martini:

Ice cubes

2 ounces vodka

2 ounces crème de cacao or chocolat  liqueur

Chocolate shavings, white chocolate curl or chocolate truffle for garnish

Fill a mixing glass or tumbler three-fourths full with ice. Add vodka and cr me de cacao; stir until condensation forms on outside of glass. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish as desired. Enjoy!

DINNER:

Chocolate-Chipotle Sirloin Steak

3 tablespoons baking cocoa

2 tablespoons chopped chipotle peppers in adobo sauce

4 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

2 teaspoons brown sugar

½ teaspoon salt

1½ pounds beef top sirloin steak

Place the first 5 ingredients in a blender, cover and process until blended. Rub over beef. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

Grill beef, covered, over medium heat or broil 4 inches from heat for 8 to 10 minutes on each side or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, an instant read thermometer should read 135-degrees; 140-degrees for medium, and 145-degrees for medium-well) Remove from grill/oven, allow to sit for several minutes then thinly slice and serve.
Serves 4

Chicken Mole:

12 bone-in chicken thighs (about 4½ pounds), skin removed
1 teaspoon salt

Mole Sauce:

1 can (28 ounces) whole tomatoes, drained
1 medium onion, chopped
2 dried ancho chilies, stems and seeds removed
½ cup sliced almonds, toasted
¼ cup raisins
3 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce
3 garlic cloves, peeled and halved
¾ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
Fresh cilantro leaves, optional

Sprinkle chicken with salt, place in a 5 or 6-quart slow cooker. Place the tomatoes, onion, chilies, almonds, raisins, chocolate, oil, chipotle pepper, garlic, cumin and cinnamon in a food processor, cover and process until blended. Pour this over the chicken.

Cover and cook the chicken on low for 6 – 8 hours or until chicken is tender; skim fat. Serve chicken with sauce and sprinkle with cilantro, if desired. This recipe serves six, two thighs per person.

Chocolate Molasses Pork Roast:

½ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup maple syrup
¼ cup beef broth
¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
¼ cup ketchup
¼ cup molasses
2 tablespoons baking cocoa
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons onion powder
¾ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon ground mustard
1 boneless pork loin roast (4 – 5 pounds)
3 tablespoons cornstarch

In a small bowl, mix the first 12 ingredients. Cut roast in half; place in a 5 – 6 quart slow cooker. Pour sauce over top. Cover and cook on low for 6 – 8 hours or until meat is tender.

Remove pork to a serving platter; keep warm. Skim fat from cooking juices. Transfer juices to a small saucepan; bring to a boil. In a small bowl, mix cornstarch and water until smooth; gradually stir into pan; return to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until the sauce thickens. Serve over slices of the pork. This recipe serves 8 to 10 servings

Slow-Cooked Caribbean Pot Roast:

2 medium sweet potatoes, cubed
2 large carrots, sliced
¼ cup chopped celery

1 boneless beef chuck roast (2 – 2 ½ pounds)
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon white sugar
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 teaspoon cumin
¾ teaspoon salt
¾ teaspoon ground coriander
¾ teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon dried oregano
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
¾ teaspoon grated orange zest
¾ teaspoon baking cocoa
1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce

Place the potatoes, carrots and celery in a 5 – 6 quart slow cooker. In a large skillet, brown meat in oil on all sides. When browned, transfer beef to slow cooker.

In the same skillet as the beef was browned, sauté onion in drippings until tender. Add garlic, cook 1 minute longer. Now combine the flour, white sugar, brown sugar, seasonings, orange zest and cocoa. Stir in tomato sauce; mix everything together to combine all ingredients. Transfer this to the slow cooker and cook on low until the beef and vegetables are tender, 6 to 8 hours. Remove beef, allow to rest a few minutes, then slice and serve with vegetables and sauce. Serves 8 to 10

Steak au Poivre for 2:

2 beef tenderloin steaks (1 inch thick and 5 ounces each)
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 tablespoon whole white or black peppercorns, crushed
¼ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot

¼ cup port wine
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
¼ cup condensed beef consommé, undiluted
1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary or ¼ teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
½ ounce bittersweet chocolate, chopped

Rub steaks with 1 tablespoon oil; sprinkle with peppercorns and salt. In a skillet, heat 2 teaspoons oil over medium heat. Add steaks; cook 5 -7 minutes on each side or until an instant read thermometer reaches desired doneness. For medium-rare—135-degrees; medium- 140-degrees; and medium-well – 145-degrees. Remove steaks and place on a plate and keep warm.

In the same pan, heat remaining oil over medium-high heat. Add shallot; cook and stir about 1 minute or until tender. Add wine and vinegar, stirring to loosen browned bits from pan. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 2-3 minutes or until slightly thickened.

Stir in consommé and rosemary; bring to a boil. Add chocolate, cook and stir until melted and sauce is slightly thickened. Spoon finished sauce over steaks and enjoy.

Smoky Espresso Steak:

3 teaspoons instant espresso powder
2 teaspoons brown sugar
1½ teaspoons smoked or regular paprika
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking cocoa
¼ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 pound beef flat iron or top sirloin steak (¾ inch thick)

Preheat broiler. Mix first 7 ingredients; rub over both sides of steak. Place steak on a broiler pan; let stand 10 minutes.

Broil steak 3-4 inches from heat, 4 – 5 minutes on each side or until meat reaches desired doneness. (135-degrees for medium-rare, 140-degrees for medium, 145-degrees for medium well) Allow the steaks to stand for 5 to 8 minutes before slicing. This recipe serves 4

Chicken and Olive Mole Casserole:

2 large onions, finely chopped, divided
3 tablespoons olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
5 tablespoons chili powder
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 ½ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
½ ounce semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
6 cups shredded cooked chicken
12 corn tortillas (6 inches) warmed
1 cup sliced pimiento-stuffed olives
4 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese

In a large saucepan, sauté 1 cup onion in oil until tender. Reduce heat to low. Add the garlic, salt, oregano, cumin and cinnamon; cover and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in chili powder and flour until blended. Gradually stir in broth. Bring to a boil. Cook until mixture is reduced to 3 cups, about 35 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in chocolate.

In a large bowl, combine chicken and ½ cup sauce. Spread ½ cup sauce into a greased 13 x 9-inch baking dish. Layer with half the tortillas, chicken mixture, remaining onion and olives; top with 1 cup sauce and 2 cups cheese; Repeat layers.

Cover and bake at 375-degrees for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 10 – 15 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 10 minutes prior to serving. This recipe serves 8

Cocoa-Crusted Beef Tenderloin:

4 beef tenderloin steaks (1 to 1½ inches thick and 6 ounces each)
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon coarsely ground pepper
3 tablespoons baking cocoa
3 tablespoons finely ground coffee

Preheat broiler. Sprinkle steaks with salt and pepper. In a shallow bowl, mix cocoa and coffee. Dip steaks in cocoa mixture to coat all sides; shake off excess.

Place steaks on a rack of a broiler pan. Broil 3-4 inches from heat, 9 – 11 minutes on each side. (For medium-rare – 135-degrees, medium – 140-degrees; and medium-well – 145-degrees) Allow steaks to sit for a few minutes prior to serving. This recipe serves 4

Rosemary – Rubbed Filet Mignon with Chocolate Port Reduction

½ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
2 teaspoon fresh rosemary, minced
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ teaspoon salt
2 (5 oz. each) filet mignons, trimmed
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

For the sauce:

6 oz. good-quality port wine
¼ cup reduced sodium beef stock
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, minced
½ tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 oz. 72% dark chocolate
1 teaspoon butter
Salt and pepper to taste

Fleur de Sel salt and fresh rosemary sprigs for garnish

Preheat the oven to 400-degrees. In a small bowl, mix together the pepper, 2 tsp. minced rosemary, mustard, garlic powder and salt. Pat the filets dry and season on both sides with the rub.

Over medium heat in a nonstick or cast-iron skillet, heat the oil. Add the beef filets and sear until golden brown on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer the filets to a baking pan and bake until an instant read thermometer reads to your desired cooking temperature – I suggest an internal temperature of 140-degrees, which would be medium.

Prepare the sauce – While the steaks finish in the oven, put the port, beef stock and 1 tsp minced rosemary into the pan the steaks were cooked in; increase heat to medium-high. Scrape up any beef bits from the pan and cook until reduced to a light-syrup. Turn off the heat; stir in the balsamic vinegar, chocolate, butter and salt and pepper until the chocolate and butter melt.

Remove the steaks from the oven and transfer to serving plates. Drizzle with the sauce and garnish with a pinch of fleur de Sel and fresh rosemary. This recipe serves 2 very luck folks.