

Spring In Italy

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Spinach Stuffed Mushrooms

Makes 10

Ingredients

Mushrooms

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 10 white button mushroom caps, stems removed and reserved
- salt and pepper
- 2 Tbs balsamic vinegar

Stuffing

- 1 Tbs olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 small yellow onion, peeled and finely diced
- 1/2 pound (8 oz) fresh spinach, finely chopped OR frozen thawed and squeezed dry salt and pepper
- mushroom stems, finely chopped 1 Tbs fresh thyme leaves
- 2 Tbs plain or Italian bread crumbs
- ¼ cup vegetable stock
- ¼ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, divided(for topping)

Directions

Preheat oven to 375F.

In a large nonstick skillet, over medium heat, add the olive oil and the mushroom caps.

Season with salt and pepper. Cook about 2 minutes on each side. Add the balsamic vinegar to the pan and allow the vinegar to cook and glaze the mushrooms. Transfer the mushrooms, stem side down, to a paper towel covered baking sheet to drain.

Return the skillet to the stove and add the oil, garlic and onion. Saute 3 minutes or until soft. Add the spinach and cook to wilt. Add the chopped mushroom stems. Season with salt, pepper and thyme. Add the breadcrumbs and dampen with the vegetable stock, adding a tablespoon at a time. Add 2 Tbs grated cheese to the stuffing mixture. Remove the paper towel and turn mushrooms over. Using a tablespoon, fill each mushroom cap and top with extra grated cheese. Place in the oven for 5 minutes to set the filling.

Platter and serve.

Serves 4

Salmon Puttanesca

Ingredients

- 4 (6-ounce) salmon fillets, skin and pin bones removed Sea salt and freshly cracked black pepper
- Olive oil
- 1 cup diced yellow onion, approximately 1 medium onion
- 2 tablespoons capers
- 1/4 cup, rough chopped pitted kalamata olives, or mixed Italian olives 1 teaspoon minced anchovies
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 pint mixed colored snacking cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/2 lemon, juiced
- 1 tablespoon julienned basil, plus whole sprigs, for garnish
- 1 tablespoon chopped Italian parsley leaves
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

Season the salmon steaks with salt and pepper on all sides. In a large nonstick saute pan, over medium high heat, add 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. When the oil is hot and shimmering add the salmon fillets. If your pan doesn't fit all 4 fillets, cook 2 at a time.

Cook for 3 minutes to get a crust, then turn over, lower the heat to medium and cook for about 5 minutes. Remove the fillets to a plate and loosely tent with aluminum foil to keep warm.

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the same pan used for the salmon, over high heat. When the oil is hot add the onions, capers, olives and anchovies. Stir often until the onions are just starting to caramelize and turn a golden brown. Add the garlic and red pepper flakes and saute for 2 minutes more. Stir in the tomatoes, red wine vinegar and the lemon juice. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 3 to 4 minutes. Adjust the seasoning.. Stir in the basil and parsley and remove from heat.

Spoon the puttanesca sauce in the center of the plate. Place the salmon fillet atop the sauce and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Radicchio & Citrus Salad with Mozzarella

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup slivered blanched almonds
- 1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt, plus more
- 1 8-ounce ball of fresh mozzarella cheese
- 6 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 3 medium oranges, peeled, sliced into rounds
- 1 large head of radicchio, cut in half, leaves separated 2 tablespoons or red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon herbes de Provence (if you don't have this dried herb blend, you can substitute fresh thyme or parsley)

Directions

Toast almonds in a dry medium skillet over medium heat, tossing often, until beginning to brown in spots, about 3 minutes. Add 1 tsp. sugar, ¼ tsp. salt, and 2 Tbsp. water. Remove from heat and stir with a heatproof rubber spatula until water is evaporated. Sprinkle in remaining 1 Tbsp. sugar and stir until almonds are coated. Transfer to a plate and let cool.

Slice the ball of mozzarella in half. Cut each half into 8 ½ moon slices. Toss oranges, radicchio leaves, vinegar, and remaining 4 Tbsp. oil in a large bowl to combine; season with salt.

Arrange 4 pieces of mozzarella on 4 salad plates, and drizzle with the oil and sprinkle with salt and herbes de Provence; top with salad. Scatter almonds over.