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COOKBOOK

VOLUME 02







TRAVEL EDITION

CUMULUS

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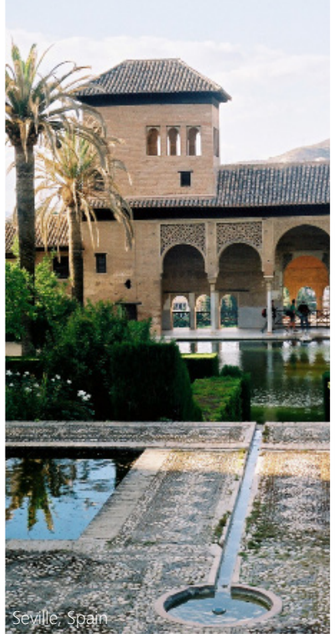
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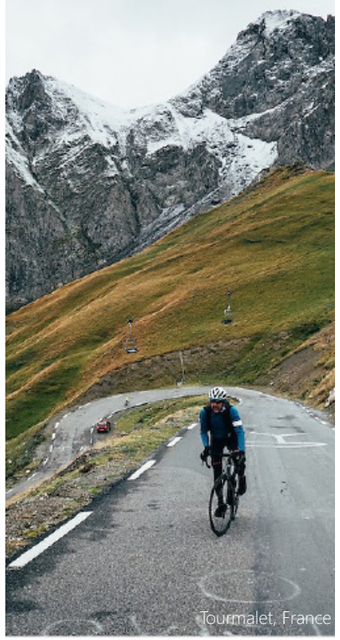

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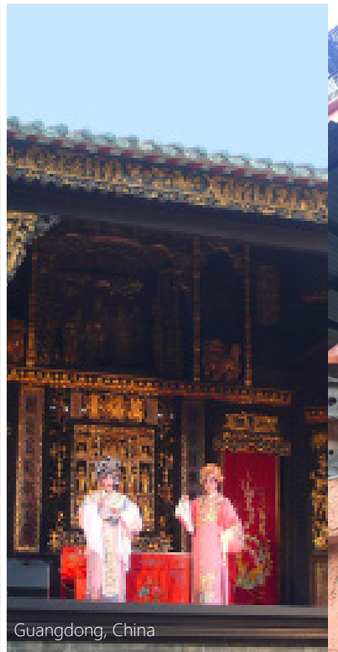

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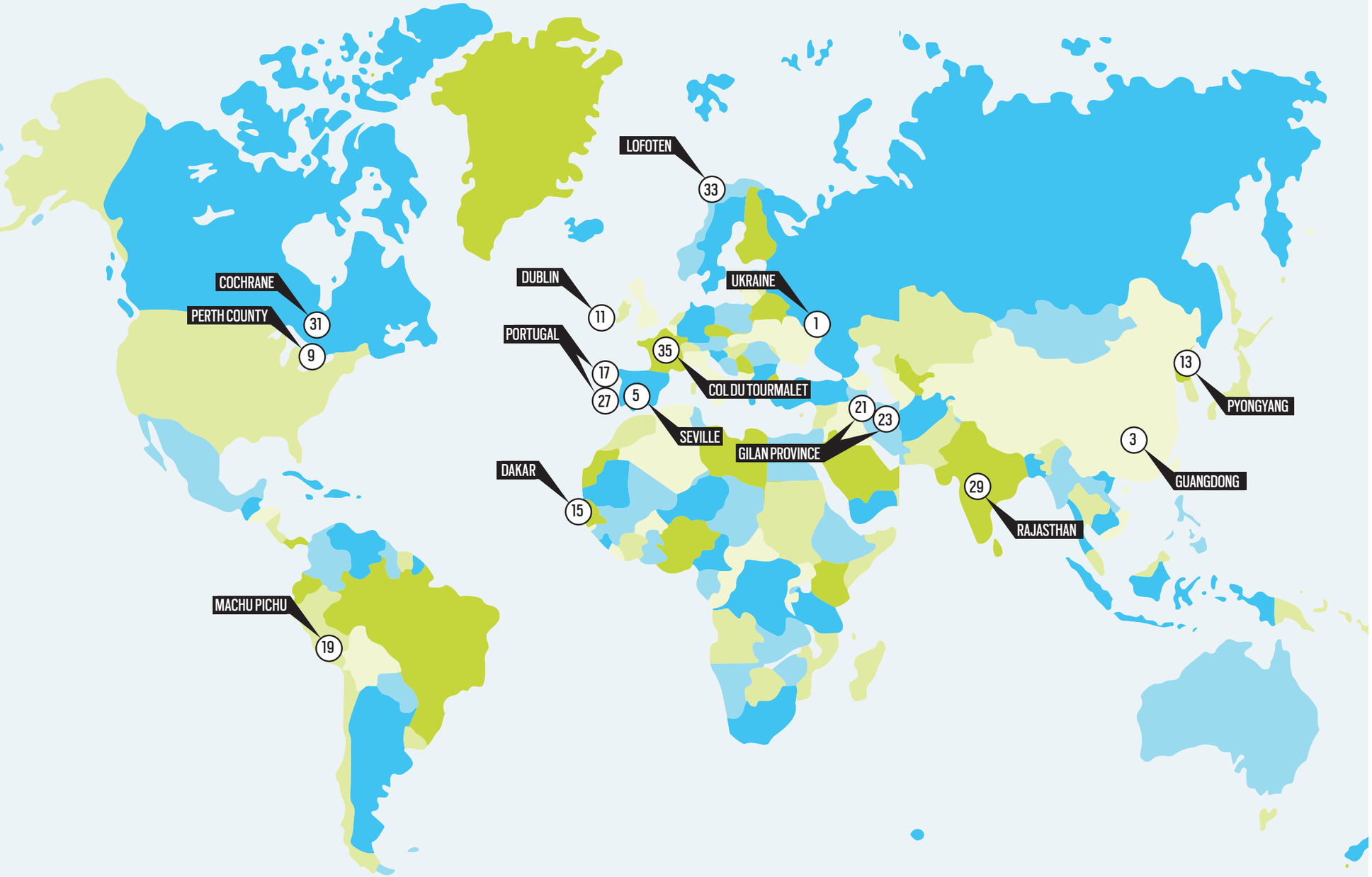
ABOUT

After a start to the decade marked by quarantine and limited travel, who hasn't been using food as an escape?

This year Cumulus shares the recipes and stories that remind us of faraway family, memorable vacations and the distant places we daydreamed about while borders were closed. Join us on a culinary journey all over the globe with the second annual Cumulus Cookbook:
Travel Edition!

"I am not a glutton–I am an explorer of food."
- Erma Bombeck

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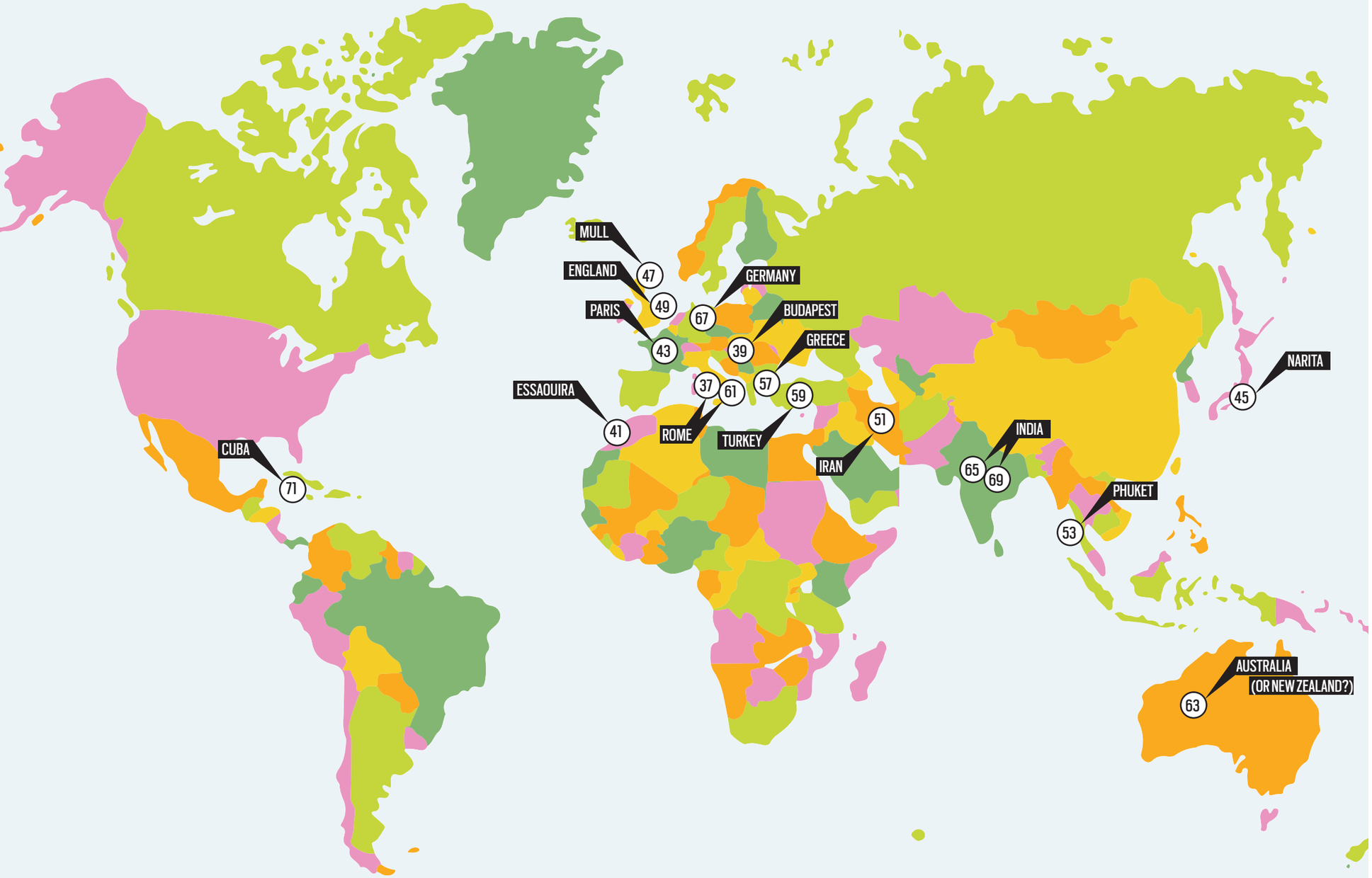
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BORSCHT

For the love of beets

In the cold winter
There is a radiator
Do eternal stew

temperature: served hot or cold

prep time: 30 min

cook time: 1 h

serves: 4-6

what

3 cups Water
3 Medium beets, peeled, and julienned
2 tbsp Vegetable oil or olive oil
1 Large onion, peeled and diced
3 Carrots peeled and diced
2 Roma Tomatoes, diced
2 Yellow potatoes, big cubes
Herbs and spices (salt, bay leaf, black pepper, thyme) to taste
½ Small red cabbage – thinly sliced
2 Cloves of garlic (or more if you want)
4 tbsp Chopped dill (have some more on hand to garnish)
½ cup Plain Yoghurt
1/3 cup Tomato paste
Sour cream to garnish

how

In a large pot, start boiling the water.

Sauté onions and carrots until tender and fragrant on medium-low heat in a separate saucepan.

Dump onions and carrots into water after sautéing and add beets once the water starts boiling again, bring it down to a simmer for a few minutes.

Add tomatoes, potatoes, spices, and continue simmering until potatoes are tender. Add cabbage and simmer until it has the consistency you like – crunchy or soft.

In the meantime, chop the garlic, dill in the food processor, whisk in the yoghurt at the end.

When the cabbage is the way you like it, add tomato paste and the garlic-dill-yoghurt mixture. Return the pot to a simmer, then cover the pot, turn the heat off, and let the flavours mingle for at least 30 mins.

When ready to serve, ladle into bowls and top the soup with a dollop of sour cream and dill.



CHANG FEN

Rice noodle roll or Chang Fen originated in Guangdong, China. Chang Fen is on the menu of every Dim Sum restaurant. It is the most popular item apart from the famous triumvirate of dim sum quintessential- Shrimp Dumpling, Shumai, and Char Siu Bao.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
100 °C	20 min	40 min	2

what

150g Rice Flour
150g Tapioca Starch
30g Corn Starch
450g Water
1 tbsp Vegetable Oil
1/2 Teaspoon Salt
1/2 tsp Cooking Wine
250g Shrimp
1/4 tsp White Pepper Powder
3 tsp Soy Sauce
1 tsp Rock Sugar
1/3 cup Water
1 Scallion, chopped finely
1/2 inch Ginger

how

Prepare Shrimp:
Marinate the shrimp with cooking wine, white pepper powder

Make the Sauce:
Combine soy sauce, rock sugar, water, scallion and ginger.

Prepare Batter and Make Rice Noodle Roll:
Mix the rice flour, tapioca starch, corn starch, salt, vegetable oil, and water in a container.

Set up the steaming station.

Apply some oil onto the baking pan, or you can use a non-stick pan instead.

Measure 100g of the batter. It is the amount required for an 8"x8" square pan. Make sure you stir the batter before pouring it every time because the flour and starch will sink to the bottom quickly.

Bring the water to boil.

Pour the batter into the pan. Adjust the level of the pan so that the batter is equally distributed.

Add shrimp to one side of the batter. You do not need to wait until it is solidified before adding the ingredients. It should be a single layer so that the filling is embedded firmly into the noodle sheet.

Cover and steam for 2 minutes or until the rice sheet become translucent.

Remove the pan from the steamer with a steamer gripper.

Let cool for half a minute, then push the noodle sheet with the dough scraper to roll up the noodle.

Place it on the serving dish and douse with the sauce. Serve.



GRETCHEN'S SUN-RIPENED GAZPACHO

I've always loved gazpacho and when I went to Spain a few summers back I was able to indulge every day. The best ones where hidden deep in the mercados at small stalls and café countertops. During the pandemic I travelled back to Spain by perfecting the recipe. It is best made when you have access to a bounty of sun ripened tomatoes.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
refrigerated	20 min	chilling	6

* (ideally romano, no beefsteak)
If its early in the season, add a red pepper for sweetness

what

2 pounds ripe red tomatoes*, cored and roughly cut into chunks
1 Italian frying or cubanelle pepper cored, seeded and roughly cut into chunks (do not use a bell pepper)
1 long cucumber peeled and roughly cut into chunks
1 small mild onion (white or red), peeled and roughly cut into chunks
1 clove garlic, peeled
To taste sherry vinegar (vinagre de jerez)
Salt (to taste)
⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling

how

Combine tomatoes, pepper, cucumber, onion and garlic in a blender or, if using a hand blender, in a deep bowl. (If necessary, work in batches.) Blend at high speed until very smooth, at least 2 minutes, pausing occasionally to scrape down the sides with a rubber spatula.

With the motor running, add some vinegar and some salt. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil. The mixture will turn bright orange or dark pink and become smooth and emulsified. If it still seems watery, drizzle in more olive oil until texture is creamy.

Transfer to a large pitcher and chill until cold.

Before serving, adjust the seasonings with salt and vinegar. If soup is very thick, stir in a few tablespoons ice water. Serve in glasses, over ice if desired, or in a bowl.

For a thicker soup: When blending, add a slice of stale white bread.



PAUL'S TRADITIONAL ANDALUSIAN GAZPACHO

Imagine Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef, Eli Wallach and Sergio Leone sipping on this wonderful chilled soup as they discuss the final cemetery scene in the 1966 film The Good the Bad and the Ugly. Cork tree forests, the bull ring in Ronda, Flamenco and the Alcazar in Seville... Spain rocks!

temperature:	prep time:	chilling time:	serves:
refrigerated	20 min	3 h	4

what

1 Piece Dry White Bread
½ cup Water
2 Garlic Cloves
2 tsp Salt
2 tbsp Sherry Vinegar From Jerez
1 tsp Sugar
½ tsp Ground Cumin
2½ lb Ripe Tomatoes Quartered
½ cup Andalusian Hojiblanca (Mild Extra-Virgin Olive Oil)

Garnish:
Finely Chopped Sweet Red And Green Pepper

how

Soak bread in 1/2 cup water 1 minute, then squeeze dry, discarding soaking water.

Mash garlic to a paste with salt using a mortar and pestle (or mince and mash with a large knife). Blend garlic paste, bread, 2 tablespoons vinegar, sugar, cumin, and half of tomatoes in a food processor until tomatoes are very finely chopped. Add remaining tomatoes with motor running and, when very finely chopped, gradually add oil in a slow stream, blending until as smooth as possible, about 1 minute.

Force soup through a sieve into a bowl, pressing firmly on solids. Discard solids.

Transfer to a glass container and chill, covered, until cold, about 3 hours.

Queue up the Ennio Morricone, season with salt and vinegar, and serve cold.



GRAMMIE STARRATT'S POTATO STUFFING

Taking the big trip west down the 401, deep into the fertile hinterlands of Southern Ontario, I can't help but think of the family classic recipe and salivate.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
350 F	30 min	1 hour	10-12

what

5-6 Potatoes (depending on the size of the turkey
2-4 Onions, sliced
Butter
Milk
Savory
Pepper
Salt
Breadcrumbs, dry toasted*

how

Boil potatoes cut into large cubes until cooked. Drain and mash.

Add a lump of butter and enough milk so it's a bit sloppy. Stir in onions, enough savory so the potatoes take on a greyish tinge, pepper and salt to taste. Add breadcrumbs until the mixture is stiff.

Bake at 350°F until the edges are browned, approx. 1 hour (if not using to stuff a turkey).

* Grammie's traditional recipe uses store-bought, fine dry breadcrumbs. This gives a more glue-y texture. Alternatively, use a loaf of 100% wholewheat bread from the reduced for quick sale rack. Lay out the slices in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Toast at a low temperature until the bread is golden and brittle. Use the coarse grating blade on a food processor to break the bread into crumbs.



BROWN SODA BREAD

Soda bread is very easy to make; anyone without previous breadmaking skills can do it. This bread is found everywhere in Ireland. It's a dense bread, wonderful served with smoked salmon! The best soda bread I've tasted was after an overnight flight to Dublin at Viola's Restaurant, served with a great Irish breakfast.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
375 F	5 min	1 h	1 loaf

* Warm buttermilk will activate the soda prematurely and prevent the bread from rising. 2% buttermilk is better if you can find it.

what

Butter for greasing
4 cups sifted whole wheat flour, preferably Irish
I cup sifted unbleached white flour, preferably Irish
½ cup Irish steel-cut oatmeal
I tsp baking soda
I tsp salt
2 to 2½ cups cold buttermilk*

how

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Grease a baking sheet and set aside.

Mix the wheat flour, white flour, oatmeal, baking soda, and salt together in a large bowl.
Make a well in the middle of the flour mixture and gradually pour in the buttermilk, stirring with a wooden spoon from the center to the edge of the bowl. The dough should be soft but not too wet, with no raw flour left. (This will probably take about 2 cups of buttermilk, but use more or less if necessary.)

Turn the dough out onto a floured board. Flour your hands lightly, then shape the dough into a flat round about 3 in. thick. Don't knead the dough very much. Cut a deep cross in the top of the loaf with a wet or floured knife.

Transfer the loaf to a baking sheet and bake for 45 to 60 minutes, or until nicely browned and the bottom of the loaf sounds hollow when tapped. Don't underbake!



MUL NAENGMYEON (ICY NOODLE SOUP)

A road trip from Calgary to Toronto sounds bucolic, until it's sweltering July in a poorly air-conditioned Dodge Caravan. After flying through the prairies eating mostly freezies and French fries, we took a few days to unwind in Chicago where I found this recipe and was immediately transported. The soup of thin chewy noodles, beef slices and crunchy toppings in a chilled tangy broth is a modern Korean summer favourite, but tastes just as refreshing here in Toronto. I've made it every summer since!*

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
cold as possible	1.5 h	1 h	2

*Mul-naengmyeon was traditionally served as a winter dish in Pyongyang!

what

½ lb Beef brisket
1 Tbsp Soy sauce
1 Tbsp Sugar
1 tsp Salt
2 tsp Distilled white vinegar

Noodles and Toppings:
1 Kirby cucumber (short & lumpy pickling cukes)
1 tsp Distilled white vinegar
½ tsp Salt
1 tsp Sugar
1 pinch Gochujang chili flakes (optional)
2 Tbsp Dry mustard powder
8 oz Naengmyeon (thin buckwheat noodles)
2 Hardboiled eggs, halved
1 Asian pear, peeled and sliced into thin crescents
Ice (optional)

how

Place brisket in a saucepan with 8 cups of water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a gentle simmer and cook for 1 hour, skimming foam as needed. Remove brisket and chill, loosely covered. Let broth stand for 5 minutes then strain into a bowl, discarding any sediment. Stir soy sauce, sugar and salt into broth, then chill until very cold.

Toss cucumbers with vinegar, salt, sugar, and optional chili flakes, and let sit for 10 minutes.

Cook noodles according to packet instructions, then rinse vigorously with cold water until chilled.

To serve, mound the noodles in two bowls and top each with thin slices of brisket, pickled cucumbers, pear slices and egg halves. Skim off any fat from the broth and stir in some ice (for really hot days). Stir in the remaining 2 tsp vinegar and season to taste with reserved cucumber pickling liquid. Ladle into bowls. Stir in mustard paste to desired spiciness and serve.



NDAMBE

Dakar is a place I've been wanting to visit for years, a bustling cosmopolitan city jutting into the Atlantic Ocean on Africa's western tip. There are a few Senegalese restaurants in Toronto where you can find a taste of this city. One simple dish I like to make at home is Ndambe; a hearty stew often eaten on bread as a breakfast. It makes for a good late-night snack when you can't get to Dakar for breakfast.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
simmer	5	1.25 h	4

what

1 cup Black-eyed peas
1 Onion, chopped
¼ cup Vegetable oil
1-2 cloves Garlic
2 tsps Chili powder
1 tsp Smoked paprika
1 Tbsp White vinegar
2 Tbsp Tomato paste
1 cup Broth or water
1 Baguette

how

Boil black-eyed peas for about an hour until tender, then drain the water. (this can be done ahead of time).

Heat the oil in a pan, and add chili powder and smoked paprika. Stir and allow to bloom until fragrant (any spices can be substituted).

Add chopped onion and cook for about 5 minutes, until translucent, then add garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Create a well in the pan and add tomato paste for 1-2 minutes. Then stir to combine.

Add broth, cooked black-eyed peas, and vinegar. Stir to combine, and let simmer for 15 minutes, adding more water if necessary.

Spread the cooked mixture on a baguette and serve warm. Optionally add a sliced boiled egg, greens, or hot sauce.



SALADA DE POLVO

Present in almost every coffee shop and 'tasca', in the South of Portugal this recipe is often prepared with cilantro instead of parsley.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
n/a	45 mins	20 mins	4

what

2 lb Octopus, Frozen
2 Medium-sized onions (1, unpeeled + 1 , minced)
1 bunch fresh parsley, chopped
4 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp vinegar
Salt and Pepper

Wine:
Casal de Sta. Maria, Alvarinho White (Lisbon)

how

Cook frozen octopus in pressure cooker with 1 tbsp water and 1 unpeeled onion for 20 min. (from the time it reaches pressure) or in a pot over low heat until tender.

Drain and cut octopus in 1-inch pieces, then transfer to serving bowl.

Add minced onion and parsley. Then stir in olive oil and vinegar, and lastly season with salt and pepper. Serve cold.



SOPA D'EL CAMINO INCA

The trip to Peru, and Cusco the ancestral home of the Quechua and the Inca dynasties, introduced us to some of the best soups we've ever tasted. With quinoa and potatoes as the base and light broths, they were outstanding. The best was prepared by one of the porters during our 4 day hike of the trail. Along with carrying kilos of gear and food, running in flip-flops, Diego was a mean-trail cook.
His recipe is an interpretation of a traditional version with added protein to satisfy hungry hikers. Easily adapted for your inner vegan.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
n/a	20 min	40 - 50 min	4 hungry hikers

TIP
For added fun, include corn on cob chopped into ½" slices or sweet potato, fava or white beans.
For a vegan version, just omit the chicken thighs. Easy-peasy.

what

4 - 6 chicken thighs – skinless bone-in for broth (omit if vegan)
1 Small onion chopped
1 teaspoon Cumin
1 tbsp Vegetable oil
3 ounces Dried quinoa
2 stalks Celery, chopped
2 Large carrots, chopped into ½" cubes
2 Medium leeks
¼ Medium white cabbage chopped like carrots
2 Large potatoes skin on, chopped to ¾" cubes
1 ½ teaspoon Fresh minced garlic
5 - 6 Cups of water
1 teaspoon Cumin
2 tsp Aji amarillo yellow chili paste (optional)
¼ cup fresh cilantro and parsley for garnish
As needed Salt and cracked pepper

how

Heat oil in large pot to medium heat; add onions and sauté till golden. Add cumin and cook for 3-4 mins.

Add thighs and cook for 4 – 5 mins.

Add quinoa; add water and bring to boil. Simmer on medium – high heat for 10 -15 mins. Add potatoes at halfway point.

At about 20 – 25 minutes of total cooking, add the garlic, remaining vegetables and the chili paste.

Cook for another 15 mins and until carrots are tender .

Add salt & cracked pepper to taste. Take chicken off the bone and discard them. Serve with a dollop of cilantro/parsley.



ZEYTOON PARVARDEH

Some translations call it 'Persian marinated olive'. Others refer to it as 'Pomegranate, walnut and olive dish'. No matter how it is translated, Zeytoon Parvardeh offers a delectable taste with a succulent and crunchy texture. Originating from Gilan province in northern Iran, it is commonly served as an appetizer or as a side-dish with any food. For me, Zeytoon Parvardeh is a reminder of dinner parties at our home growing up in Iran. Because of our Gilani heritage (father's side), my parents often made it as a side dish or as a chaser for Persian Vodka (argh-sagi).

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
n/a	20 min	n/a	10-15

what

5 Tbsp Pomegranate molasses
3 cloves Garlic, grated
1-1/2 cup Crushed walnut
2 Tbsp Extra-virgin olive oil
16 ounces Unflavoured and pitted green olives, drained
1 Tbsp Finely chopped mint
2 Tbsp Finely chopped cilantro
½ tsp Ground oregano
½ tsp Optional: Ground Persian Hogweed [golpar]
½ cup Pomegranate juice
¼ cup Pomegranate seeds

how

Combine in a bowl pomegranate juice, herbs, garlic, crushed walnut, pomegranate molasses and olive oil. Stir to mix into a thick paste.

Add olives and pomegranate seeds and stir the mix.

Transfer to a jar, seal and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving. Garnish with fresh pomegranate seeds and mint leaves.

Note: It can be served after a few hours of marination. But for a more refined taste, refrigerate for 5-7 days before serving.



DEL DUKUNEH

This flavorful amazing dish is from north of Iran, Gilan province. It is rarely known in any other place than rural local cuisines and by old nanas in Gilan Province. It is a vegetarian appetizer so rich in nutrients that it could be also served as the main dish with a side of rice. The herbs in the original recipe come from the very local mountains and cannot be found elsewhere; though I tried to come up with a replacement that recreates the flavours.

temperature: med-high stovetop

prep time: 30 min

cook time: 45 min

serves: 6

what

6 Chinese Eggplants
½ Cup Vegetable Oil
1 Cup Chopped Cilantro
2 Cups Walnuts
5 Cloves Garlic
½ Cup Pomegranate Paste
1 Tsp Tumeric
Salt & Pepper
1 Cup Water

how

Prep the stuffing: Add the cilantro, walnuts, garlic, pomegranate paste, turmeric, salt & pepper in the food processor. Mix everything until it turns to a soft creamy paste. Separate in two halves and keep it aside.

Prep the Eggplant: Peel the eggplants and do NOT trim the stem off. Open up a groove lengthwise on the eggplant. Do NOT cut deep and make sure you only cut it halfway.

Soak the eggplants in a big bowl with water and salt for half an hour. Remove from the water and dry up the eggplants with a clean paper towel.

Add the oil in a big non-stick pan and put it on medium-high heat, sauté the eggplants on all sides until they turn nice and golden. Remove from the heat and let it cool down for a few minutes.

Stuff and cook: Take half of the stuffing and spread equally inside the eggplants with a spoon or fork. Set the eggplants in the same pan and put it on medium-low heat. Mix rest of the stuffing with one cup of water and add it to the pan. Cover and simmer for half an hour or just until it's nicely soft and cooked. Serve it with the sauce and enjoy!





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ALENTEJO-STYLE PORK FILLET WITH CLAMS

The wine and garlic marinade used in this dish, the famous 'vinha d'alho', was taken by the Portuguese to India, where it was changed into 'vindaloo'.

temperature: med-high

prep time: 3 hours

cook time: 45 minutes

serves: 4

what

1 ½ lb Pork fillet in 1-inch cubes
1 lb Clams, thoroughly washed
6 Medium-sized potatoes for frying, diced
4 cloves Garlic, minced
½ cup White wine
½ cup Extra-virgin olive oil
Frying oil
2 tbsp Lard
4 tbsp Paprika paste OR
1 level tbsp Paprika powder
½ bunch Fresh cilantro, chopped
2 Bay leaves
Salt and pepper

Wine:
Vinha da Tapada, Red (Alentejo)

how

Season fillet with garlic, bay leaves, pepper, salt and paprika paste/powder, blending well.

Pour white wine, cover and leave to marinate for a few hours.

In a deep skillet, heat olive oil and lard, then add fillet. Let it brown, stirring from time to time.

When meat is tender, add clams, cover and wait for them to open.

Deep fry potatoes in a separate pan and add to fillet. Sprinkle with cilantro and serve.



BANJARA GOSHT (MUTTON CURRY)

"KHAMAGHANI"

Special greetings from Rajasthan. While I was travelling with my family to the city of lakes, Udaipur, we stayed at one of the most celebrated Heritage Hotels - Taj Lake Palace. Located in the middle of Lake Pichola, this Palace and the authentic Indian Hospitality gave us an exquisite experience of a lifetime. While we were enjoying this delectable meal, the hotel chef presented one of his recipe books that compiles Rajasthani delicacies. This picturesque memory of India with my family will stay with me always.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
300°F	15 min	55 min	8

what

1000 gms mutton (Curry Cut)
100 ml Ghee (Clarified Butter)
100 gms onion
50 gms garlic paste
50 gms ginger paste
2 tbsp deggi chilli powder (Red Paparika)
2 tbsp coriander powder
1/2 tbsp turmeric powder
50 ml churned thick curd
5 gms coriander seed (crushed), roasted
5 gms cloves
5 gms whole black peppercorns
2 Dry red chilli
1 Cinnamon stick
1 tbsp black salt
2 Bay Leaves

how

Heat Ghee in a wok up to 300°F (140–150°C), add bay leaves, peppercorns, cloves, cinnamon stick and dry red chilies and temper for a minute.

Add chopped onions and cook well until it turns into amber color and separates the oil.

Add ginger and garlic paste, stir & cook well for 5 minutes.
Add Deggi chilli powder, coriander powder, turmeric powder and black salt, cook well for another 5 minutes.

Add the mutton pieces to the Masala in the wok and cook well by covering the wok with lid for 10-15 minutes.

Now add the churned curd and cook it for another 10 minutes on low flame, till the meat gets cooked and soft in texture. Stir occasionally in between.

Garnish it with slit green chili and juliennes of ginger, Serve with Roti (Bread).



CHIP CHICKEN (POULET EN CROUSTILLES)

Born from the mines and mineral waters of Fletcher's Lake at the very end of Yonge Street, a Pre-Polar Express delicacy served in Cochrane, Ontario. Poulet en Croustilles is a sumptuous fusion of fat & trans-fat, a mouth-watering cacophony of salt & unsalted butter, producing delight, a hug from the inside.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
400 & 425 °F	20 min	38-42 min	2-4

Special thanks to Chef Lana Kershaw (Mother of Yung Alexander), Host Lex & Jim.

what

1 Bag Low Sodium Lays Chips
3-4 Chicken breasts (3 large or 4 small)
1 Stick Herb Butter

how

Preheat oven to 400°F & prepare parchment paper on a baking sheet/dish with a lip.

Cut chicken into ¾" - 1" thick strips.

Melt butter 30 sec. microwave, repeat as needed.

Crush chips: open bag and crush in bag, or in bowl. Pour into bowl/dish in preparation for coating.

Dip chicken into butter, then into chips, lightly pressing.

Place on baking sheet and repeat.

Bake at 400°F for 20 minutes.

Increase heat to 425°F & cook for about 20 more minutes, open oven to check every 5. (Settings may vary depending on oven.)

Serve with salad (or fries?!)



CLASSIC NORWEGIAN COD

This traditional Norwegian dish brings back memories of a trip to Lofoten Island, an archipelago north of the Arctic Circle off the Norwegian coast. The waters are turquoise, almost like you would see in the Caribbean. The cod comes straight out of the ocean and is put on racks to dry, the smell of drying cod is everywhere.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
220 °F	1 h 30 min	45 min	2-3

what

4 Cod Filets
1 Lemon
Butter
Salt

5 Hard Boiled Eggs
100 g Butter
0.5 cup Dill
Salt and pepper to taste

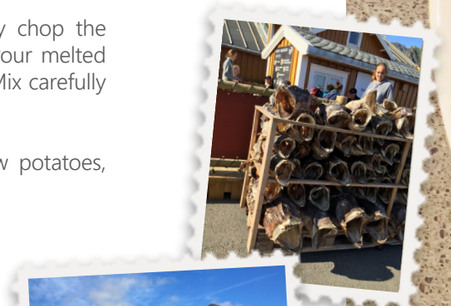
1 Horseradish
300 g Butter
2 Lemon
800 g Potatoes
0.5 cup Dill

how

Cod: Rinse and pat the cod filets dry. Sprinkle with salt and place lemon slices on top. Steam fish in a colander for 8-10 minutes.

Fried Butter and Dill With Egg: Coarsely chop the boiled eggs and place them in a bowl. Pour melted fried butter, chopped dill over the eggs. Mix carefully and add salt to taste.

Finishing Touches: Serve with boiled new potatoes, shredded horseradish and lemon slices.





COQ AU VIN (BLANC)

temperature: 400 F

prep time: 15 min

cook time: 1 hour

serves: 4-6

Coq au vin is the perfect comfort food as the weather turns colder. I always find myself drawn to French food and French wines that leave me daydreaming of going back to the country. From Wes Anderson's portrayal of the glorified Paris, to the rolling countryside of old vineyards and the country's long love affair with the bicycle. My next return to the country will involve climbing the Col du Tourmalet on bicycle as they do in the Tour de France and rewarding myself with all the food and wine. Until then, here is a less traditional coq au vin using white wine.

what

8 thighs or 6 breasts Chicken thighs or breasts – Bone in, Skin on

1 Sweet onion

4 Carrots

8oz container Mushrooms – any variety or a mix

2 cups White wine – Riesling works well, or something French

1 cup Cream

2 tbsp Mustard – French Dijon

¼ cup Parmesan and some to serve

A few sprigs Fresh thyme

1 tbsp Butter

how

Salt and pepper the chicken. Heat up an oven safe skillet on med-high heat. Sear the chicken for a few minutes on each side. Then remove from the skillet.

Add onion, carrots, mushrooms and butter to the skillet. Cook for about 10 minutes till the onions get soft.

Add white wine, cream, parmesan, and mustard. Bring to a boil.

Place chicken back into the sauce. Skin facing up just out of the liquid if possible.

Insert skillet/pot into a preheated 400 degree oven. Cook for about 30 minutes.

Serve with mashed potatoes or wild rice. Enjoy.



FUSILLI ALLA SALSICCIA

This is my favorite recipe from a well-known Italian pasta cookbook (circa 1980) that I was given while studying in Rome. The pasta sauce combines two ingredients that remind me simultaneously of studying in Italy and my honeymoon in Turkey where eggplant is adored.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
stovetop	10 min	30 min	2-3

what

400 gms Fusilli pasta
200 gms Italian sausage
50 gms Pancetta (or bacon)
1 Eggplant
1 Garlic clove
30 gms Italian parsley
200 gms Strained tomato
3 tbsp Olive oil
Salt and pepper
Parmesan cheese

how

Remove sausage skins and break sausage into small pieces. Combine with chopped pancetta in a large saucepan and brown in olive oil. (5-7 minutes).

Chop eggplant and parsley into small pieces, mince garlic clove and place in saucepan with strained tomato.

Add salt and pepper (to taste) and simmer at low heat for 30 min, stirring occasionally.

Cook fusilli pasta al dente (8-10 minutes).

Strain pasta and place with sauce in large bowl, mixing vigorously.

Serve immediately with generous quantities of freshly grated parmesan.



HUNGARIAN GOULASH WITH GROUND TURKEY

Budapest has everything – history, culture, food, and also the famous ruin bars. So many bars. While stumbling between these cool bars (in beautifully neglected pre-war buildings), we wanted something hot and delicious. I ordered the goulash and was afraid it would be too bland and meaty for my palate, but it was flavorful and lovely. I have swapped out the traditional beef chunks for ground turkey, but it still makes a hearty bowl perfect for Canadian winters.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
stovetop	15 min	45 min	2-3

what

2-3 tbsp Butter
1 lb Yellow Onions, chopped
1 lb Ground Turkey
2.5 tbsp Paprika or Hungarian Sweet Paprika
5 cloves Garlic, minced
2 Red Bell Peppers, seeded/membranes removed, cut into 1/2 inch chunks
1 Yellow Bell Pepper, seeded/membranes removed, cut into 1/2 inch chunks
2 Tomatoes, diced
2 Medium Potatoes, cut into ½ inch chunks
2-3 cups Chicken Broth
1 tsp Caraway Seeds
2 Bay Leaves
1 tsp Salt
½ tsp Freshly Ground Black Pepper
1.5 tbsp per serving Sour Cream

Optional: ½ lb Sliced Mushrooms, ½ 8 oz can Corn or Beans, 1 Green Chilli

how

Melt the butter in a Dutch oven over medium high heat and cook the onions until beginning to brown, about 7-10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the paprika.

Add the ground turkey and garlic, return to the heat, and cook for about 7 minutes, or until the turkey is no longer pink.

Add the bell peppers and green chilli (optional) cook for another 7-8 minutes. Add the tomatoes, potatoes, mushrooms, corn, broth, caraway seeds, bay leaf, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, cover, reduce the heat to medium, and simmer for 30 minutes. Add salt to taste.

Serve with a generous dollop of sour cream, some crusty bread, and a glass of dark beer (not optional).



MADADA BEEF TAJINE WITH ALMONDS AND DATES

This recipe is straight from l'Atelier Madada in Essaouira, Morocco where we spent the day picking ingredients at the spice souk, touring the 18th century Portuguese ramparts (famous for cinema buffs as the setting for Orson Welles' Othello) and preparing this amazing dish under the strict guidance of chef Mona.

temperature: medium heat

prep time: 30 min... plus some shopping at the spice souk

chilling time: 90 min

serves: 4





what

250g Beef
50g Almonds
4 large Dates
1 large Onion finely chopped
1 Garlic Clove (remove the green core) and paste
¼ tsp Ginger
¼ tsp Tumeric
¼ tsp Meat Spice Mix
Pinch of Saffron
1 Stick of Cinnamon
¼ tsp Cinnamon
2 tsp Powdered Sugar
1 Juniper Berry (crushed)
Pinch of Gum Arabic
Some Salt
1 tbsp Orange Blossom Water
1 tbsp Olive Oil
1 tbsp Unsalted Butter

how

Place the beef in a tajine with a finely chopped onion, chopped and pasted garlic clove, all the spices: ginger, turmeric, meat spice mix, a pinch of saffron, salt, a stick of cinnamon and 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Mix well so that the meat marinates.

On medium heat, open the tajine cover once it is hot to turn the beef. After 10 minutes of searing, turn the beef back over and check if the onions have made some sauce. If not, add some hot water on the side of the tajine and let the meat steam until tender.

Boil some water in a saucepan then drop in the almonds for a couple of minutes. Remove, cool them down under cold water then remove the skin. In a frying pan heat some vegetable oil and fry the almonds until golden. Set aside.

Steam the dates for about 5 minutes with lid off. Once cooled down remove the stone taking care to keep them whole. Put the unsalted butter in a saucepan, crush the juniper berry and Arabic gum then add them to the pan with the orange blossom water, powdered sugar and cinnamon. Bring to boil on low heat then add the steamed dates and let them caramelise for a couple of minutes.

You can then stuff the dates with 3 fried almonds. When the meat is cooked, place the stuffed dates and some almonds in the tajine and warm through for another couple of minutes with the lid off.

Enjoy your tajine!

MAGRET DE CANARD À L'ORANGE

Before Covid, my wife and I used to go to Paris for vacation every 2 to 3 years. We always stay in Airbnb, shop at local market, and cook most of our meals. This is one of the dishes I always make as it is fast, easy, and super tasty.
Vacation scenic photo: La Tour d'Argent - a historic restaurant in Paris that inspired scenes in the 2007 movie Ratatouille.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
250 - 300°F	5 min	30 min	2

what

1 duck breast 12 to 16 ounce
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup white wine
4 tablespoons orange marmalade
1 tablespoons unsalted butter

how

With a sharp knife, make shallow cuts in a crisscross pattern across the surface of the duck skin. After scoring, season the duck with fine sea salt and freshly ground pepper, heavily on the fat side and just lightly on the flesh side.

Place the duck breast in a cold pan skin side down and cook over low heat for 12 to 15 minutes until the fat has been rendered down to a slender layer beneath the crisp golden-brown skin.

Flip the duck breast and continuing to cook on the flesh side for an additional two minutes. This will get you a perfect medium-rare breast.

Empty the duck fat and save for other cooking use.

Deglaze the pan with a splash of white wine. Add the orange marmalade. Once the sauce is all bubbly, finish it with a pat of butter.

By the time the sauce is done, the duck will be fully rested and ready to be sliced and served.



MENTAIKO UDON

I first tried mentaiko udon at Zakkushi on Queen West in 2019. This udon is delicious; it's also a reminder of my travel dreams. I've only ever experienced Japan in-transit, never venturing far from the air-conditioned ecosystem of quiet Narita International. One day I'll get to venture out and go across the country!

temperature: serve warm, but it's good cold as well!

prep time: 15 min

cook time: 30 min

serves: 2

what

2 oz Spicy salted pollack or cod roe (karashi mentaiko)
1 tbsp Kewpie or Kenko mayo
¼ cup Heavy/whipping cream
1 tsp Soy Sauce
2 servings Frozen udon noodle
½ baseball size brown or yellow onion
2 tbsp Unsalted butter (salted is ok)
4 oz Squid – I use the frozen pre-cut one!
2 tbsp Sake (a nice one) or just cooking sake

For poaching:
2 Large eggs, as fresh as you can get them
1 tsp any clear/light coloured vinegar you have

Final touches:
1 Stalk of green onion
Salt to taste (any type you prefer)
Black pepper
Nori (seaweed sheet or shredded); use scissors to get a nice thin cut
Shichimi togarashi (Japanese seven spice)

how

Poaching the eggs: Heat up a a pot of water ideally +4 inches deep and prepare a bowl with cold/ice water on the side.

Add no more than 1 tsp of vinegar to the water once it comes to a boil. Turn down the heat so you get a soft boil (only a few small bubbles coming up from the bottom); stir the water until it forms a whirlpool.

Drop the egg into the centre of the whirlpool and set a timer for 2-3 minutes.

Remove poached egg and drop into ice water to cool. Repeat for as many servings as you are making.

Assembling the udon: Gather all ingredients. Heat large pot of water to put frozen udon noodles in (no need to defrost).

With a knife, make a slit through each sac membrane of the mentaiko lengthwise and scrape out the spicy roe (you can use a spoon, too). Discard the membrane.

In a large bowl, combine mentaiko and 1 tbsp Japanese mayonnaise. Add ¼ cup heavy cream and 1 tsp soy sauce. Finely dice ½ of an onion.



Heat 2 tbsp of butter in a frying pan over medium heat and add the chopped onion. When the onion is tender, add the 4 oz of squid and cook until it changes color. Add 2 tbsp sake and sauté until alcohol is evaporated. Onions should become somewhat translucent at this point. Turn off heat. Add the onion and squid mixture into the mentaiko sauce. Mix well.

Reheat the frozen udon noodles in boiling water for 1 minute.

Add cooked udon and toss well until the udon is evenly coated with the sauce. Adjust the taste with salt and black pepper. Garnish with nori and sliced green onion. Sprinkle shichimi togarashi if you like it to be spicy.

NOTE!: Mentaiko is raw and it's not recommended for reheating. Please make this recipe only for the portion you're going to serve.



BLACK PASTA WITH SCALLOPS

This recipe epitomizes the tastes of Scotland with the abundant fresh seafood found there combined with a splash of that most recognized Scottish export – whisky! Even if you don't like the taste of whisky, this recipe contains only enough to impart a subtle sweet/ smoky flavour to the dish. This is from a restaurant on Mull- a small, remote and beautiful Island on west coast. Demonstrates that Scottish cuisine has progressed well beyond mashed potatoes.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
n/a	5 min	12 min	4

what

12 oz black pasta
12 large scallops
2 tbsp butter
¼ cup blended Scotch whisky (don't use single malt here, it's too overpowering)
1 cup fish stock
2 tbsp orange juice
¼ cup unsalted butter, cut in 4 pieces
salt and freshly ground pepper
¼ cup chopped chives

how

Bring a large pot of salted water to boil and add the pasta.
Cook for 4 to 5 minutes until al dente. Drain.

While pasta is cooking, heat butter in skillet over high heat. Add scallops and sauté about 2 minutes per side until golden and opaque throughout. Remove from skillet and set aside.

Add whisky to skillet and boil until reduced to 1 tbsp. Add stock and orange juice and boil until reduced by half, about 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in butter. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Toss sauce with pasta and place on serving plates. Place scallops on top and sprinkle with chives.



STEAK & KIDNEY PIE

One of my family's favourites and a staple of British cuisine (cooking). Ironically it is now very difficult to find kidneys in Scottish supermarkets, however, fortunately they are readily available at any good Canadian butcher's shop (not supermarkets). It seems that men particularly like the hearty flavour of the meat and pastry, but its also a redeemingly healthy source of iron and zinc found in kidneys. A great winter dish. Make double and freeze.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
n/a	30 min	2+ hours	6

what

Filling:
½ lb lamb's kidneys with membranes removed, cut into 1" pieces
1½ lb lean stewing steak, cut into 1" chunks
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
2 medium onions, chopped
2 bay leaves
4 sprigs of thyme
5 fl. oz red wine
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 tsp English mustard powder
2 tbsp plain flour
1 large carrot, chopped
3 flat mushrooms, thickly sliced
½ lb brown mushrooms, halved
3 tbsp chopped parsley

Pastry:
5oz plain white flour, plus extra for dusting
1 oz very cold butter
4 tbsp yogurt
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Or alternatively, you can use ½ lb of store-bought puff pastry

how

Rinse the cleaned kidneys in cold water until the water runs clear.
Heat the oil in a large saucepan or deep sauté pan. Add the onions, bay and thyme sprigs and fry over a medium heat for 8-10 mins until the onions are really golden, stirring often.

Add the steak and kidney to the pan and stir-fry briefly, just until it loses its pink colour. Turn up the heat, pour in the wine, stir to deglaze the bottom of the pan, then let it boil over a high heat for 2-3 mins until reduced and absorbed into the meat.

Stir in the tomato puree, mustard powder and the flour, stirring for a couple of mins. Pour in 1¼ cups of boiling water and continue stirring until the mixture starts to boil and is thickened. Add the carrot and all the mushrooms, reduce the heat, cover with a lid, then leave to simmer gently for about 1 hr, stirring occasionally. Remove the lid and simmer another 25-30 mins or until the meat is very tender and the gravy has thickened slightly.

Remove from the heat and remove thebay leaves and thyme sprigs. Stir in the parsley, season to taste, then transfer to an ovenproof casserole 3-4 inches deep, then leave to cool slightly. Heat oven to 400 F.

Make the pastry. Put the flour into a bowl. Grate in the cold butter, make a well in the centre, then add the yogurt, olive oil, a pinch of salt and a good grinding of black pepper. Using a round-bladed knife, mix together with 2 tsp cold water, then gently gather together to form a dough. Remove from the bowl and knead briefly until smooth.

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface so it's slightly bigger than the top of the pie dish. Lay the pastry over the meat and trim the edges with scissors so it slightly overhangs the edge of the dish. Make 2 small slits in the centre. Flute the edges. Place the dish on a baking sheet then bake in the oven for about 25 mins or until the pastry is golden.



TAHCHIN (BOTTOMS UP!!)

Tahchin means 'arranged at the bottom' – this is a such a versatile classic Persian dish, essentially a saffron infused rice cake. Usually, rice is mixed with yogurt and saffron, with chicken layered in the middle – and of course the base of the rice should form a crispy crust (bottom of the pot!!), which is then decorated with barberries). The combination of aromas makes my soul travel Iran, no matter where I am!!

temperature: medium stovetop

prep time: 1 h

cook time: 45 min

serves: 4-6

what

1 ½ Cups Greek Yoghurt
½ Cup Vegetable Oil
1 Tsp Grinded Saffron
2 Cups Chicken Breast
3 Cups Basmati Rice
½ Cup Barberries
2 Egg Yolks
2 Tbsp Butter
1 Tsp Turmeric
Salt & Pepper
1 Tsp Sugar
1/3 Cup Slivered Pistachios

how

Dissolve the saffron in a few tbsp of freshly boiled water.

Bring some water to boil and add the chicken breast, onion, salt and pepper, turmeric and let it cook for one hour. After the chicken is cooked. Separate the broth and the onion (we don't need the broth in this recipe).

Shred the chicken and set it aside.

Parboil the rice: Bring lots of water to boil in a pan. Add the rice, stir it well and allow the water to boil again.

Let the rice pre-cook for a few minutes. The cooking time depends on the rice you are using. Remove a rice corn from the pan after about 3 minutes and split it with your fingernail. If the outside is cooked but the centre of the rice corn is still firm, it is ready and can be drained and rinsed now. After, put the rice aside and let it cool for few minutes.

Mix the Tahchin ingredients: In a big bowl combine the egg with the yoghurt, the dissolved saffron, oil and a little salt. Add the rice to it and stir it well until it turned evenly nice and yellow.

Layer Tahchin and cook: Melt the butter in the pan. Make sure not only the bottom but also the sides of the pan are lined with butter. Add half of the rice to the pan, then spread the chicken out evenly on top of it, leaving a bit of space between the sides of the pan and the chicken to make sure it remains hidden inside the rice cake. Spread a Tbsp of the barberries on the chicken and finally add rest of the rice on top. Make sure to flatten it nice and even on top. Place the pan over medium heat. Once you see steam rising from the rice, put on the lid and reduce the temperature to low. Let the Tahchin cook for 45 minutes.

Fry the barberries for no more than 30 seconds!! with a Tbsp of butter, and a tsp of sugar. Combine the barberries, with slivered pistachios. Set it aside for later.

And the moment of the truth!! Put on some oven gloves, remove the lid from the pan and put a serving plate upside down in its place. Carefully flip the pan over and remove it. Decorate your Tahchin with the barberry-pistachio mixture. Serve it with the side and drink of your choice and enjoy!





THAI RESORT BANANA PANCAKES

For our honeymoon we stayed at a beautiful resort in Phuket, Thailand. Every morning we'd have breakfast under the coconut trees next to the pool. The resort served the most delicious banana pancakes and I think I ordered them every day!
On Sundays I usually make buttermilk pancakes so I've added bananas to the pancake recipe I grew up with to recreate my Thai resort pancakes.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
griddle @ 425°F	15 min	20 min	4

TIPS
Although you can substitute milk with vinegar if you don't have buttermilk, I find the pancakes are much fluffier when you use real buttermilk.
Chose bananas that are ripe, but ideally not overly ripe. They're harder to cut precisely and they caramelize too quickly.

what

1 1/4 cup Flour
½ tsp Baking soda
1 tsp Baking powder
1 Tbsp Sugar
1 1/4 Cup Buttermilk
2 Tbsp Melted butter, cooled slightly
1 Egg
1 tsp Vanilla
1 to 1.5 Banana(s), sliced thinly

how

Preheat your griddle (or frying pan).

In a large bowl mix together the flour, baking soda, baking powder and sugar.

In a medium bowl whisk together the buttermilk, melted butter, egg and vanilla.

Gently combine the wet and dry ingredients together. Don't overmix.

Grease the griddle or pan with butter.

Scoop batter onto the griddle into the size of pancake you'd like. While the first side is cooking add some banana slices onto the top of each pancake. When the first side of the pancake is golden, flip over and cook the side with the bananas.

Keep warm in the oven while cooking the rest of the pancakes.



DRINKS & DESSERTS

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BROTHER RYAN'S GREEK BAKLAVA

Dreaming of disappearing to the Greek Isles these many months, this family recipe will transport you from the very first bite until the last. From Ryan, the Baklava guru: "This delectable, traditional dessert will warm your heart and put a smile on your face when you sink your teeth into it. It has been carefully constructed to impress."

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
350°F	1h 10 mins	40-50 mins	32 pieces

TIPS

Preparing the Phyllo Pastry:
To prepare the phyllo pastry, the night before you cook the baklava, place the pastry in the fridge to dethaw it overnight while also helping it stay cool.

what

Nut Filling:
6 oz, unshelled, unsalted Pistachios (coarsely chopped)
6 oz, Walnuts (coarsely chopped)
6 oz, pecans (coarsely chopped)
¼ to ½ cup of sugar
2 tablespoons of ground cinnamon

16-oz package phyllo dough, thawed (Recommended: Phyllo Pastry Factory)
Phyllo pastry (16-oz pack)
1 ½ to 2 sticks (or 16 tablespoons) of unsalted vegan butter (Recommended: Vegan Earth), melted.

Honey Syrup:
1 cup of sugar
1 cup of cold water
1 cup of honey
1 tablespoon of orange extract
5 whole cloves
Juice of 1 lemon

how

Pre-heat the oven to 350°F.

Make the Honey Syrup:
Pour 1 cup of cold water into a medium-sized pot. Add 1 cup of sugar and stir until it begins to dissolve, then continue to stir on a medium-high stovetop until it the sugar is almost completely dissolved.
Add 1 cup of honey, 1 tablespoon of orange extract, and 5 whole cloves. Stir occasionally to mix all the ingredients as the syrup comes to a boil. Once it starts boiling, lower heat and simmer for 25 minutes, then remove from heat and let cool to lukewarm. Add ¾ of the juice of one lemon. Stir for 30 seconds and remove the cloves.

Make the Nut Mixture:
Pour 6 oz of pistachios into a food processor or blender. Pulse a few times to chop the pistachios into small chunks and place in a large mixing bowl. Repeat for the pecans and walnuts. After placing all the chopped nuts into the mixing bowl, add ¼ to ½ cup of sugar and 2 Tbsps of ground cinnamon to the mixing bowl. Mix well.

Preparing the Phyllo Pastry:
Before unboxing the thawed phyllo pastry, lightly dampen two clean kitchen towels. These will prevent your pastry from drying up and cracking while you are building your baklava. Brush the interior of the pan with some of the melted butter, being sure to butter the corners and sides of the pan.

Assemble the Baklava:
To assemble the baklava, remove the damp kitchen towel from the top of your stack of pastry sheets, and gently fold the top sheet of phyllo pastry in half (remember to put the damp towel back on the remaining stack of phyllo pastry each time you remove a sheet from the stack). Lift the folded sheet and place it in the buttered pan. Brush the top of the phyllo sheet with melted butter. Repeat this process with the next 5 sheets, making sure to brush each layer well with melted butter.

The bottom layer of your baklava should consist of 4-6 sheets of folded pastry dough. Having a strong base is key for the honey syrup to be absorbed by your baklava pieces and helps the structural integrity of the baklava pieces.

After your bottom layer has been constructed, distribute about ½ of the nut mixture evenly over the top layer of the buttered phyllo dough in the pan.

Once your nut mixture is evenly spread out, remove the damp kitchen towel, fold the next sheet of dough in half and place it on top of the nut mixture. Butter the folded phyllo sheet and continue this process of folding and buttering one sheet at a time for about 4 to 5 sheets.

Once you've constructed your middle level of folded and buttered phyllo pastry sheets, distribute the remainder of the nut mixture evenly over the top layer of dough. Once your nut mixture is evenly spread out, finish the remaining pastry sheets using the same process.

When your sheets are finished, brush the very top layer of your layer of phyllo dough with butter. Cut the baklava and bake for 40-50 minutes.

Adding the Honey Syrup:
Once your baklava is finished baking remove from oven, let cool for 5 minutes and pour the honey syrup over the top.

Cooling your Baklava:
After pouring in your cool honey syrup, allow your baklava to sit for an hour or two to let the honey syrup harden a bit, and get absorbed by the pastry dough. After about an hour or two of cooling, your baklava will be ready to serve. Enjoy!

MORE TIPS

Cutting your Baklava:
To cut your slab of baklava into diamonds, use a long, sharp knife. Begin at the center of your pan, push the blade through to the bottom and work your way towards yourself as you cut. Once you reach the bottom edge of the pan, turn the pan 180 degrees. Continue the line you started, pushing the blade to the bottom of the pan, cutting a straight line all the way to the bottom edge of the pan. You'll want about 4 rows of straight lines, so repeat this process 2 more time (once on either side of the middle cut line). Cutting it this way should give you 8 pieces of baklava on the long sides of the pan, and 4 pieces on the shorter sides of the pan (for a total of thirty-two delectable pieces).

How to Store Baklava:
Baklava can keep well for up to two weeks. To store it, place in an air-tight glass container at room temperature or in the fridge. Personally, I place any leftover baklava in the fridge after a day or two which help preserve and add complexity to the flavor. However, keeping it at room temperature does help preserve its crispy texture better. If your baklava starts to look dry, that is a sign that it is nearing the end of its life. You can freeze baked baklava for up to 4 months (in small batches, rather than as a whole pan). Simply thaw in the fridge overnight or at room temperature for a few hours.



TURKISH PISTACHIO BAKLAVA

Traditional baklava is believed to have originated in the Imperial Kitchen of the Ottoman Empire, when the Sultan presented trays of baklava to a special military corps on the 15th day of Ramadan every year. More recently, baklava is a reminder of happy moments consuming too much sugar, and holidays in Turkey when people would visit each other's houses and serve different kinds of baklava at every home.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
400°F	5 min	2-3 min	8

*Adapted from the New York Times Cooking recipe by Karakoy Gulluoglu

what

2 ¼ cups (300 grams) shelled pistachio nuts
4 sticks / 2 cups (454 grams) unsalted butter
1 pound phyllo dough, defrosted overnight in the refrigerator
3 cups (600 grams) sugar
1 2/3 cups (400 milliliters) water
Juice of 1/2 lemon, more to taste

how

In a food processor, pulse the pistachios until coarsely ground, maintaining some texture.

Clarify the butter by melting it over low heat, then letting it cook until the foam rises to the top and the milk solids fall to the bottom of the pan (5 to 15 minutes depending on how high your heat is but don't rush it).

Skim and strain the melted butter.

Heat oven to 400 F and brush the inside of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with a some clarified butter.

Trim the stack of phyllo dough with scissors as needed to fit the bottom of your baking dish. Cover phyllo layers with a lightly damp kitchen towel, and keep covered.

Place 1 piece of phyllo on the bottom of the baking pan; brush lightly with the butter. Layer phyllo sheets on top, brushing each sheet with butter as you go, until half the phyllo is used.

Spread pistachios on phyllo in an even layer, then layer with remaining phyllo, brushing each sheet with butter as you go (rewarm butter if necessary).

Cleanly cut the pastry into 36 pieces Make sure to cut all the way through to bottom of pan. Pour any remaining butter evenly over pan.

Bake baklava until the top is golden brown, and the phyllo layers beneath the pistachios are baked through. To test this, use a knife to lift up a corner of one of the pastry rectangles from the center of the pan so you can peek at the bottom layers. Start checking after 40 minutes, but it could takeup to 1 hour 10 minutes. If the top starts to get too brown before the pastry is cooked through, lay a piece of foil over the top.

Meanwhile, prepare sugar syrup: In a medium pot, combine sugar with the water. Bring to a boil, then let simmer for 10 minutes, until slightly thickened. Stir in lemon juice.

When the baklava is baked through, reheat the syrup until it comes to a simmer. Remove pan from oven and place in the sink or on a rimmed baking sheet to catch any drips of syrup. Slowly pour hot sugar syrup over the pastry. When the syrup stops bubbling, move pan to wire rack to cool completely. Serve at room temperature.



CORNETTI ALLA MARMELLATA

I had the good fortune to spend a term of my undergraduate studies in Rome. After late nights exploring the sprawling city, I often left for class without eating breakfast. My favourite café breakfast was a cornetto—Italy's answer to the croissant—warm from the oven and piped full of zesty orange marmalade, to be scarfed down at the counter with a shot of espresso. These take a fair bit of time, effort, and butter, but I promise you it is worth the fuss for a special breakfast.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
400°F	2 hours	20 min	6 / 12 mini

TIPS

If marmalade is not your thing, vanilla cream, Nutella or ricotta-and-spinach also make excellent fillings.

If you don't have a pastry piping bag, use a sandwich bag! Spoon your filling into one corner of the bag, twist the bag to create a "balloon", and snip off the tip to create an opening.

what

2 ½ cups (350g) Flour (00 flour is ideal, but all-purpose is fine)
1 ½ tsp (5 g) Dry instant yeast
¼ cup (50g) White sugar
1 tsp Salt
1 cup (250g) Butter, room temperature
2/3 cup (160mL) Milk, room temperature
1 Egg, room temperature
Orange marmalade

how

Take a large bowl and mix sifted flour, salt and sugar.

Warm the milk slightly and dissolve the yeast with a teaspoon of flour. Let it rest until you see bubbles forming, then pour into the bowl of flour. Mix well until you get a soft dough.

Lightly flour a work surface and knead the dough for 5 minutes until it becomes smooth and elastic.
Put it in a floured bowl, cover it with a damp cloth and let it rest for about an hour, until doubled in volume.

In the meantime, take the butter and place it between two sheets of cling film. Roll it out with a rolling pin until it forms a square and place it in the refrigerator.
Take the leavened dough and deflate it, then place it on a floured surface and roll it out to form a rectangle twice the width of the butter square.

Place the butter in the lower part of the rectangle of dough and fold the other dough over it until the butter is completely covered, sealing the edges well.

Now rotate the butter-dough envelope until the fold is on your right and roll out the dough gently until it forms a rectangle with the short side exactly half the length of the long one.

Remove the excess flour and fold the rectangle into 3 parts as if it were a letter. Cover it with cling film and put in the freezer for 20 minutes.

Remove it from the freezer and repeat the previous step 2 more times. This process is called lamination and it give flaky pastries their signature layers.

Cut the dough in half and, taking care to flour the work surface, form triangles with a knife or pizza cutter. Roll the triangles up starting from the broad side of the triangle.

Place the cornetti on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper and brush them with beaten egg. Cover them with cling film and leave them in the refrigerator for 8 hours.

Remove the cornetti from the refrigerator and let them rise for 45 minutes until they double in volume.

Preheat the oven to 400 °F (200 °C) and brush the cornetti again with the beaten egg. Bake for 20 minutes.

When the cornetti are ready, take them out of the oven and let them cool slightly. Fill the cornetti with a piping bag of marmalade before serving.





TO RUSSIA, WITH PAVLOVA

temperature: Oven at 275°F

prep time: 30 min

cook time: 60 min

serves: 4 (or 1 if you're hungry!)

Павлова Русский? Нет! I present to you a tidbit of information I probably would have learned had I the opportunity to travel to Russia sometime during the last two years: Pavlova is in fact not a Russian dessert at all, it is Australian (or from New Zealand depending on who you ask). This dessert is just as light and airy as a dancing ballerina, which makes sense because it was named after a Russian one. So, in the spirit of paying homage, I do so again here with this recipe: To Russia, with Pavlova.

what

Berry Sauce:

1-2 cups Fresh or frozen strawberries, blueberries and blackberries.

½ cup Sugar (add more if too tart)

Pavlova:

4 Egg whites

1 tbsp Corn Starch

1 tbsp Vinegar (Red, white… all are acceptable)

1 cup Granulated sugar

1 tsp Vanilla Extract

Garnish:

As needed Fresh strawberries, blueberries and blackberries.

As needed Whipped Cream

how

Pre-heat the oven to 275 °F

In a mixing bowl, whip the egg whites on medium speed. When white bubbles begin to form, pour in the sugar and increase speed to high on your mixer. Stir in cornstarch, vinegar and vanilla. Note: Pavlova is delightfully simple to make, but can go very wrong very fast if any trace of fat enters the mix during this first step. You will have to make sure all utensils are cleaned and that no trace of egg yolk has been mixed in, or else you'll find your meringue wont peak!

When peaks begin to form and the meringue looks like melted marshmellows, dollop all of it onto a lined baking tray. This dollop should be round and about 8" in diameter, not too thick and not too thin. It is a good idea to create a slight dip in the center to hold any toppings. For an added visual touch, you can shape the outside edges of the meringue with upward swooping motions creating a consistent pattern all around.



Bake for 60 mins (or more depending on the oven). When complete, let cool completely. The meringue will be slightly browned when ready, and after cooling should have a firm exterior, but the interior will be soft and white.

Berry Sauce:
While the meringue is baking prepare the berry sauce. In a small sauce pan, pour in the berries and sugar and let simmer on medium-high until a thicker liquid consistency forms. Frozen berries have the added benefit of having more water content than fresh and work better for this sauce, but if using fresh you can add a few tablespoons of water and it will be fine.

Garnish:
Layer on whipped cream, berry sauce, and fresh fruit in that order. Enjoy!





GOLDEN LATTE (TURMERIC MILK)

Although we haven't been able to create travel plans and detailed itineraries during the pandemic, we all made some daily rituals to keep things sane! This beverage was one of those per diem customs that my family and I would enjoy every night throughout 2020. The Golden Latte has golden health benefits that boost immunity and help a sore throat. The key ingredient turmeric has ben used in Ayurvedic medicine for centuries due to its strong anti-inflammatory properties. It helps lift your mood and personally for me, it's a happy walk down memory lane.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
simmer	5 min	15 min	4

what

4 Cups Milk
1 tsp Turmeric Powder
¼ tsp Black/White Crushed Peppercorns
2 tsp Honey

how

In a heavy-bottomed pan, heat milk on a medium flame.

Simmer for 10 minutes until it starts boiling and reducing.

Add turmeric powder, crushed peppercorns and stir it. Simmer for another minute.

Pour in a serving glass and add honey.
Serve it hot.



CHAI

On chilly winter days, one simply needs a nice hot cup of tea to be reminded of the comfort of vacation, and a little spice to remember the uniqueness of traveling to new destinations. "Chai", the Hindi word for "Tea" involves a mix of spices and black tea, steeped into a flavourful and aromatic drink. Originating in India, Chai recipes have spread across the globe, and vastly vary across cultures and locations, making this a must-try when traveling to new destinations. While Chai ordered from most commercial coffee shops is a treat, it is often lacking in the spice and richness of more traditional recipes. Use this recipe to travel to distant destinations with a sip, forgetting the cold winter days. Enjoy!

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
n/a	5 min	2-3 min	3 large mugs

what

½ tsp Cardamom Seeds
½ tsp Ginger Piece
¼ tsp Cinnamon Sticks
¼ tsp Cloves Whole
¼ tsp Black Pepper Corns
¼ tsp Maple Syrup or Honey
2 Tea Bags
4 cups Water

how

If using whole spices crush slightly in mortar & pestle (Tip: can also add Coriander seeds for extra spice).

Bring 4 cups of water to a boil together with the spices and tea bags.

Let simmer for 2 – 3 minutes, then take the pot off the stove and let stand for 15 – 20 minutes.

Remove tea bags and using a strainer, pour into glass jars and keep in fridge for up to two weeks.

When you have a cup of Chai, simply mix with equal parts milk. You can serve warm or over ice. Enjoy! (Tip: sprinkle ground cinnamon on top as garnish when serving).



GLÜHWEIN (MULLED WINE)

German Glühwein is a warming holiday drink, simmered with spices. This drink is best enjoyed outdoors at a Christmas market or as a warm-up after shoveling. You will find Glühwein at markets and sidewalk stalls across Europe around the holidays. Make a big pot for your next holiday gathering.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
simmer	5 min	30 min	6

what

1 750 ml Bottle red wine
(not anything expensive, but not cheap either)
1 cup fresh orange juice
1/3 cup brandy / congnac (preferably Asbach)
1 orange sliced
3 cinnamon sticks
10 whole cloves
2 whole star anise
1/3 cup sugar (add more as needed)

how

In a medium large pot add wine, orange juice and brandy.

Heat on low.

Add rest of ingredients.

Simmer 30 minutes. Don't boil or else you get juice.

Taste for sweetness. If you like it sweeter, add more sugar and taste again.

Serve in mugs.



MOJITO

While you can't always find the time for a trip to Cuba, you can always find the ingredients to mix up a refreshing mojito.

temperature:	prep time:	cook time:	serves:
with ice	3 minutes	N/A	1

what

2 tsp sugar
10 fresh mint leaves
½ lime, juiced
ice
2 ounces rum
splash of club soda

how

Combine sugar, mint and lime juice in a 12-ounce glass and muddle together.

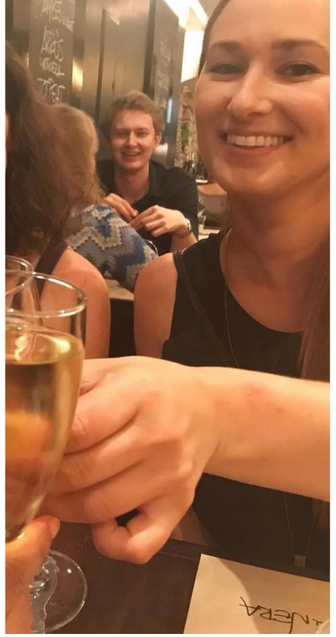
Fill the glass with ice, then add 2 ounces of rum.

Shake in a shaker until well-mixed and pour back into the same glass.

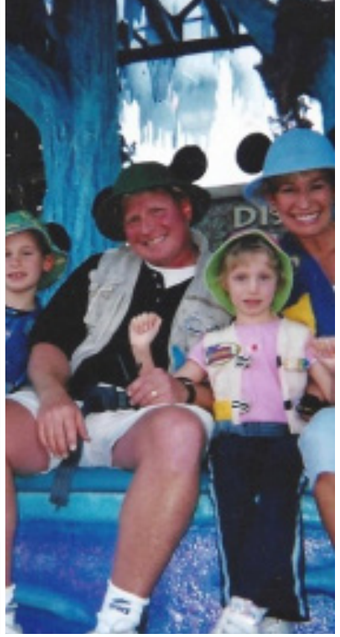
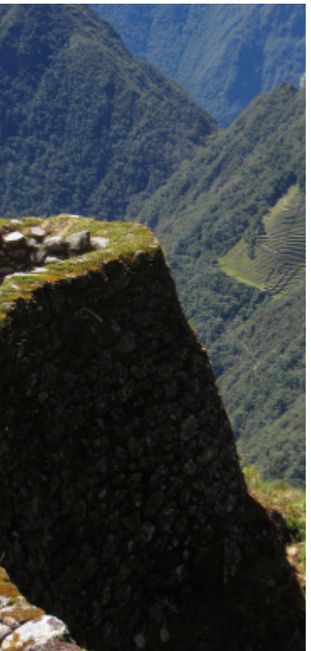
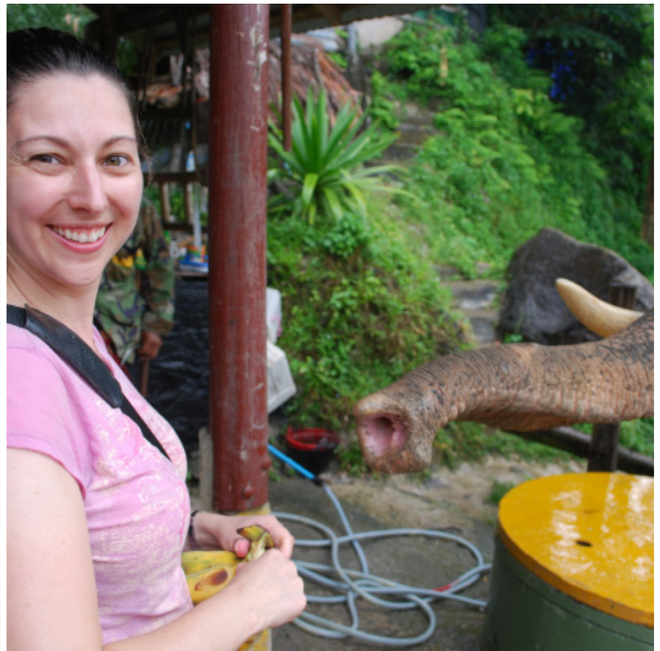
Top off with club soda and garnish with mind and a lime wedge.












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