

THE GATHERING

“PAELLA PARTY”

MENU:

BEVERAGE: Sangria

APPETIZERS: Salted Almonds
Spicy Cracked Marinated Olives
Sautéed Garlic Mushrooms
Pickled Stuffed Sweet Peppers
Beef Skewers with Orange and Garlic
Chorizo in Red Wine
Cheese and Sun-dried Tomato Toasts

SALAD: Spanish Asparagus and Orange Salad

MAIN COURSE: Paella

DESSERT: Cabrales Stuffed Poached Pears

SALTED ALMONDS

INGREDIENTS:

*8 oz. whole Almonds
4 Tbs. Spanish Olive Oil
1 Tsp. Paprika
Coarse Sea Salt*

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put the oil in a roasting pan and swirl it around so that it covers the base. Add the almonds and toss them in the pan so that they are evenly coated in the oil, then spread them out in a single layer.

Roast the almonds in the preheated oven for 20 minutes, or until they are light golden brown, tossing several times during the cooking. Drain the almonds on paper towels, then transfer them to a bowl.

While the almonds are still warm, sprinkle with plenty of sea salt and paprika, if using, and toss together to coat. Serve almonds warm or cold.

SPICY CRACKED MARINATED OLIVES

INGREDIENTS:

2 ½ cups canned or jarred large green Spanish olives, drained
4 garlic cloves, peeled
2 tsp. coriander seeds
1 small lemon
4 fresh Thyme sprigs
4 feathery stalks of fennel
2 small fresh red chiles (optional)
Spanish extra virgin olive oil
pepper

If using unpitted olives, place them on a cutting board and, using a rolling pin, bash them lightly so that they crack slightly. Using the flat side of a broad knife, lightly crush each garlic clove. Using a mortar and pestle, crack the coriander seeds. Cut the lemon, with its rind, into small chunks.

Place the olives, garlic, coriander seeds, lemon chunks, thyme sprigs, fennel and chiles (if using), in a large bowl and toss together. Season with pepper to taste. No salt will be needed if using canned or jarred olives, as they are salty enough. Pack the ingredients tightly into a glass jar with a lid. Pour enough oil to cover the olives, then seal jar tightly.

Let the olives stand at room temperature for 24 hours, then marinate for up to a week but preferably two weeks in the fridge before serving.

SAUTÉED GARLIC MUSHROOMS

INGREDIENTS:

*1 lb. button mushrooms
5 Tsp. Spanish Olive Oil
2 Garlic Cloves, finely chopped
Lemon juice
4 Tsp. chopped fresh parsley
Salt and Pepper
Lemon Wedges, to garnish*

Clean mushrooms and trim stems. Cut any large mushrooms in half or into quarters. Heat the oil in a large, heavy-bottom skillet. Add the garlic and cook for 30-60 seconds, or until lightly browned. Add the mushrooms and sauté over high heat, stirring frequently, until the mushrooms have absorbed all the oil in the skillet.

Reduce the heat to low. When the juices has come out of the mushrooms, increase the heat again and sauté for 4-5 minutes, stirring frequently, until the juices have almost evaporated. Add a squeeze of lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Stir in the parsley and cook for an additional minute.

Transfer mushrooms to a warmed serving dish, then garnish with lemon wedges and serve piping hot or warm.

PICKLED STUFFED SWEET PEPPERS

INGREDIENTS:

12 oz. Fresh Goat Cheese

14 oz. Pickled Sweet Peppers, drained

1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill

Salt and Pepper

Cut the cheese into pieces about ½ inch long. Slit the sides of the sweet peppers and seed, if you like. Stuff the peppers with the cheese.

Arrange stuffed peppers on serving plate. Sprinkle with the dill and season with salt and pepper.

BEEF SKEWERS WITH ORANGE AND GARLIC

INGREDIENTS:

*3 Tbs. White Wine
2 Tsp. Spanish Olive Oil
3 Garlic Cloves, Finely chopped
Juice of 1 orange
1 lb. Beef Top Round, cubed
1 lb. pearl onions, halved
2 orange bell peppers
8 oz. Cherry Tomatoes, halved
Salt and Pepper*

Mix the wine, olive oil, garlic and orange juice together in a shallow, nonmetallic dish. Add the cubes of beef, season with salt and pepper to taste and toss to coat. Cover with plastic wrap and let marinate in the refrigerator for 2 - 8 hours.

Prepare the broiler to high. Drain the beef, reserving the marinade. Thread the beef, onions, bell peppers, and tomatoes alternately, onto several small skewers.

Cook the skewers under the hot broiler; turning and brushing frequently with the marinade, for 10 minutes, or until cooked through. Transfer to warm serving plate and serve immediately.

CHORIZO IN RED WINE

INGREDIENTS:

7 oz. Chorizo Sausage
¾ cup Spanish Red Wine
2 Tbs. Brandy (optional)
Parsley to garnish

Before you begin, bear in mind that this dish is best if prepared the day before you are planning to serve it. Using a fork, prick the Chorizo in 3 or 4 places. Place the Chorizo and wine in a large saucepan. Bring the wine to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer gently, covered, for 15-20 minutes. Transfer the Chorizo and wine to a bowl or dish, cover, and let the sausage marinate in the wine for 8 hours or overnight.

The next day, remove the Chorizo from the bowl and reserve the wine. Remove the outer casing from the Chorizo and cut the sausage into ¼ inch slices. Place the slices in a large, heavy-bottom skillet.

If you are using Brandy, pour it into a small saucepan and heat gently. Pour the brandy over the Chorizo slices, then stand well back and set aflame. When the flames have died down, shake the pan gently and add the reserved wine, then cook over high heat until almost all of the wine has evaporated.

Serve in Red Wine, sprinkled with parsley.

CHEESE & SUN-DRIED TOMATO TOASTS

INGREDIENTS:

*1 French Loaf
1 cup sun-dried tomato paste
1 ball fresh mozzarella
1 ½ Tsp. dried Oregano
2-3 Tbs. Olive Oil
Pepper*

Preheat the broiler on medium-high setting and preheat oven to 425 degrees. Slice the loaves diagonally and discard the end pieces. Toast the slices on both sides under the broiler until golden.

Spread one side of each toast with the sun-dried tomato paste and top with mozzarella. Sprinkle with oregano and season with pepper to taste.

Put the toasts on a large baking sheet and drizzle with oil. Bake in the preheated oven for 5 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and bubbling. Remove the toasts from the oven and let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

SPANISH ASPARAGUS AND ORANGE SALAD

INGREDIENTS:

*1 bunch Asparagus
4 Oranges, peeled and thinly sliced
4 On-the-Vine Tomatoes cut into eighths
1 head of Romaine
4 Tbs. Olive Oil
2 Tsp. Sherry Vinegar
½ Tsp. Salt
Black Pepper*

Cook the asparagus in boiling water 3-4 minutes. Grind the rind from one orange and reserve. Peel all the oranges and cut into segments. Squeeze out the juice from the membrane and reserve the juice. Put the asparagus, orange segments, tomatoes and lettuce into a salad bowl. Mix together the oil and vinegar and add 1 tsp. of reserved orange juice and 1 tsp. reserved rind. Season with salt and pepper. Just before serving, pour the dressing over the salad and mix gently to coat.

PAELLA

INGREDIENTS:

4 lbs. Chorizo or Italian Sweet Sausage links, sliced
3 lbs. Chicken cut up
2 medium onions, 1 cup, chopped
1 large red pepper, 1 cup, chopped
1 large green pepper, 1 cup, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
3 cups regular rice
4 medium tomatoes, chopped
2 tsp. salt
½ tsp. saffron, crushed
8 cups boiling water
2 lbs. fresh, shelled shrimp
20 small cherrystone clams
2 chicken lobsters
1 10 oz. package frozen peas

In a large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until done. Drain sausage, reserving drippings in skillet, set aside. Brown Chicken in reserved drippings, remove Chicken, reserving drippings in skillet. Add chopped onion, red pepper, green pepper and garlic to reserved drippings, cook until onion is tender, but not brown. Stir in uncooked rice, chopped tomatoes, saffron. Turn into Paella or large roasting pan and stir boiling water into pan. Bring to boiling. Stir in cooked sausage. Arrange Chicken pieces on top. Bake covered at 375 degrees for 30 minutes.

Thoroughly scrub clams. Place shrimp, clams and peas atop rice mixture. Bake covered until chicken and rice are done, 15 to 20 minutes longer. Discard any clams that do not open. Garnish with lemon sliced and serve directly from pan at table.

CABRALES STUFFED POACHED PEARS

INGREDIENTS:

6 Bosc Pears

8 cups Tardío, a sweet, late harvest wine made from the Torrentes grape preferably Santa Julia

8 cups Malbec, one of the traditional "Bordeaux varieties", Malbec has characteristics that fall somewhere between Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot

1 cup sugar

2 cinnamon sticks

5 star anise

2 cloves

6 Tbs. Cabrales (Bleu Cheese)

1 cup walnuts

Peel pears and remove the core from the bottom using a melon baller, keeping the stem end intact. Scrub the pears with a new abrasive plastic scrubbing pad to remove any rough edges or textures left from the knife. Set the pears aside.

In a large stockpot, combine the tardío, red wine, sugar, cinnamon sticks, star anise, and cloves and bring to a boil. Add the pears and cook until tender, about 25 minutes. Remove the pears and reduce the remaining liquid by half, about 45 minutes.

In a food processor, puree the cabrales and toasted walnuts, and set aside. Place the mixture in a pastry bag and stuff the pears with walnut and cabrales mixture.

Serve with the reduced poaching liquid.

SANGRIA

INGREDIENTS:

2 bottles Rose Wine
1 bottle club soda
1 cup sugar
1 cup diced Strawberries
1 cup diced peaches
2 blood oranges, juiced
1 blood orange, sliced
1 lemon, juiced
1 lemon, sliced

In a large 1-gallon pitcher, combine all ingredients and stir well to combine and dissolve the sugar. Refrigerate until ready to serve.