

Teaspace

Grilled Halibut with charmoula and genmaicha Israeli couscous

Serves 4

For the charmoula:

2 t.	cumin, toasted and ground
1 t.	coriander, toasted and ground
1 t.	smoked paprika, ground
1/4 t.	cayenne pepper, ground
2 cloves	garlic, minced and sautéed
1 oz.	lemon juice
1/2 c.	extra virgin olive oil
1 T.	flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 T.	cilantro, chopped
1/2 ea	preserved lemon, pulp removed, fine julienne
1/2 c.	cherry tomatoes, halved <i>or</i> Roma tomatoes, small dice
8 ea.	good-quality olives (i.e. Kalamata, Nicoise), pitted and halved

Method of Preparation:

In a medium bowl, whisk together spices, lemon juice, and slowly add olive oil, then herbs. Reserve one-quarter (1/4) of this mixture as marinade for the fish. Add remaining ingredients to the other three-quarters (3/4) of the mixture.

For the Israeli couscous:

1 T.	Extra virgin olive oil
1 T.	shallot, fine dice
3 c.	genmaicha (or other green) tea, strong-steeped
2 c.	Israeli (also called pearl or maftoul) couscous
to taste	salt and freshly ground pepper

Method of Preparation:

In a medium saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, sauté the shallot in the olive oil, then add the couscous, stirring continuously to avoid browning. Lightly season with salt and pepper, then add the tea. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and cover, simmering about 8 to 10 minutes, or until the pasta is al dente. Adjust seasoning and fluff with a serving fork or spoon.

Grilling the Halibut:

4 ea.	Halibut filets (preferably Alaskan), boned and skinned
to taste	salt and freshly ground pepper

Method of Preparation:

Fire up your grill and preheat oven to 500F. Season the fish with salt, pepper, and the reserved 1/4 marinade. Grill the halibut to medium well (3-4 minutes per side), remove from grill to a hotplate or pan, dress with remaining charmoula, and bake for 2-3 minutes, until sauce is heated through. Serve over the couscous, along with roasted or grilled vegetables.

A little strawberry-rhubarb pie with chamomile-vanilla ice cream

Yields 6 miniature pies and 1 1/2 quarts of ice cream

For the chamomile-vanilla ice cream:

2 c. heavy cream (36-40%)
2 c. milk, 2%
1/2 ea. vanilla bean, split and scraped
1 oz. chamomile flowers or tea, dried
8 ea. egg yolk
2/3 c. sugar

Method of Preparation:

In a medium saucepan, bring cream, milk, and vanilla bean to just below boil. Remove from heat, add the chamomile, and allow to steep 5-10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and sugar. Strain the cream through a chinois (fine sieve), and temper the egg yolk mixture by slowly adding the cream, little by little. Return the mixture to the saucepan and stir over low heat until coating the back of a spoon, 5-7 minutes (this can be done over a double boiler, if desired). Strain again, then cool thoroughly in an ice bath or under refrigeration. Spin in an ice cream maker when the mixture is *very cold*.

For the tart dough (piecrust):

3 c. all-purpose flour
1 T. sugar
1 T. kosher or sea salt, fine ground
7 oz. unsalted Butter, chilled and 1/4" cubed
1 ea. egg, whole
2 ea. egg, separated
1/2 c. ice water

Method of Preparation:

In a medium bowl, or the bowl of a food processor, combine the flour, sugar, and salt, then using a pastry blender, fork, or blade, cut in the butter until coarse, pea-sized crumbs are formed, making certain not to work into a dough at this point. Once all of the butter has been incorporated, whisk together, in a separate bowl, the whole egg, two yolks, and the ice water, reserving the two whites for later use. Add the egg mixture to the flour/butter mixture, and mix just until a cohesive dough is formed. Cut the dough in half, and roll out on floured parchment to 1/8 " thickness. Rest the dough, refrigerated, at least 15 minutes, then punch out into twelve 4" rounds. Press 6 of these into buttered and floured 3" (or 4") tart tins. Set aside, refrigerated, until ready to fill.

Macerating the fruit, assembly, and baking of the pies:

3 pints ripe strawberries, stems removed and quartered or sliced
4 ea rhubarb stalks, peeled and sliced 1/4" thick crosswise
3 T. vanilla sugar
3 T. all-purpose flour
3 T. sherry vinegar

Method of Preparation:

Preheat oven to 425°F. In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients and set aside to macerate at room temperature for at least 5 minutes and up to 1 hour. After fruit has macerated, fill each of the prepared pie shells, slightly mounded, to about 1" above the sides of the shells. With a pastry brush or your finger, lightly brush the inside rim of each shell with some of the reserved egg white. Cover each pie with the remaining crust rounds, seal well along the edges with your fingers or a fork, then lightly brush the tops with more of the whites. Cut a small X or hole in the top of each pie (this is important, not only for presentation, but to allow the pie to "breathe"). Place the pies on a sheetpan, then into the oven, immediately reducing the temperature to 375°F. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the crust tops are golden, and juice begins to bubble through the holes in the tops. Serve the pies warm with a scoop of ice cream, and maybe agave nectar or a fine honey.