

Mixed Green, Beet and Pancetta Salad with Balsamic Vinegar

¼ cup white balsamic vinegar
½ small shallot, chopped
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
½ tablespoon Worcestershire
1 garlic clove, minced
½ teaspoon garlic and onion powder
½ teaspoon anchovy paste
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper

4 cups mixed greens
½ cup diced beets
¼ cup grated asiago cheese
2 to 3 sliced pancetta, cooked and crumbled
Candied Pecans

- Add vinegar, shallot, mustard, Worcestershire, garlic, spices and anchovy paste to the jar of a blender. Pulse until smooth. Season with salt and pepper.
- With machine running, slowly add olive oil.
- Add salad ingredients to large mixing bowl. Toss with dressing to taste; adjust seasoning.

Braised Pork Shanks

2 teaspoons dried thyme
2 teaspoon dried rosemary
4 pork shanks
1 tablespoon olive oil
4 shallots, chopped
4 cloves garlic, whole
1 cup red wine
1 cup demi-glace
1 cup tomato sauce
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
- Add thyme and rosemary to a spice grinder; pulse until fine. Add salt and pepper.
- Bring a heavy dutch oven to medium-high heat and add the oil.
- Season pork with spice mix. Cook, turning, until nicely browned on all sides. Remove from pan.
- Add shallots and garlic; cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.
- Add wine; bring to a simmer and cook until reduced by half.
- Add demi-glace and tomatoes; bring to a simmer and cook for 5 to 10 minutes.
- Add back the pork; cover and bring to a gentle simmer. Transfer to oven; cook until tender, about 2 ½ hours.
- Transfer pork to serving platter. Skim fat from surface of sauce; serve over pork.

Roasted Butternut Squash Gratin

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large butternut squash, peeled, seeded and sliced
2 acorn squash, halved and sliced
2 cups grated gruyere cheese
Fresh rosemary
Heavy cream, as needed
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Drizzle oil on the bottom of a 13- by 9-inch baking dish.
- Arrange half the butternut squash on the bottom of the dish. Season with salt, pepper, and rosemary; sprinkle with gruyere. Repeat with acorn squash and remaining butternut squash, seasoning each and sprinkling them with cheese.
- Pour in heavy cream until it comes about halfway up gratin. Cover with foil; bake for 30 minutes.
- Increase oven to 375 degrees. Remove foil and bake an additional 45 minutes or until vegetables are tender, nicely browned and sauce has tightened.
- Remove from oven; let stand, covered, for 15 minutes. Slice and serve.

Ricotta Cheesecake

6 large eggs
2/3 cup sugar
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
Two 15-ounce containers whole-milk ricotta cheese
2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
Confectioners' sugar for dusting

- Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Spray the springform pan with cooking spray. Separate the eggs, placing the whites in one of the large bowls and the yolks in the work bowl of a food processor.
- Add the sugar and vanilla to the work bowl of the food processor and process until thick and light yellow, about 1 minute. Add the ricotta and zest and process until smooth, another 30 seconds. Scrape the mixture into the other large bowl.
- Beat the whites on high speed with the mixer until they hold stiff peaks. Fold the whites into the ricotta mixture and scrape into the prepared pan, smoothing the top with the spatula.
- Bake until the cake is deep golden brown and the sides begin to pull away from the pan, about 1 hour and 20 minutes. Transfer to the rack to let cool completely. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until serving, at least 6 hours and up to 1 day.