

Culinary Comfort Class

February 2019

Topic: Probiotics & The Gut Microbiome

Ribollita Soup

For the soup: Heat:

2 Tbsp. Olive oil
1 cup each: diced red onions & chopped carrots
2 Tbsp. Minced fresh garlic
4 tsp. Dried Italian seasoning
¼ tsp. Red pepper flakes

Add:

8 cups low sodium vegetable broth
1 can diced tomatoes in juice (14.5 oz.)
4 cups chopped green cabbage
1 cup diced Yukon gold potatoes

Stir in:

6 cups kale, ribs removed or spinach leaves
1 can great Northern beans (15 oz.) drained & rinsed
½ cup thinly sliced fresh basil
Salt & pepper to taste

Directions:

Heat oil in a stock-pot & add onion & carrots; sweat for 5 minutes. Stir in minced garlic, Italian seasoning & red pepper flakes; cook about 1 minute.

Add broth, tomatoes, cabbage & potatoes & bring to a boil.

Reduce heat to simmer; cook until potatoes are fork tender. 15 minutes.

Stir in kale or spinach & beans; simmer 10 minutes. Off heat, stir in basil & season with salt & pepper.

Optional: serve with toasted baguette slices brushed with garlic/oil & Parmesan.

Serves: 6. (12 cups)

Per serving: 538 calories, 10 g fat (2 g sat. Fat), 875 mg sodium, 91 g carbohydrate, 12 g fiber, 25 G protein

Blanched Asparagus

Ingredients:

1 # fresh asparagus

Blanch asparagus in a pan of salted water until crisp-tender, about 3-4 minutes.

Drain; pat dry & transfer to a serving platter.

Chocolate Buttons with Nuts & Dried Fruit

Ingredients:

9 ounces chopped dark chocolate

¼ packed cup dried cherries

¼ packed golden raisins

¼ cup chopped roasted pistachios

¼ cup sesame seeds, optional

Directions:

In a double-boiler, melt the chocolate.

On a parchment paper or wax paper lined baking sheet, make 16 dabs of chocolate (1 Tbsp. Each).

Combine the remaining ingredients in a bowl & sprinkle evenly over each chocolate dab.

Chill in freezer about 10 minutes.

May store extras in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to a week.

Makes: 16 buttons

These are easy, elegant & just decadent enough to satisfy the sweet tooth!

Lemon Chicken Orzo

Ingredients:

1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp, garlic powder
1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast
¾ tsp. salt, divided
½ tsp. pepper
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 can (14 ½ oz.) reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 ¼ cups uncooked whole wheat orzo pasta
2 cups chopped, fresh spinach
1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
3 lemons
2 Tbsp. minced, fresh basil

Cooking Instructions:

- 1) In a shallow bowl, mix flour & garlic powder. Cut chicken into 1 ½" pieces; pound each with meat mallet into ¼" thick. Sprinkle with ½ tsp. salt and pepper.
- 2) Dip both sides of chicken in flour mixture to coat lightly; shake off excess. (Note: you do not have to coat the chicken; can also just use the chicken plain).
- 3) In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add chicken & cook 3-4 minutes on each side until golden brown & chicken is no longer pink. Remove from pan & keep warm.
- 4) In same pan, bring broth to a boil; stir in orzo. Return to a boil. Reduce heat, simmer, covered 8-10 minutes or until tender. Stir in spinach, tomato, lemon juice, basil, and remaining salt; remove from heat. Return chicken to pan, if desired serve with lemon wedges.

Serves: 4

Pineapple & Banana Smoothie topped with Pomegranate Seeds or berries

Ingredients:

1 cup diced fresh pineapple
3 cups loosely packed baby spinach
1 ½ cups plain yogurt
1 frozen banana
Pomegranate seeds for garnish

Directions:

- 1) Blend pineapple, spinach, plain yogurt, and banana until smooth then pour into glasses.
For a thicker drink, freeze the pineapple