

PAIR UP

with Maria Terry



August 2014 – Back to Basics

Although there is still a little summer left, August brings to mind the coming of fall and kids going back to school. I have a daughter going off to college this year, so “back to school” has a whole new meaning to me. I created this menu in Larissa’s honor using some of her favorite foods. For those over 21, I have paired these recipes with two of the most loved wine varietals, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon.

While it is still hot, a cold soup makes for a nice starter in place of salad. Chilled Fresh Corn Soup with King Crab takes advantage of the local crop of fresh sweet corn. Previously frozen, pre-cooked king crab legs are cheaper than Dungeness crab and easier to get year ‘round. Pair this cool soup with a buttery Chardonnay to echo the sweet corn and rich crab. This recipe uses 2% milk in place of heavy cream, making it silky but not too high in calories.

Larissa’s favorite steak is top sirloin of beef or New York strip steak. It seems to hit that sweet spot of the beef cuts available these days: not as fatty as rib-eye, but with more rich beef flavor than filet mignon. This steak is terrific straight off the grill, but if you really want to create a memorable experience, top it off with a little Whiskey Pepper Cream Sauce. Smokey notes from the whiskey and a spike of heat from the black pepper are all smoothed out by a bit of heavy cream. And, if you like your sauce a little less creamy, just cut back on the amount of cream you whisk in at the end. Pair this dish with a classic: an intensely aromatic, full flavored, Cabernet Sauvignon.

Cookies are a great way to finish a meal because they can be made ahead of time and can be eaten out of hand while sitting outside and enjoying a warm, late-summer evening. My daughter’s favorite cookie

comes from a Mrs. Fields recipe called the Double Rich Chocolate Chip Cookie. On a personal note, I think it is the best tasting, “just out of the oven” cookie I have ever had. As for pairings, don’t bother looking for a wine to go with these super sweet cookies; stick with the classics – coffee or, better yet, milk.

So, go on. Pair Up!

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Chilled Fresh Corn Soup with King Crab

INGREDIENTS

1 pound frozen cooked king crab legs, thawed
6 cups fresh corn kernels (about 11 ears)
4 1/2 cups water
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper
1 cup 2% milk
1/4 cup chopped fresh chives
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Cut shells off crab with kitchen shears; reserve shells. Coarsely chop crabmeat; chill. Combine shells, corn, 4 1/2 cups water, and red pepper in a saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 20 minutes or until corn is very tender. Discard shells.

Using a standard or hand blender, process until smooth. Press pureed corn mixture through a fine sieve over a bowl, reserving liquid; discard solids. Stir in milk, chives, and black pepper. Chill 2 hours. Top with reserved crabmeat.

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Yield: 8 servings

Whiskey Pepper Cream Sauce

INGREDIENTS

4 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup diced onions
1/2 cup whiskey
1/2 cup beef stock or broth
Dash of salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1/4 to 1/2 cup heavy cream

DIRECTIONS

Cook the onions in the 3 tablespoons butter in a skillet over medium heat until golden brown. Turn off the burner temporarily.

Pour in the whiskey. As soon as it evaporates, turn the burner on medium-high heat and pour in the beef stock. Add salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, and allow the mixture to bubble up and reduce by half.

Whisk in the remaining tablespoon of butter, and reduce the heat to low. Whisk in 1/4 cup to 1/2 cup cream, according to your taste. Allow the sauce to simmer and thicken for a few minutes.

Yield: about 1 cup

Double Rich Chocolate Chip Cookie

INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 cups flour
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup sugar
3 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
2 cups chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 300°. Combine flour, soda, salt, and cocoa powder in a bowl.

Cream butter in mixer, add sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla and beat again until well incorporated. Add flour mixture slowly and chocolate chips at end. Do not over mix.

Drop by rounded tablespoons onto ungreased cookie sheet, 1 1/2" apart. Bake 21-23 minutes, transfer to cool surface immediately (cookies will stick if left on pan to cool).

Yield: 4 dozen