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We believe fresh, good food not only feeds the body, but the mind and spirit as well."

Reynaldo Hernandez,
Co-Founder and VP,
Epicurean Group



Signs of the Season

My aunt and uncle had a prolific garden. For me, as a kid, it was one of my favorite places, running through the corn and feasting on fresh tomatoes off the vine. Each autumn there was an exciting family event when all the cousins were invited to pick their own "pumpkin family" from the enormous pile in the old barn. Not just one pumpkin, but an entire family! – mom, dad, brother and sister pumpkins, who all would be carved, placed on the steps of our home and lighted for Halloween. The aunties also selected their pumpkins to roast for pies, soups, casseroles, and, of course, as decorations for the sideboard.

Signs of the season, you can see pumpkins piled high in local barns and pumpkin patches across the county. While I admire pumpkins for their aesthetic value and cheery jack-o-lantern faces, I also love to cook with them. I hope you enjoy my curried pumpkin soup – a perfect start to the beautiful harvest season, and all the magic and memories it entails.

—**Chef Rey Hernandez**, Co-Founder and VP, Epicurean Group

FALL MENU

Serves 8

Half Moon Bay Curry Roasted Pumpkin Soup with Crimini Mushrooms

*Capay Farms Fall Greens Salad with Pomegranate Seeds
and Lemon Dijon Vinaigrette*

*Grilled Llano Seco Pork Tenderloin with Fennel Apple Chutney,
Red Quinoa Pilaf, Shelled Cranberry Beans
and Happy Boy Farms Broccoli Rabe*

*Paso Robles Zinfandel Dessert Wine Poached Figs
with Three Twins Vanilla Ice Cream and Pistachio Biscotti*



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Half Moon Bay Curry Roasted Pumpkin Soup with Crimini Mushrooms

2 pounds fresh pumpkin, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 quart vegetable stock
4 tablespoons butter
1 yellow onion, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
6 ounces Crimini mushrooms, sliced thin
1 tablespoon curry powder
1 tablespoon light brown sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup whipping cream
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

Directions:
Preheat oven to 375°.

Combine the pumpkin and onion in a mixing bowl with the oil and curry powder. Mix together until well coated. Spread out on a sheet pan and roast until slightly browned and tender, about 25 minutes. Set aside.

In a soup pot, melt 2 tablespoons butter over medium high heat until it stops sizzling, add mushrooms and cook until tender. Season to taste with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper. Remove from pan, set aside in a warm place.

Add the rest of the butter to the soup pot and heat until it stops sizzling. Add flour and brown sugar and cook, stirring constantly for about 5 minutes. Add vegetable stock and whisk together until smooth. Add pumpkin and onion to soup pot and bring to a boil. Turn off heat and puree soup with a hand immersion blender or food processor to a smooth consistency. Return to the soup pot and bring to a low simmer. Add salt and pepper to taste. Stir in cream and keep warm until serving.

To serve:
Ladle soup into 8 bowls and spoon sliced mushrooms over each. Serve immediately.

Capay Farms Fall Greens Salad with Pomegranate Seeds and Lemon Dijon Vinaigrette

1 pound Kaleidoscope Carrots*, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 large bunch Dinosaur Kale, ribs removed and cut into 1/2-inch strips
4 cups arugula, washed and drained
1 small head escarole, washed and cut into 1/2-inch strips
1/2 cup pumpkin seeds, toasted
1/2 cup pomegranate seeds
1/2 cup grated Asiago Cheese
1 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh squeezed lemon juice
2 tablespoons Dijon Mustard
2 teaspoons light, agave syrup
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

* Kaleidoscope Carrots are available at the supermarket or farmer's market.

Directions:
Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
Toss carrots with 1/4 cup olive oil and season with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper, then spread evenly in a roasting pan. Roast in oven until well browned and tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from oven and cool to room temperature.

Place kale, arugula and escarole in a salad bowl and season with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper. Set aside.

In a separate, non-reactive bowl, whisk remaining olive oil with Asiago, lemon juice, mustard and agave syrup until smooth.



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To serve:

Pour dressing over greens and toss to coat. Divide evenly into 8 salad plates. Garnish each plate with pumpkin seeds and pomegranate seeds. Serve immediately.

Grilled Llano Seco Pork Tenderloin with Fennel Apple Chutney, Red Quinoa Pilaf, Shelled Cranberry Beans and Happy Boy Farms Broccoli Rabe

4 whole pork tenderloins, 3 to 4 pounds total, trimmed and silver skin removed.

Brine for Pork:

3 tablespoons kosher salt
3/4 cup evaporated cane juice
2 cups hot water
2 cups cold water

** Epicurean Tip: Why Brine?*

Brining gives meat a firmer consistency and seasons the meat to the bone. Salt causes the protein in meat to unwind as if exposed to heat or alcohol. When the protein unwinds they tangle together again to form a matrix that traps moisture, resulting in a moist, juicy product. Sugar in the brine has little effect on the texture but adds flavor and promotes browning. Aromatics added to the brine also have no effect, but add flavor to the meat.

Directions:

In a non-reactive bowl, dissolve salt and cane juice in hot water. Stir until dissolved. Add cold water and cool to room temperature. Add pork and cover tightly. Refrigerate for 1 1/2 hours.

Wet Rub for Pork:

1 tablespoon fennel seed
1 tablespoon coriander seed
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1 1/2 teaspoon brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon fresh cracked pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil

Directions:

Toast fennel, cumin and coriander seeds in a skillet over medium high heat, stirring constantly until fragrant and slightly toasted. Remove from heat and mix with the remaining ingredients, except the oil. Using a spice grinder or mortar and pestle, and grind the mixture to powder. Mix with the oil and spread evenly over the pork at least one hour before grilling.

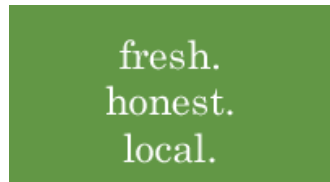
For the Fennel Apple Chutney

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 fennel bulb, cut in 1/4 inch dice
1 medium sweet Vidalia Onion cut in 1/4 inch dice
2 each Granny Smith apples cored and cut in 1/2 inch dice
1 1/2 cup seasoned rice vinegar
Grated zest from one lemon
1 teaspoon kosher salt
2 whole Fresno Chilies, chopped fine

** Note: Make at least one day before using.*

Directions:

Heat oil in saucepan over medium heat until it shimmers. Add fennel and onion and cook until tender. Add apples, vinegar, zest, salt and chilies. Bring to a boil then drop to a simmer. Cook until it thickens, about 20 minutes. Cool to room temperature. Refrigerate covered overnight.



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For the Pork:

Remove pork from brine. Rinse and pat dry with paper towels. Coat pork with wet rub at least one hour before grilling.

Fire the charcoal in the grill and burn until the coals are white with ash. Spread the coals evenly on one side of the grill. Clean the grill grate with a wire brush and allow to heat.

Place the pork on the grate and cook for 2 to 3 minutes per side and evenly browned. Move to cool side of the grill and close cover. Cook until internal temperature is 145°, then close all vents to hold pork.

To serve:

Remove pork tenderloin from grill and let rest on a cutting board for 10 minutes. Slice on the bias in 1-inch slices and serve immediately with chutney on the side.

Red Quinoa Pilaf

1 1/2 cup prewashed quinoa
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1/2 yellow onion, diced fine
2 ribs celery, diced fine, 2 teaspoons fresh grated ginger
Kosher salt to taste
1 3/4 cup vegetable stock
4 teaspoons rice vinegar
1 large bunch Italian Parsley, chopped coarse

** Epicurean Tip: Rinsing Quinoa*

If quinoa is not described as "pre-washed" when purchased, you must rinse it thoroughly before cooking. It contains naturally occurring saponin, which protects the seed in nature. If consumed it can have some uncomfortable side effects.

To rinse well, place it in a cheesecloth-lined fine sieve. Rinse and drain 2 to 3 times, changing the cheesecloth after each time. Let drain thoroughly before cooking.

Directions:

Toast quinoa in a saucepan over medium heat until fragrant. Place in bowl and hold. Add olive oil to the same saucepan and add onion, celery, ginger and salt. Cook until tender. Increase heat to medium high and add stock and quinoa. Bring to a boil and then drop to a simmer. Cook until the quinoa is tender and all liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat and keep warm.

To serve:

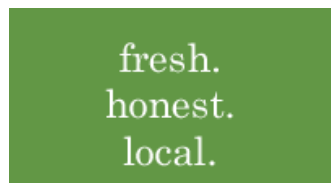
Fluff the quinoa with a fork and adjust seasonings, if needed. Stir in parsley and serve immediately.

Fresh Shelled Cranberry Beans with Broccoli Rabe

3 cups vegetable stock
1 pound fresh shelled cranberry beans
1/2 yellow onion, diced fine
1 rib celery, diced fine
1 carrot, peeled and diced fine
2 sprigs fresh thyme
3 cloves garlic, peeled, crushed and chopped
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 pound broccoli rabe cut into 2-inch pieces
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

Directions:

Heat oil over medium heat until it shimmers. Add onion, celery, carrot, garlic and thyme and cook until tender. Add beans and vegetable stock and bring to



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a boil. Drop to a simmer and cook, covered, until beans are tender and creamy in texture, about 40 minutes. Uncover and bring to a low boil. Cook until liquid reduces to 1/2 its volume. Add broccoli rabe and mix well. Drop heat to a simmer and cook, covered for 5 minutes. Turn off heat and let rest, covered, for 5 minutes.

To serve:
Remove lid and add salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately

Paso Robles Zinfandel Dessert Wine Poached Figs with Three Twins Vanilla Ice Cream and Pistachio Biscotti

For the Figs:
24 each ripe Mission Figs
2 1/4 cup Paso Robles Zinfandel dessert wine
1/2 cup local honey
1 tablespoon whole cloves

Directions:
Preheat oven to 350°

Pack figs tightly in a shallow baking pan. Combine rest of ingredients and pour over the figs. Bake for 1 hour or until figs are tender when pierced with a paring knife. Remove from oven and let cool to room temperature. Remove figs with a slotted spoon and strain remaining liquid into a saucepan. Reduce liquid to a syrup consistency. Set aside and hold.

For the Biscotti:
1 1/4 cup pistachios, shelled and lightly toasted
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/4 teaspoon table salt
2 large eggs
1 egg white beaten with a pinch of salt
1 cup evaporated cane juice
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
1 1/2 teaspoon anisette (or ouzo)
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:
Preheat oven to 325°

Chop 1 cup pistachios coarsely. Process remaining 1/4 cup in food processor or mortar and pestle, until fine as flour. In a separate bowl, add all purpose flour, baking powder and salt and mix until well combined. Add ground pistachios and mix well.

Whip 2 eggs in a mixing bowl at high speed until doubled in volume. While mixer is running at medium speed, drizzle melted butter, sugar, anisette and vanilla until combined. Sprinkle 1/2 the flour mixture over the egg mixture and fold together until just combined. Add remaining flour and chopped pistachios and fold together again, until just combined.

Divide batter in 1/2 and place onto a greased parchment paper. Shape into 2 separate 3-inch by 8-inch rectangles. Brush the tops with the egg whites and bake until just turning gold, about 30 minutes.

Remove from oven and rest for 30 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and slice into 1/2 inch slices with a serrated knife. Lay biscotti on a cooling rack placed over a cookie sheet. Bake again until golden, about 30 minutes. Let cool to room temperature. They can be stored in an airtight container for 3-4 weeks.

To serve:
Scoop 3 figs onto a dessert plate and top with a scoop of ice cream. Drizzle with syrup and place 3 biscotti on the side. Serve immediately.