

SPRING 2012

I know that spring is here when the first bunches of tender asparagus and piles of fava beans appear at local farmers markets and produce stands. After a wintertime crafting menus of root vegetables paired with hearty braised meats, these fresh vernal greens entice. To celebrate the season, I've showcased spring greens in a savory vegetarian menu that even meat-and-potatoes eaters will cheer.

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

MENU

Serves 8

Insalata Mista

with Organic Greens, Cucumber, Carrot and Red Onion

Wild Mushroom Lasagna

with Dandelion Greens and Fava Bean Coulis

Shaved Asparagus with Garlic and Ginger

Baked Strawberries with Meyer Lemon Zabaglione



Insalata Mista

1 tablespoon white wine vinegar

1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar

8 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

8 cups organic greens (bibb lettuce, red oak leaf, baby romaine), washed and dried

2 cups lovage



2 medium organic carrots, julienned
1 organic cucumber peeled, halved, seeded and sliced
1 medium organic onion, peeled and julienned
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

Directions:

Place vinegars, salt and pepper in a bowl; drizzle in olive oil while whisking ingredients together. In another bowl place the greens, carrots, cucumber and onions. Drizzle with the dressing; toss gently and serve immediately.

Shaved Asparagus with Garlic and Ginger

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
8 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and sliced
2 one-inch pieces of fresh ginger, peeled and julienned
4 ounces shaved Parmesan
1/3 cup fresh squeezed lemon juice
1/3 cup walnut oil
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper to taste
4 pounds green asparagus, with woody parts trimmed

Directions:

Heat the olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and ginger and cook until the garlic is just browned. Remove from the heat and reserve. In a large non-reactive bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, walnut oil and salt and pepper, then add the garlic and ginger. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the asparagus lengthwise into ribbons. Add to the bowl with the dressing. Let rest to infuse for 1 hour.

For service, spoon the asparagus around the lasagna and top with shaved Parmesan.

Wild Mushroom Lasagna

For the Fava Bean Coulis:

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons shallots, minced
1 cup fresh fava beans, shelled and peeled
1 cup vegetable stock
1 cup organic baby spinach
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

Directions:

Heat oil in a saucepan on medium heat; add shallots and cook for 1 minute. Add fava beans and cook for 2 minutes. Add vegetable stock; simmer for 5 minutes; remove from heat; add spinach and stir until wilted. Place in a blender and puree. Adjust seasoning and reserve.

For the Lasagna:

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup cippolini, thinly sliced
6 cloves fresh garlic, minced
8 cups assorted mushrooms (chantrelles, crimini, oyster, morels)
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup Straus Dairy crème fraîche
1/2 cup fresh dandelion greens, chopped



2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
24 each two-inch squares fresh pasta, cooked al dente and cooled

Directions:

Heat oil in a sauté pan over medium heat and add cippolini and garlic; cook until tender. Add mushrooms and cook for 5 minutes. Add heavy cream and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the crème fraîche, dandelion greens and chives. Add salt and pepper to taste. Heat pasta briefly in boiling water; drain and reserve.

To assemble, place one pasta sheet in center of plate and spoon mushroom mixture over; cover with second pasta sheet and spoon mushroom mixture over; cover with third pasta sheet. Spoon the fava bean coulis over and around lasagna, along with any excess mushrooms.

Baked Strawberries with Meyer Lemon Zabaglione

1/2 cup water
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
1/4 cup Meyer lemon juice (2 lemons)
1/4 teaspoon salt
6 large egg yolks
2/3 cup evaporated cane juice
4 cups strawberries, washed, dried and stemmed. If berries are large, cut them in half.
1/3 cup sugar for caramelized crust

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Combine water, lemon zest, lemon juice and salt in a small bowl and set aside. Whip the egg yolks and cane juice in a medium bowl until frothy. Set the bowl over a pot of simmering water. Continue whipping until the mixture thickens. Gradually add the lemon mixture while whipping. Continue cooking and whipping the mixture until it is thick and tripled in volume. Remove the bowl from the heat and continue to whip until the mixture is cool to the touch. Set aside and prepare the berries, occasionally whipping the mixture.

Place the berries in 8 individual ramekins. Bake in the oven till the berries are warm and just starting to release their juices. Remove the berries from the oven. Spoon the zabaglione over the berries and sift the remaining sugar on top. The sugar may be placed under the broiler to caramelize the sugar or with a hand-held kitchen torch. Serve immediately.