

## Menu

- Chilled Asparagus & Avocado Soup with Tomato Confit
- Warm Wild Mushroom, Goat Cheese and Caramelized Onion Strudel
- Crab Cakes
- Molten Chocolate Cakes

If you make all of these recipes together, we recommend serving with a green salad and lemonade or a spritzer. Alternatively, you could use one of these recipes to inspire another menu.

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### Chilled Asparagus & Avocado Soup with Tomato Confit

#### Ingredients

##### *For the soup:*

2 tbsp unsalted butter or olive oil  
1 small yellow onion, minced  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
1 lb asparagus stalks, washed and cut paper thin (discard tough, bitter ends)  
1 pinch nutmeg  
1 quart chicken stock or water  
8 oz spinach leaves, washed (stems are ok)  
1 avocado, large & ripe, peeled and pit removed  
Kosher salt, to taste  
Tabasco sauce, to taste

##### *For the confit:*

4 Roma tomatoes  
Kosher salt, to taste  
Extra virgin olive oil, to taste

#### Procedure

##### *For the soup:*

In a thick-bottomed soup pot, sweat the onion and garlic in butter or oil over very low heat until sweet. Add asparagus stalks. Over medium heat, sweat the stalks. Add the nutmeg and continue sweating for a few more minutes. Add chicken stock or water. Bring to a boil, and reduce to a simmer. Simmer for about 20 minutes until the asparagus is very tender. Remove the soup from the heat and place soup into an ice bath to cool. While cooling, stir in spinach. Puree soup in a bar blender and strain through a mesh sieve.

When the soup is cool, add the pitted avocado to a bar blender and cover with about 2 cups of the chilled soup. Blend until smooth, and combine the avocado puree into the chilled soup. Season with salt and Tabasco to taste.

*For the confit:*

Preheat the oven to 200° F. Core out the tomatoes, and with a pairing knife, score the tip of the tomato, making an X. Drop the tomatoes in boiling water for about 10 seconds, then immediately remove them from the water and shock them in ice water. Peel off the skins. Quarter the tomatoes and remove the seeds. Toss the tomatoes in olive oil and salt lightly. Place them on an aluminum foil lined baking pan, about ½ inch apart from each other, and place in the oven. Cook for about 30-40 minutes or until the tomatoes have slightly dehydrated and have darkened a bit in color. When cool, cut into diamonds.

Serve the soup cold, garnished with blanched asparagus tips, diced avocado and the tomato confit. Serves 8-10.

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## **Warm Wild Mushroom, Goat Cheese and Caramelized Onion Strudel**

### Ingredients

1 box Phyllo dough, thawed in refrigerator for 2 days  
4 tbsp butter, melted  
½ package soft goat cheese (I like Laura Chenel or Harley Farms)  
1 onion, caramelized in advance  
1 lb wild assorted mushrooms, cleaned and sliced thin (remove any tough roots)  
2 tbsp butter  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
2 tbsp parsley, minced  
Kosher salt, to taste  
Pepper, to taste

### Procedure

Melt the butter in a large sauté pan and add the mushrooms. Cook over medium heat until the mushrooms are tender and their water has evaporated. Next, add the minced garlic and parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Allow to cool completely.

While the mushrooms are cooling, unfold the roll of the packaged Phyllo dough onto a clean dry surface. Cover the dough with a damp (not wet) paper towel to prevent cracking of the dough. On a cutting board, place a sheet of Phyllo dough and brush it carefully and completely with melted butter. Repeat this process with another sheet.

With a sharp knife, cut the Phyllo dough into equal strips in your desired size. (You will be folding them in half to make each strudel — see below.)

To assemble the strudels, place approximately a teaspoon of the mushroom mixture on the far right corner of one strip of Phyllo, top with a half-teaspoon of the goat

cheese and finish with a pinch of caramelized onion. Fold the rectangular strip diagonally to form a triangle.

Brush some melted butter over the finished strudel and refrigerate until needed. They will keep for 3-5 days. When you are ready to bake the strudel, put them on a baking sheet and bake in a 350° F oven for 5-10 minutes or until golden brown. Be careful when removing them from the oven — they are very hot!

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## **Crab Cakes**

### Ingredients

1 tbsp butter  
4 shallots, minced  
1 red bell pepper  
½ cup mayonnaise  
1 Fuji apple, peeled and grated on cheese grater, juice reserved  
1 tsp lemon juice, fresh  
2 tsp tarragon, minced  
2 tbsp parsley, minced  
1 lb Dungeness crab meat, picked of shells, and squeezed gently of excess water  
½ cup breadcrumbs, finely ground  
Salad oil  
Tabasco sauce, to taste  
Kosher salt, to taste

### Procedure

Preheat the oven to 350° F. In a sauté pan, sweat the shallots in butter over medium-low heat until sweet, but not yet brown. This will take about 5 minutes. Allow the shallots to cool. While the shallots are cooling, take a red bell pepper and rub its skin with about a teaspoon of salad oil. Place the pepper on a baking pan and place into the oven. Roast the pepper for 10-15 minutes, until the skin begins to blister. Remove the pepper from the oven. Allow to cool in a small bowl, covered with plastic wrap. When cool, remove the skin and seeds. Mince the pepper and reserve.

In a large mixing bowl, add the red pepper, shallots, mayonnaise, grated apple with juice, lemon juice, herbs, and crab. With a spatula, gently fold the mixture together, so not to break up any whole crabmeat. This will give the cakes a better texture. Fold the mixture just until it is evenly mixed. Add enough breadcrumbs to bind the cakes. You might need more or less breadcrumbs depending on the moisture of the crab. Season with salt and Tabasco. Mold crab into cakes of desired size and shape.

In a hot sauté pan, add a teaspoon of salad oil, and sear the cakes over medium heat until golden brown on each side, and hot all the way through the center. Makes about 12 cakes.

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## Molten Chocolate Cakes

### Ingredients

5 oz chocolate, semisweet  
5 oz butter  
3 eggs  
3 egg yolks  
1 ½ cups powdered sugar, sifted  
½ cup all-purpose flour  
1 tsp vanilla extract

### Procedure

Preheat oven to 325° F. Place chocolate and butter over a double boiler; stir until melted. Let cool slightly. In the meantime, whisk eggs, egg yolks, and vanilla in a large mixer. Slowly add the sugar, then the chocolate mixture and flour. Coat ¾ cup ramekins with butter, then pour the batter into the ramekins up to the rim. Place in oven for 8-10 minutes. Remove from oven; run knife along edges of ramekin; invert onto a plate. Serve with vanilla whipped cream or vanilla bean ice cream. Makes about 6 cakes.