

Improv: **July 2020**

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Shopping List

Please buy organic when and if you can.

2 lbs mussels

4 (6 oz) bone-in, center cut pork chops

8 oz thick cut prosciutto or pancetta

Bakery

1 large baguette

1 lb pizza dough

Dairy

2 cups Pecorino cheese – try to find a “truffles” one if you’d like

1 ½ Parmigiano Reggiano

2/3 cup crème fraiche or sour cream

Herbs: *Always check the fridge first*

1 bunch Italian parsley – for 3 tablespoons chopped

1 bunch oregano – for 2 tablespoons chopped

1 bunch basil – for 3 tablespoons, chopped

1 bunch thyme – for 2 tablespoons

Produce

1 shallot

2 carrots

2 ribs of celery

1 small celery root

1 head garlic for 10 cloves

1 sweet onion

2 cups fresh cherries – for 1 cup chopped

2-3 green onions

2 lemons

10-12 tomatoes – the best you can find

2 Yukon Gold potatoes

Dry

1 cup dry white wine

1 cup couscous

1/3 cup slivered, dry toasted almonds

1 lb fettucine

1 tablespoon cornmeal

From Your Pantry

ALWAYS CHECK THIS LIST – IT CHANGES

Olive oil, ¾ cup

Butter, 1 ½ tablespoons

Flour, 2 tablespoons

Salt, Kosher

Pepper

Steamed Mussels in Broth: **July 2020**

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Monday:

Steamed Mussels in Broth

I'll never forget the first time my kids gobbled these up – my heart swelled with pride. I grew up eating mussels 2-3 times a month and this "mussel soup" was my favorite way to enjoy them. Only one update, I'll pair them with a crisp Viognier. Yum.

Serves: 4 Prep: 15 Cooking: 20

Ingredients

¼ cup olive oil

1/3 cup minced shallots

2 carrots, in ¼ inch dice

2 celery ribs, in ¼ inch dice

1 small celery root, thickly peeled, in ¼ inch dice

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 clove garlic, sliced in half lengthwise

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup dry white wine

3 tablespoons minced Italian parsley

2 pounds small mussels, debearded and scrubbed clean, tightly closed

1 large baguette, not a super skinny one, ½" slices on the diagonal

Cooking Instructions

1

Preheat oven to 375°.

2

Place slices of baguette on a rimmed baking sheet.

3

Heat olive oil in a large pot over moderate heat.

4

Add shallots, carrots, celery, celery root, and garlic.

5

Season with salt and pepper.

6

Saute vegetables until soft, 10 to 12 minutes.

7

Place bread in the oven for 5 minutes to toast. Rub each with cut garlic when they come out of the oven.

8

Add wine, 2 tablespoons parsley and mussels.

9

Increase heat and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook, shaking the pot a few times, until the mussels open-about 5 minutes.

10

Discard any mussels that do not open.

11

Divide mussels among warm bowls. Spoon the vegetables and juices over them. Garnish with the remaining parsley and toasts.

Pork Chops with Fresh Cherry Couscous: **July 2020**

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Tuesday:

Pork Chops with Fresh Cherry Couscous

We are still enjoying fresh cherries here in Northern California and this is a great way to work them into a meal. Their tart, fruity flavor works perfectly with the bite of the green onion and the richness of the pork. It's a winning dish!

Serves: 4 Prep: 15 Cooking: 10

Ingredients

3 tablespoons olive oil
4 (6 oz) bone-in, center-cut pork chops
1 teaspoon salt,
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 cup couscous
3/4 cup boiling water
1 cup fresh cherries, pitted and chopped
1/2 cup green onions, sliced
1/3 cup dry-roasted almonds, slivered
2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Cooking Instructions

Preheat pan to medium-high heat. I like to use my cast iron skillet.

2

Set a small pot with 1 cup of water to boil.

3

Brush 1 tablespoon olive oil evenly over both sides of pork, and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt and black pepper.

4

Place chops in skillet and cook for 4 minutes.

5

Flip the chops and remove pan from heat. Let sit for 2 minutes.

6

Remove from pan and let pork rest for 5 minutes.

7

Place dry couscous in a large bowl.

8

Add ¾ cup boiling water; cover and let stand for 5 minutes.

9

Uncover and fluff with a fork.

10

Stir in remaining 2 tablespoons oil, ½ teaspoon salt, chopped cherries, green onion, almonds, lemon zest and juice.

11

Toss to combine and serve under a pork chop.

Pasta Pomodoro: **July 2020**

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Wednesday:

Pasta Pomodoro

The garden is teeming with fresh tomatoes. This is a simple, fresh sauce that you can even double and freeze if you like. If you have a food mill, you could process half of the tomatoes before they enter the pot. But, it's not mission critical.

Serves: 4 Prep: 15 Cooking: 30

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 small yellow onion, diced

4-6 cloves of garlic, thinly sliced

6 cups fresh tomatoes, roughly chopped (diced if you do not have an immersion blender)

2 tablespoons fresh oregano, chopped

3 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped

1 lb fettucine

1 ½ tablespoons butter
3 teaspoons salt
½ cup Parmigiano Reggiano, grated

Cooking Instructions

Prep Opportunity

The sauce can be made up to a day ahead if you'd like.

- 1
Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat.
- 2
Add onion and cook, stirring a few times, until soft – about 10 minutes.
- 3
Add garlic and cook 1 minute.
- 4
Add tomatoes and cook for 15 minutes or until they are starting to fall apart. Mash with the back of a wooden spoon to help them along.
- 5
Set a pot of water to boil for the pasta. Add 1 tablespoon salt to the water.
- 6
Add 1 ½ teaspoons of salt to the tomato sauce and continue to simmer for 10 minutes more.
- 7
Cook pasta.
- 8
Blend sauce with immersion blender to just smooth.
- 9
Taste the sauce for salt and adjust as needed.
- 10
Melt butter.
- 11
Drain pasta, toss with butter and divide among bowls.
- 12
Top with tomato sauce, cheese and fresh basil.

Potato Pizza: **July 2020**

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Thursday:

Potato Pizza

This dinner was at the request of my kids. A local place makes a truffled potato pizza and I had to give it a whirl. It's delicious and easy - even for the kids to make!

Serves: 4 Prep: 15 Cooking: 30

Ingredients

8 oz thick cut prosciutto or pancetta, diced
2 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 large sweet onion
2 tablespoons flour
1 lb pizza dough
1 tablespoon cornmeal
2/3 cup crème fraiche
2 cups Pecorino cheese (look for a truffle one if you like it), grated
1 cup Parmigiano Reggiano, grated
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves

Cooking Instructions

Prep Opportunity

You can cook the potatoes ahead. Store in the fridge.

- 1
Place the potatoes in a saucepan; add enough water to cover and 1 tablespoon of salt. Cover pot and bring to a boil over high heat.
- 2
Reduce the heat to medium and boil with the lid slightly ajar until the potatoes are almost tender, 10 minutes. Drain and let them cool.
- 3
Meanwhile, heat the oil in a skillet over medium heat and add both the prosciutto and onion. Cook, stirring, until the onions are caramelized, 15 minutes. Set aside.
- 4
Place a pizza stone or baking sheet on the middle rack of the oven.
- 5
Preheat to 500°.
- 6
Flour a workspace.
- 7
Roll out the dough to a 14- 16" round.
- 8
Sprinkle a pizza peel or a baking sheet with cornmeal. Transfer the dough to the prepared peel.
- 9
Spread the crème fraîche over the dough, leaving a ½" border around the edge. Sprinkle with the truffled Pecorino cheese.
- 10
Scatter the caramelized onions and prosciutto all over the pizza, reserving just 2 tablespoons of the mixture.
- 11

Arrange the potato slices on the dough and then drizzle them with 1 tablespoon good olive oil.

12

Sprinkle with the Parmigiano Reggiano, reserved onion mixture and thyme leaves.

13

Transfer to the oven and bake until crust is golden – approximately 8-10 minutes depending upon the thickness of the dough.

14

Slice and serve immediately.