

Water Cress Tea Sandwich with Orange Butter

Ingredients

1 bunch watercress washed and dried (see notes) or one 4 ounce bag prewashed water cress.

6 tablespoons softened butter

Zest of 1 orange

Juice from half orange (about 2 tablespoons)

Loaf of sour dough bread thinly sliced

Directions

Add orange zest, and orange juice to butter and blend to a spreadable consistency. Add more orange juice if needed. Set aside.

Trim crust from bread slices and create a rectangle or square depending on loaf shape.

Spread orange butter on all slices, covering entire surface.

Layer each slice of bread with watercress to create sandwich filling. Add a small dab of butter on top of each watercress filling to prevent water cress from falling off bread. Join two slices of water cress covered bread to form sandwich. Cut sandwich in quarters or if shape permits cut diagonally for form triangles.

Wrap tea sandwiches in food wrap to prevent drying out before serving time.

Notes

1. Pre-washed bags of watercress are available at Whole Foods.

2 Watercress preparation: Remove stems, rinse leaves in cool water, tossing to separate. Soak leaves for 30 minutes in two quarts cool water mixed with two tablespoons white vinegar. Drain leaves and pat dry on towel

3. Sour dough is selected for additional flavor but other breads can be used. Pepperidge Farm has two breads, Very Thin that comes in white or whole wheat or Party that comes in Jewish Rye or Dark Pumpernickel. I use sourdough because of the flavor and it is a sturdier bread. Thin sliced sourdough bread is available at Dierbergs but the loaf shape does result in greater waste when crust is trimmed. Whole foods 365 brand snappy sourdough bread is thicker but more rectangular in shape resulting in less waste.

Cucumber Dill Tea Sandwiches

Ingredients

1. Fresh Dill approximately 3 tablespoons
2. Sour dough bread, thin sliced
- 3 1 large English Cucumber
4. Four ounces spreadable butter at room temperature.

Directions

Wash and dry dill. Finely chop dill. Blend chopped dill into spreadable butter. Set aside.

Wash cucumber and split in half length wise. Use a vegetable peeler to create very thin slices.

Trim crust from bread slices. Spread dill butter evenly over each slice of bread.

Layer buttered bread slices with cucumber pieces. Cover entire surface with about two thicknesses of cucumber. Join both sides of bread to form sandwich. Cut sandwiches into quarters. Alternatively, if bread shape permits, cut diagonally to create triangles.

Wrap sandwiches in food wrap until served to prevent bread from drying out.

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Apple Fennel Cheese Tea Sandwiches

Ingredients

4 ounces log goat cheese softened to room temperature

3 tablespoons honey

fennel bulb

2 granny smith apples

juice of a lemon

loaf of thin sliced sourdough bread

Directions

In a bowl mix goat cheese and honey to a spreadable consistency. Add more honey if needed. Set aside.

Wash and core fennel bulb. Trim green stalks from fennel. Cut bulb in half. Using one half, finely chop fennel and reserve other half for another recipe or discard.

Core and very thinly slice apples. The use of a mandolin or thin slicing blade of a food processor is helpful to get desired thinness. Toss with lemon juice to prevent browning of apple slices.

Trim crust from bread slices. Spread goat cheese honey mixture evenly onto bread slices. Sprinkle one side of bread with chopped fennel allowing fennel to stick to cheese mixture. On paired bread slice arrange apple slices to about two thicknesses. Make sure apple slices cover bread entirely.

Join the fennel and apple covered slices to form sandwich. Cut sandwich in quarters. Alternatively, if bread shape allows, cut the sandwich on the diagonal to create triangles

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Basil Lemonade

Makes 1 gallon

Ingredients:

Approximately one gallon of lemonade prepared with fresh lemons and sweetened as desired.

Fresh lemon slices for decoration

2 cups fresh basil leaves, washed and stems removed

Directions:

Muddle the basil leaves and add directly to the lemonade.

Stir well. Chill. Add sliced lemons for decoration and serve with an ice ring if desired.

Additional ideas: prepare ice ring with edible flowers such as pansies and nasturtium. Next to your punch bowl place a vase of basil and several lemons.

Herb Gimlet

Recipe from the Tasting Table Test Kitchen

Yield: 1 cocktail

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 7 minutes, plus 20 minutes to cool the syrup

Herb Gimlet

Recipe from the Tasting Table Test Kitchen

Yields 1 cocktail

Preparation time 10 minutes

Cook time 7 minutes plus 20 minutes to cool the syrup.

INGREDIENTS

Herb Simple Syrup

½ cup sugar

½ cup water

1 tablespoon fresh tarragon leaves

1 tablespoon fresh lemon thyme leaves

1 tablespoon lemon zest

Gimlet

2 ounces gin (Uncle Val's Botanical Gin recommended)

1 ounce fresh lime juice

¾ ounce herb simple syrup

2 dashes celery bitters

Fresh lime or lemon slice

DIRECTIONS

1. Make the herb simple syrup: Heat the sugar and water in a saucepan over medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sugar fully dissolves. Remove the pan from the heat and add to it the herbs and lemon zest. Transfer the syrup to a bowl. Place it in the fridge, uncovered, until it the syrup cools. Once the syrup has cooled, pass it through a fine strainer. It will hold for up to 1 week in an airtight container. 2. Make the gimlet: Add all ingredients to a shaker. Fill the shaker completely with ice and shake vigorously. Strain into a chilled coupe glass. Garnish with lime or lemon slice. Garnish with lime or lemon slice (optional).

CHEDDAR CHEESE STRAWS

Yield: about 10 dozen

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups butter, softened
1 (1-pound) block sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 to 2 teaspoons ground red pepper
1/2 teaspoon paprika
4 cups all-purpose flour

Directions:

Beat first 5 ingredients at medium speed with a heavy-duty stand mixer until blended. Gradually add flour, beating just until combined. Use a cookie press with a star-shaped disk to shape mixture into long ribbons, following manufacturer's instructions, on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Cut ribbons into 2-inch pieces.

Bake at 350° for 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.

For **Cheese Wafers:** Combine ingredients as directed; chill dough 2 hours. Shape dough into 4 (8-inch-long) logs; wrap each in plastic wrap, and chill 8 hours. Cut each log into 1/4-inch-thick slices; place on parchment paper-lined baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 13 to 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. Store in an airtight container 1 week.

Notes

If you don't have a heavy-duty stand mixer, you can use a handheld mixer. Just divide the ingredients in half, and work with two batches.

Cornmeal, Black Pepper & Rosemary Butter Cookies

Makes 6 dozen cookies

Initial Ingredients:

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup corn flour
- ½ cup finely ground cornmeal
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon finely ground dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
- 2 teaspoons fresh coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 cup sugar

1½ cups (i.e., 3 sticks) unsalted butter, softened

2 teaspoons almond extract

Finishing Ingredients:

fresh coarsely ground black pepper

clear coarse-size sugar decorating crystals

Directions:

1. From the list of initial ingredients, combine, mix, and then sift the following: all-purpose flour, corn flour, finely ground cornmeal, sea salt, finely ground dried rosemary and fresh coarsely ground black pepper. Reserve this mixture of dry ingredients.
2. Using a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, with the mixer operating at medium speed, cream together the butter and the sugar.
3. Add the almond extract and the minced fresh rosemary, and incorporate.
4. With the mixer operating at low speed, gradually add the reserved mixture of dry ingredients until just incorporated, thereby creating a dough. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, as needed, to ensure even mixing.
5. The dough may be used immediately. It should be stored temporarily in the refrigerator when not being used.
6. Position a rack in the center of an oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
7. Make a prepared cookie sheet by placing a silicon baking mat on top of a cookie sheet and then placing a sheet of parchment paper on top of the silicon baking mat. (Baking is quicker if two prepared cookie sheets are used in rotation.)
8. For each cookie that is about to be baked, begin with a portion of dough that is hemispherical in shape and one inch in diameter. (The most convenient way to obtain this dough portion is to use a 1 inch wide melon scoop. The dough is scooped up and then scraped level with the top of the melon scoop.)
9. Roll the dough portion into a dough ball.
10. Flatten the dough ball, into a dough round that is very approximately 3/8 inch thick.

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11. Place the dough round onto a prepared cookie sheet, with at least 3½ inches between each dough round. Continue until the prepared cookie sheet is filled with dough rounds.
12. Lightly flour a sheet of wax paper that is the size of a cookie sheet.

13. Place the floured sheet of wax paper, flour side down, over the completely filled cookie sheet.
14. Press each dough round until each dough round has a depth of 1/4 of an inch, thereby creating a cookie sheet filled with unbaked cookies.
15. Remove and discard the floured sheet of wax paper.
16. Sprinkle the unbaked cookies with fresh coarsely ground black pepper and clear coarse-size sugar decorating crystals.
17. Bake the filled cookie sheet at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for approximately 15 minutes. Half-way through the baking process, rotate the filled cookie sheet 180 degrees in the oven, so as to provide a uniform baking environment for each cookie.
18. The cookies are properly baked when a light to medium brown color is observed around the edge of the cookies.
19. After baking, slice the cookies away from the parchment paper with a long, thin carving knife. Allow each sliced cookie to remain on the baking sheet until the sliced cookie has firmed and slightly cooled (approximately one minute). Then transfer each cookie onto a cooling rack.
20. This recipe produces approximately 6 dozen cookies. Each cookie is approximately 2¼ inches in diameter.

Notes: Store airtight, in layers separated by wax paper, in a dry place. These cookies improve with age. They keep for 3-4 weeks. They may be frozen.

This recipe has been slightly modified from the original recipe. The original recipe comes from the on-line site LunaCafe (www.thelunacafe.com).

Rosemary Nut Bars with Dried Cranberries

Ingredients:

10 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
1 cup and 2/3 cup light brown sugar
1 ¼ cups and ¼ cup all-purpose flour
3 eggs
1 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
zest of 1 orange
½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
3 tablespoons fresh rosemary, minced
1 ½ cups coarsely chopped pecans
1 cup coarsely chopped dried cranberries (often sold as “craisins”)

Directions:

Heat oven to 375°F. Line a 9 x 13-inch pan with foil, butter generously, and set aside.

Crust: Place butter, 2/3 cup brown sugar, and 1 ¼ cups flour in a food processor and pulse until the mixture resembles corn meal. Pat the mixture into the prepared 9 x 13-inch pan. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until lightly golden. Set aside the baked crust.

Reduce the oven heat to 350°F.

Filling:

In a small bowl, combine ¼ cup flour, salt, and baking powder; set aside. In a large bowl beat eggs and 2/3 cup brown sugar. Add orange zest and vanilla. Beat in flour ingredients until combined. Add the chopped rosemary and combine well. Sprinkle the nuts and dried cranberries over the baked crust and pour the rosemary mixture evenly over the top.

Bake for 20 to 22 minutes. When cool, cut into bars or diamond shapes.

Note: These bars can be stored in the freezer until needed.

Jalapeno Parmesan Cheese Straws

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/cheese-straws-recipe/>

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