

Spring Dinner Party

Written by Margaret Evans
Tuesday, 14 May 2019 13:55



'Tis the season! The season for outdoor gatherings, that is. Spring in Beaufort is the most wonderful time of year to invite friends over for cocktails on the deck while you're grilling vegetables to go with dinner. Of course, the no-see-ums will run you back into the house when it's actually time to eat supper, but that's part of Beaufort's charm. Vince and I recently hosted a dinner party for some of our Lowcountry Weekly friends.

It offered a great opportunity for me to experiment with a couple of new recipes and revisit some old favorites. I hope you'll enjoy them as much as we did. I'm already looking forward to the next gathering around our dining room table. Bon Appetit!

Mixed Greens Salad with Strawberry Vinaigrette

This is the best berry vinaigrette ever! It's quick and delicious.□

For the vinaigrette:

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1 (8-ounce) package frozen strawberries, thawed in refrigerator

2 tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the salad:

6 pieces prosciutto, very thinly sliced

8 cups mixed salad greens

Fresh strawberries, sliced

Fresh blackberries

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Candied pecans or almonds, to garnish

In blender, process strawberries with honey and vinegar. Slowly add vegetable oil to form an emulsion. Season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate until ready to use. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place prosciutto on a parchment-paper-lined baking sheet, bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until crispy; set aside to cool. Place salad greens in a serving bowl. Top with strawberries, blackberries and crumbled prosciutto. Garnish with candied nuts. Serve with vinaigrette on the side. Serves 6.

Roasted Beef Tenderloin



Always a favorite at dinner parties!

1 whole (4 to 5 pounds) beef tenderloin, trimmed and tied*

1/3 to 1/2 cup steak seasoning

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*Ask your butcher to trim and tie the tenderloin. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Cover a baking sheet with aluminum foil for ease in cleaning. Spray foil lightly with cooking spray. Place trimmed and tied tenderloin on baking sheet. Coat all sides liberally with steak seasoning. (You can't over-season the beef tenderloin. More is better.) Place prepared tenderloin in preheated oven. Cook for 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from oven and immediately cover tenderloin with aluminum foil. Press foil around sides of tenderloin to retain the heat. Let meat rest under the foil for 30 to 45 minutes. The tenderloin will continue to cook under the aluminum foil. Transfer to a carving board and cut into slices. Serves 8 to 10.

Roasted Sweet Potatoes



Use the smaller, skinny sweet potatoes. They're the most tender. Large sweet potatoes are often stringy inside. This is an excellent recipe to use a flavored olive oil! I love any type of citrus flavor with sweet potatoes.

4 sweet potatoes

3 tablespoons olive oil

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Freshly ground sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Slice sweet potatoes into 1/2-inch rounds. (Peeled or unpeeled, it's up to you. I don't usually peel my roasted sweet potatoes.) In a large bowl, toss potato slices with olive oil. Season liberally with salt and pepper. Spread potatoes, in a single layer, on a baking sheet sprayed lightly with cooking spray. Roast in preheated oven, turning frequently, until potatoes are soft and golden brown, 30 to 40 minutes. Serve hot or at room temperature. Serves 6.

Grilled Vegetables



Fresh vegetables are wonderfully delicious when they've been cooked on a hot grill. Mix and match using your favorites.

1 bunch asparagus spears, trimmed

8 ounces whole mushrooms, halved

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2 medium yellow squash, sliced into rounds

1 red bell pepper, cut into strips

1 red onion, quartered

Olive oil

Coarse sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Place prepared vegetables on a baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil; season with salt and pepper. Preheat grill to medium. Cook vegetables on hot grill until crisp-tender. Serve warm or at room temperature. Serves 6.

Dark Chocolate Fruit Bites

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