

Show #63. Time for Tapas

CAULIFLOWER WITH SERRANO HAM AND TOMATO

1 large head cauliflower (2 1/2 lb), cored and cut into 1-inch florets
1/3 cup chopped red onion
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup grape or cherry tomatoes, cut into 1/4-inch dice
1/4 lb thinly sliced serrano ham, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Cook cauliflower in a large pot of **boiling salted water** until just tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Drain well in a colander, then transfer to a large bowl.

While cauliflower boils, cook onion in oil in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and ham and cook, stirring frequently, until just heated through, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and parsley.

Pour tomato mixture over cauliflower and toss to coat, then season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

note:

Cauliflower can be cut into florets and onion, tomatoes, and ham can be cut 1 day ahead and chilled separately in sealed plastic bags.

Makes 12 servings (as part of tapas buffet).

GRILLED SERRANO HAM AND MANCHEGO CHEESE CROSTINI

- 12 slices French bread, sliced on the diagonal into 1/2-inch thick slices
- Olive oil
- 12 thinly sliced pieces good quality ham
- 12 thinly sliced pieces Alpine lace cheese
- Whole grain mustard

Preheat grill. Brush each slice of bread on one side with olive oil and grill, oil-side down until lightly golden brown. Turn over and divide cheese among bread slices. Top each slice of cheese with the slices of ham and grill until the cheese begins to melt. Serve with the mustard.

Yield: 4 servings

CHERRY TOMATOES STUFFED WITH SPANISH OLIVE TAPENADE

For the tapenade:

- 1/2 cup Spanish olives with pimento
- 1 1/2 teaspoons drained capers
- 1 teaspoon brandy, preferably a Spanish brandy such as Solera Gran Reserva
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 32 small cherry tomatoes
- Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

Make the tapenade: in a food processor, pulse the olives until chopped fine. Add the remaining tapenade ingredients and pulse until olives are minced.

With a sharp knife, slice the stem end (1/4-inch down) and the bottom (1/8-inch up) from each tomato and discard. Using a 1/4 teaspoon, remove the juice and seeds from each tomato half, leaving the outside shell intact. Spoon a generous 1/4 teaspoon of the tapenade into each shell and garnish with the parsley.

Yield: 8 to 10 servings

CHICK-PEAS AND SPINACH TAPAS

- 10 ounces fresh spinach leaves, rinsed, or 1 (10-ounce) package frozen leaf spinach
- 19-ounce can (2 cups) chick-peas, drained and rinsed
- 1 red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 tablespoon snipped fresh chives
- 1 to 2 lemons, juiced or to taste
- 1/4 to 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

If using fresh spinach: Cook the spinach in a saucepan with the water clinging to its leaves, stirring, until wilted. Drain, squeeze dry, and finely chop. If using frozen spinach, follow package directions, drain, squeeze dry, and finely chop.

In a bowl combine the spinach with the chick peas, pepper, chives, lemon juice, oil, salt, and pepper. Serve as is or chilled with toasted bread.

Tapas Ahi

Fresh ahi tuna, sliced bite size, tell the butcher it's for sushi for the best

Orange cluster tomatoes, slivered

Cucumber, seeded, 1/2 cut and then sliced, each forming 1/2 circle

Red onion, chopped

Fennel leaves

Lemon juice

Lime juice

Juice the lime and lemon and whisk together and then pour over the ahi. Combine everything else gently and enjoy over wedged tortillas or grilled bread. Wow! Enjoy.

Tortilla de Maiz Tapas

Black beans from a can, rinsed and mashed w/ a fork

2 breast of chicken cooked and cut into bite-size pieces

Small can of chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, chopped into small pieces. Use just a portion, because this adds lots of heat!

Chopped Maui or red onions

Serve on wedges of heated corn tortillas.

Mix everything together except the black beans. Put the mashed beans over the tortillas first and then pile on everything else. Let the good times roll!