

Spring Holidays Give Cooks a Chance to Shine

BLOOMFIELD, CT, Mar. 19, 2010 – Whether you celebrate Easter, Passover or just the coming of Spring, now's the time to gather the family over a good meal.

Duncaster's Retirement Community's Director of Dining Services, Justin Williams, thinks it's time for comfort foods that recall family traditions. He offers these holiday recipes for the season:

What's Easter without a ham? A holiday with something missing, according to Chef Williams. Here's his recipe for ham with a twist:

Old-Fashioned Ham with Brown Sugar and Mustard Glaze

Ingredients

- 1 10-pound smoked ham with rind, preferably shank end
- 1 cup unsweetened apple juice or apple cider
- 1/2 cup whole grain Dijon mustard
- 2/3 cup (packed) golden brown sugar
- 1/4 cup honey

Preparation

Preheat oven to 325°F. Place ham in large roasting pan. Pour apple juice over ham. Cover ham completely with parchment paper, then cover ham and roasting pan completely with heavy-duty foil, sealing tightly at edges of pan. Bake ham until instant-read thermometer inserted into center of ham registers 145°F, about 3 hours 45 minutes. Remove ham from oven. Increase oven temperature to 375°F.

Remove foil and parchment from ham. Drain and discard liquids from roasting pan. Cut off rind and all but 1/4-inch-thick layer of fat from ham and discard. Using long sharp knife, score fat in 1-inch-wide, 1/4-inch-deep diamond pattern. Spread mustard evenly over fat layer on ham. Pat brown sugar over mustard coating, pressing firmly to adhere. Drizzle honey evenly over. Bake until ham is well glazed, spooning any mustard and sugar glaze that slides into roasting pan back over ham, about 30 minutes. Transfer ham to serving platter; let cool at least 45 minutes. Slice ham and serve slightly warm or at room temperature.

Lamb features prominently in the story of Passover, so Chef Williams offers this recipe for your Seder table:

Roast Leg of Lamb with Tarragon-Mint Butter

8 servings

Ingredients

Herb butter

- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 4 teaspoons tarragon vinegar
- 2 teaspoons salt

Lamb

- 1 6 1/2-pound leg of lamb with bone, well-trimmed
- 1 tablespoon 1-inch-long very thin strips orange peel (orange part only)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- salt
- 2 cups dry red wine
- 1 1/3 cups chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons finely grated orange peel
- Fresh tarragon and mint sprigs (for garnish)

Preparation

HERB BUTTER

- Stir butter, tarragon, mint, tarragon vinegar, and 2 teaspoons coarse salt in medium bowl until well blended. Transfer 1/4 cup herb butter to small bowl and reserve for vegetables. **DO AHEAD** *Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover both bowls and chill. Bring medium bowl of herb butter to room temperature before using.*

This last recipe works for any Spring celebration, pairing the sweetness of the carrots with the citrus of orange juice and lime.

Citrus Glazed Baby Carrots

Yields 8

Serving size 1/4 cup

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 pounds baby carrots

- 2 cups water
- 1 cup orange juice
- ¼ pound butter
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 ½ teaspoons lime peel; finely grated
- 1 tablespoon curly parsley chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt

Method:

1. In large pan or rondo combine carrots, water, orange juice, lime juice, grated lime peel, butter, salt, and sugar.
2. If needed, add more water to cover carrots.
3. Bring to boil.
4. Boil until carrots are tender and cooking liquid is thickened to light syrup, stirring occasionally.
5. Transfer to bowl and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

“At Duncaster, we’re all about honoring family traditions and creating new ones that allow our residents to live life to the fullest,” says Chef Williams. “Good food and good friends are one of the best ways I know to celebrate that.”

For year-round holiday suggestions, go to the Duncaster Retirement Community’s “News Section” at www.duncaster.org.

About Duncaster

Duncaster is Bloomfield's signature retirement community. Celebrating 25 years, this campus of 190 independent residences, assisted living and Duncaster’s Caleb Hitchcock Health Center is designed to help residents live life to the fullest by providing security and fulfillment. The community includes an aquatic and fitness center and an on-site health clinic. Residents can participate in ongoing education, social and cultural programs. For more information, see www.duncaster.org or call (860) 380-5005.

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