

Easy Valentine's Day Recipes Leave Time for Romance

Bloomfield, CT, Jan. 29, 2009 – There's nothing romantic about spending your Valentine's Day stuck in the kitchen. So Duncaster Lifecare Community's chef Justin Williams suggests these simple-to-prepare recipes. They also have benefit of some great flavor and a touch of the out-of-the ordinary. And nothing beats chocolate when it comes to stoking the fires of love.

"The lamb chop entrée is special enough for Valentine's Day, yet very simple to prepare. The dish has great flavor for little fuss," comments the chef responsible for Duncaster's celebrated kitchens.

Herb-Roasted Lamb Chops

4 servings

Ingredients

- 4 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary coarsely chopped
- 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 - 1 ¼ inch thick lamb loin chops

Method

1. Mix the garlic, thyme, rosemary, and salt with 1 tablespoon of olive oil in large bowl.
2. Add lamb to the herb mixture; coat thoroughly.
3. Let marinate at least 30 minutes and up to 1 hour.
4. Preheat oven to 400.
5. Heat remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in heavy large ovenproof pan over high heat.
6. Add lamb; cook until browned, about 2-3 minutes per side.
7. Transfer pan to oven and roast lamb chops to desired temperature. Approximately 10 minutes for medium-rare.

Chocolate Fondue

4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 1 apple
- 8 ounce container of strawberries, hulled
- 2 teaspoons of orange juice
- ½ cup of unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/3 cup of sugar
- ½ cup of nonfat evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ounces of dark chocolate, finely chopped

Method

1. Peel and cut the banana
2. Core and slice the apple
3. Place the banana slices, apple slices and strawberries in separate groupings on a serving plate.
4. Sprinkle the banana apple slices with the orange juice and toss gently.
5. Cover the fruit with plastic wrap and refrigerate.
6. In a medium saucepan whisk together the cocoa powder and sugar.
7. Gradually pour in the evaporated milk and whisk well to make a paste.
8. Place the saucepan over a low heat and cook, stirring constantly, until simmering.
9. Remove from the heat and whisk in the vanilla and chocolate.
10. Stir until the chocolate is melted.
11. Transfer chocolate to a fondue pot – keep warm.
12. Serve with the cut fruit for dipping.

Tuxedo Strawberries

“Chocolate covered strawberries are a defined part of romance in America. Dress them to the nines in a white and dark chocolate tuxedo! It’s a treat that is perfect for Valentine’s Day,” says Chef Williams.

Ingredients

- 24 strawberries fresh
- 6 ounces of white chocolate
- 8 ounces of dark chocolate

Method

1. Wash and dry the strawberries, making sure the berries are fully dry.
2. Melt the white chocolate in a double boiler or microwave. (Follow melting directions on the chocolate package).
3. Dip the strawberry in the white chocolate, holding onto the stem or the “shoulder” of the strawberry. Give it a quick little twist and shake. Then point it at the ceiling for a second or two to ensure that the chocolate adheres. Place on a piece of wax paper to let dry.
4. Melt the dark chocolate according to the instructions on the package. Dip the strawberry in at a 45-degree angle from both sides to make the “jacket”. Let the excess drip off. Place on wax paper to dry.
5. Place some melted dark chocolate into a piping bag with a very small tip, or in a Ziploc bag with the little corner snipped off and pipe on “buttons” and a “bow tie”.
6. Allow to dry and cool.

Best if eaten the day they are made.

About Duncaster Lifecare Community

Duncaster is Bloomfield's signature lifecare retirement community. 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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