

GRILLED STUFFED ARTICHOKEs

One can only eat so much salad, so in the summer, I love to stuff and grill artichokes as a nice side dish alternative. It takes a little bit of prep, but it's well worth your time. It's great served with a nice dip like tzatziki or even some ranch dressing.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

2 artichokes

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup gorgonzola cheese, crumbled

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup panko

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus some for brushing

salt and pepper

tzatziki or ranch dressing (optional)

PREPARATION

I like to trim the sharp points off of each of the artichoke leaves before I begin. It's optional, but this way no one will get pricked from the leaves. Just cut $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the bottom of each tip.

In a pot large enough to hold the artichokes, bring an inch of salted water up to a boil. Gently place the artichokes in and lower the heat to simmer. Cover pot and steam for 45 minutes.

Drain out the water and using tongs, gently place the artichokes on a cutting board. Allow them to cool for about ten minutes.

Cut the artichoke in half, lengthwise. Gently scoop out the fibrous elements in the middle being careful to leave the heart and most of the leaves in tact. It's okay if some of the

center leaves get dislodged in the process. Just discard them.

In a small bowl, combine the cheese, panko, and olive oil. Mix with a small whisk and set aside. Brush the artichokes with olive oil on both sides. Season them with salt and pepper to taste.

Oil the grill grates. Heat the grill to medium-high. Place the artichoke halves cut side down on the grates and grill until you get grill marks, about two to three minutes.

Gently remove artichokes with tongs or a spatula and place on a cutting board, cut side up. Spoon the cheese/panko mixture into the center of each artichoke.

Gently place back on the grill, cut side up, to allow the cheese to melt—about 2-3 minutes.

Serve with tzatziki or ranch dressing on the side.

BBQ CHICKEN SALAD

Whenever we make a barbecue chicken, we like to use at least a five-pound bird on our rotisserie. If you're going to the trouble, you might as well have enough for leftovers. Here's a great idea for a quick next-day lunch.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 2)

2 cups of barbecued chicken, skin off, rough chop

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of mayonnaise

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon balsamic glaze

1 teaspoon hot sauce

salt and pepper to taste.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup celery, chopped

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red onion, chopped

1 small roll, halved and toasted

PREPARATION

In a cuisinart, add the chicken and do a few quick pulses to chop the meat. Add in the mayo, olive oil, balsamic glaze, hot sauce, and salt & pepper. Continue to pulse until it's to a consistency you like. Taste, and adjust seasoning or mayo amount to your liking.

Add contents into a large bowl. Fold in the celery and red onion. Spoon out onto the roll halves. Serve alongside a fresh garden salad.

ALL PURPOSE MARINADE

For me, there's no point in paying a fortune for bottles of marinade when I know I have most of the ingredients on hand. Plus, there are no chemicals or preservatives added when I make it. Here's a simple recipe that goes great with poultry or fish. It's not bad on a steak either.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup orange juice

1 tablespoon salt

1 teaspoon ground pepper

2 tablespoons molasses

3 chipotle pepper plus 1 tablespoon adobo sauce

PREPARATION

Mix all of the marinade ingredients together in a bowl.

WHITE SANGRIA

There's nothing like white wine sangria to get a summer party going. It's refreshing and the fruit fools you into thinking you're doing something good for your body. Although from tasting it, you wouldn't know that it's very potent. So fair warning—only serve this to people who are not driving!

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4-6)

1 bottle white wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup triple sec

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup brandy

1 whole orange, sliced (reserve a few for garnish)

1 whole peach, sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$ fresh raspberries

sparkling water

ice for glasses

PREPARATION

In a large pitcher, combine white wine, triple sec, and brandy. Stir. Add in sliced orange, peach and raspberries. Lightly stir with wooden spoon.

Fill 4 white wine glasses with ice. Fill glass $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up with sangria, allowing some of the fruit to pour into glass. Top with sparkling water and lightly stir. Garnish with orange slice.