

MATZO BREI WITH PECANS

For those celebrating Passover, the one consolation of giving up all that bread for a week is having an excuse to make Matzo Brei. This egg/matzo omelet is a sweet treat when doused in copious amounts of maple syrup. People will argue about the egg to matzo ratio, but it really depends on how you like it. If you like things eggier, then add an extra egg or two. If you like it on the dry side, then a 1:1 ratio is the way to go. It's a very forgiving recipe, so have fun with it. I've added pecans and orange zest for a little crunch and zing.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 2)

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

3 large eggs, beaten

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

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

3 sheets egg matzo

1 tablespoon orange zest

2 tablespoons butter

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh blueberries for garnish

1 tablespoon confectioners sugar for garnish

maple syrup, warmed for serving

PREPARATION

In a clean skillet, toast the pecans for a minute. Set aside. Wipe the crumbs out of the skillet. Chop pecans into small pieces and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the eggs, salt and vanilla.

Using cold running water, wet the matzo sheets over a colander. Shake the colander to remove excess water. Crumble the wet matzo sheets into the egg mixture. Add the pecans and orange zest, mix well and set aside for five minutes.

Heat a skillet on medium. Add 1 tablespoon butter to pan. Once melted, pour matzo mixture into pan. Press down with a spatula to flatten.

Cook until bottom is browned, about 5 minutes. Carefully slip out onto a plate. Add 1 tablespoon butter to pan. Carefully flip matzo brei back into pan to cook other side for an additional 4 minutes.

Slide onto serving plate. Garnish with blueberries. Using a small sieve, sprinkle the confectioners sugar on top. Serve with maple syrup.

ASIAN MARKET SOUP

Like most New Yorkers, I'm used to small grocery stores where you have to back your cart out of the aisle if someone is coming towards you looking for peanut butter. So, when I'm in the burbs, I'm always astonished by the sheer volume of food on the shelves, not to mention the wide aisles that seem large enough to fit a Buick.

Today we happened upon an enormous Asian market in Westbury—99 Ranch market. OMG! It had every kind of Asian ingredient you could imagine, including fresh produce, fresh noodles and a pick your own fish ball bin. I went a little nuts and came home with an eclectic mix of things. What to do, what to do? When in doubt, make soup!

INGREDIENTS (serves 6-8)

3 dashi packets

3 quarts water

2 Tablespoons miso paste

1 tablespoon mirin

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon sugar

2 teaspoons fish sauce

2 teaspoons chili/garlic sauce

2 teaspoons hoisin sauce

1 Tablespoon canola oil

2 cloves garlic, sliced

1 maitake mushroom, chopped

3 dried Chinese mushrooms, re-hydrated and sliced

2 baby bok choy, chopped

1 dozen fish balls

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound fresh noodles

1 scallion, chopped for garnish

Dried shallots for garnish

PREPARATION

In a large pot, combine the dashi packets and water. Bring to a boil. Add the miso paste, mirin, soy sauce, sugar, fish sauce and chili/garlic sauce. Stir until miso is dissolved.

In a large skillet, heat oil. Add garlic, mushrooms and bok choy. Sauté until wilted, about 2-3 minutes, then add to the soup.

Add in fish balls and bring back to a boil, then put on low heat for ten minutes. Remove dashi packets. Add the noodles and cook as per box/bag instructions.

Serve in large bowls and garnish with scallions and dried shallots.

RAZOR CLAMS

One of my favorite seafood treats is the razor clam. They're tough to find, although your local Chinatown fishmonger might have a stash somewhere. Whenever I see them I grab them and make this simple dish. It's full of flavor and has a really nice kick for those of you that are chili heads.

INGREDIENTS (serves 2)

1 dozen razor clams

1 Tablespoon Canola oil

2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

1 Tablespoon chili-garlic sauce

1 Tablespoon hoisin sauce

1 teaspoon soy sauce

3 Tablespoons water

1 teaspoon cornstarch

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon sesame oil

1 Scallion, chopped for garnish

PREPARATION

To clean razor clams, soak them in salted cold water for 20 minutes. Drain and rinse in a colander.

Heat large sauté pan or wok. Add oil for 20 seconds. Add garlic, chili-garlic sauce, and hoisin sauce. Stir for one minute. Add razor clams, and stir one minute. Add soy sauce and 2 Tablespoons of water and stir for one minute. Cover and cook for 3 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine 1 Tablespoon of water and 1 teaspoon of cornstarch. Mix until there are no lumps. Uncover pan and pour mixture over razor clams. Drizzle on sesame oil. Stir everything together until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens, about two more minutes.

Place razor clams on a plate. Pour sauce on top. Garnish with scallions.