

SPATCHCOCKED CHICKEN WITH BLUEBERRY BBQ SAUCE À LA LALA

Get your grill going and get it to 350°.

Start with a 3-4 lb. chicken and with some kitchen shears cut along both sides of the backbone and remove it. Now, flip the bird over and press down on the breast bone so that the bird lies flat. There are about a million Youtube tutorials on this. Watching one of them is helpful. You can also ask your butcher to do this.

Season both sides of your prepared bird generously with salt and pepper. When the grill is ready, put it on breast side up and grill, covered for 20 minutes. Cook 20 more minutes and start basting with the shrub every 5 minutes. Cover grill between basting.

After 40 minutes, total, carefully turn the bird over so that the breast side is down. Grill for another 10-20 minutes, basting the other side. You want the internal temp to reach 165° before removing from the grill.

Let rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.



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BRUSCHETTA WITH GARDEN TOMATOES AND BURRATA À LA LALA

8 slices of good quality bread
EVOO
2-3 cloves of garlic, peeled and halved
1 lb. garden tomatoes, chopped

1/2 lb. fresh mozzarella or Burrata
Salt and pepper
Fresh chives and/or basil

Preheat oven to broil.

While oven is getting up to speed, season the chopped tomatoes with salt and pepper and give them a glug of EVOO. Let sit for about 5 minutes to let juices develop.

Brush slices of bread with the EVOO and toast until golden and crisp. Remove from oven and rub each slice of bread with the cut side of garlic. This will impart the hint of garlic, but won't be overwhelming.

To serve, put a slice of mozzarella or a smear of Burrata on each slice of bruschetta and top with the tomatoes. Garnish with chopped chives or a chiffonade of basil.



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MR. LOVELL'S POTATOES

Ken Lovell is the patriarch of UFO (Urban Farm at Ormewood) where we garden. He is generous both with his vegetables and his considerable knowledge. All summer we trade things that the other isn't growing. He'll give us corn and we'll give him zinnias. He recently shared some lovely new potatoes he had grown and I used them in a recipe I found in *Bon Appetit* several years ago. This recipe falls into the category of "great for those who like to play with their food". You'll need a 12 cup muffin tin, parchment paper and ideally, a mandoline slicer, so not the regular set of tools. The end result is worth the trouble because these little ziggurats of potatoes are a treat for the eye and the palette!

COOKING
À LA *Lala*



POTATO ZIGGURATS À LA LALA

1/2 C. unsalted butter
1 bunch fresh thyme
1 garlic clove, minced

2 lbs. small, new potatoes
1/2 C. grated parmesan cheese *(optional)*
Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 350°. Melt butter in a small saucepan and brush muffin cups all over with melted butter. Line bottom of muffin cups with a circle of parchment paper. Put a couple of thyme sprigs in the bottom of each cup.

Add the minced garlic and about 2 t. Thyme leaves to the butter left in the small sauce pan and cook over medium heat for a minute or two until it is fragrant. Remove from heat.

Using a very sharp knife or, preferably, a mandoline, slice potatoes very thin-as thin as a dime if you are able. Put the sliced potatoes in a bowl and toss with the garlic butter and season with salt and pepper. Work as quickly as you can with the potatoes as they will turn brown.

Now, layer the potato slices into the muffin cups, pressing down as you go so that they are packed tight. When all the cups are filled, cover the muffin pan tightly with foil and bake 30-40 minutes and potatoes can be easily pried with a knife. Remove from oven and increase oven temp to 450°.

Remove the foil from the pan and place a cookie sheet on top of the pan where the foil was. Carefully, flip the cookie sheet over so that the muffin cups are inverted onto the sheet. Tap cups gently to loosen the potato mounds. Remove the parchment paper.

If using parmesan cheese, top each mound with about a tablespoon of cheese. Now return the potatoes to the oven and cook for another 5-10 minutes until tops are crisp and golden.

UFO BLUEBERRIES

Tom and I have been gardening out at UFO (Urban Farm at Ormewood) for 8 years and it wasn't until a couple of years back that I realized there were 30-40 mature blueberry bushes on the property and that our landlord, Red, welcomed us to harvest from them. Since this discovery, I have been on a quest to broaden my repertoire of blueberry dishes. It's hard to beat a cobbler or pie, but I want to share some "off-road" recipes for these precious, purple orbs. The two dishes we explore from this episode are based on one master recipe for a shrub, which is a vinegar based syrup used as a base for cocktails. This one is a recipe from NC chef, Vivian Howard, who uses it both in a cocktail and a barbecue sauce; now, that's double duty!

COOKING
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UFO BLUEBERRY SHRUB & COCKTAIL À LA LALA

For the Shrub:

3 C. blueberries
2 C. apple cider vinegar, divided
2 C. sugar

1/4 t. red chile flakes *(or more!)*
1 cinnamon stick
1 bay leaf

For the Cocktail:

1 1/2 oz. Gin
3/4 oz. lime juice

3/4 oz. shrub
1 1/2 oz. Prosecco

Put the berries and 2T. of the vinegar in a food processor and pulse the berries just to break them up and release some of their juices.

In a medium saucepan, combine the pulsed berries with the remaining ingredients and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pan and cook for an hour, stirring occasionally.

Carefully transfer the cooked sauce to a blender. You may need to do this in batches. Start on low and work your way up to the highest setting and puree it to high heaven. Now, strain the liquid through a fine mesh strainer back into the cleaned pan you started in. Reduce the sauce over medium heat, stirring occasionally until it has reduced by about 1/3 of its original volume, 25-30 minutes.

Let cool and put in a covered container. The shrub will keep in your fridge for several; months.

COCKTAIL: Mix the first 3 ingredients together in a jelly jar. Add some ice and top off with Prosecco. Garnish with a lime wheel and some blueberries.

CREAMED SWISS CHARD À LA LALA

1 C. fresh, torn breadcrumbs or Panko
2 T. EVOO
2 t. lemon zest
2 large bunches of Swiss chard, cleaned;
ribs and stems cut into 2" pieces and
leaves chopped.

3 T. butter
2-3 shallots, sliced
1/2 C. heavy cream

Preheat oven to 400°. Toss breadcrumbs or panko with lemon zest, 2 T. EVOO and a pinch of salt and toast on a rimmed baking sheet until crisp and golden brown, about 10 minutes. Set aside.

Heat butter in a large pan over medium heat and when sizzling, add the shallots and saute for 2-3 minutes before adding the chard stems and ribs and a pinch of salt.

Cook for another 10 minutes or so before adding the chopped chard leaves. Cook for 10- 15 minutes more before adding the heavy cream. Let the cream thicken a bit and taste and adjust seasoning.

Before serving, top with the breadcrumb mixture.



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GREEN BEANS À LA LALA

8-10 C. fresh green beans (Roma II if you
can get them), *cleaned and cut into
1"-2" pieces*

8 oz. smoked lardons or bacon, *chopped
into 1/2" pieces*

1 medium onion, Visalia or white,
chopped

2-3 cloves of garlic, *minced*

pinch of red chile flakes *(optional)*

6-8 C. chicken stock

In a medium pan over medium high heat, saute the lardons or bacon until the fat has rendered out and the pieces are crispy and cooked through. Add the onions and a pinch of salt and cook until soft, 5-7 minutes. Add the garlic and chile flakes, if using, and cook until soft but not brown. Add the beans and enough stock to cover and cook at a low simmer for 30-40 minutes.

Taste the beans as well as the pot liquor and adjust seasoning to your liking.



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