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GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES

Patently sauté sliced onions to sweet and buttery caramelized perfection, and you've got one of the greatest flavors on earth. Make the following recipes and taste for yourself—if you can resist eating the seductive, deep-gold strands straight from the pan.

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY CHRISTIANN KOEPKE



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French Onion Soup with Parmesan-Garlic Croutons

MAKES 12 CUPS The slow-and-low caramelization of onions results in a seductive and satisfying soup, while a cheesy crouton garnish lends welcome crunch that transforms into soggy, sopping goodness. For a classic finishing touch, top individual bowls of hot soup and croutons with grated Gruyère cheese.

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
4 pounds (4 to 5 large) yellow onions,
thinly sliced (about 8 cups)
3 large (about 8 ounces) shallots,
coarsely chopped
4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
3 sprigs fresh thyme, plus more leaves
for garnish
1 bay leaf
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
1½ cups good-quality dry white
wine, divided
8 cups (2 quarts) good-quality
gluten-free beef broth
1 recipe gluten-free Parmesan-Garlic
Croutons, optional (at right)

Caramelize the onions: In your largest Dutch oven or heavy pot, heat the butter over medium-high heat. Add the onions, shallots, garlic, thyme sprigs, bay leaf, 1 teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring occasionally and scraping up any brown bits at the bottom of the pan, until the onions are very soft and dark golden brown, 40 to 60 minutes, depending on your heat. (Decrease heat to medium if the onions are burning.)

Add the wine, scrape the brown bits on the sides of the pot into the onions, bring to a boil, lower the heat, then simmer, stirring occasionally, until the onions are nearly dry, about 10 minutes. Remove the thyme sprigs and bay leaf. Add the broth, stir, bring to a light boil,

reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with 1 to 1½ teaspoons salt, depending on the saltiness of the broth, and pepper to taste. Serve hot with croutons and a sprinkle of fresh thyme leaves.

PARMESAN-GARLIC CROUTONS

MAKES ABOUT 5 CUPS Once cooled, the croutons will keep in an airtight container for 1 week.

⅔ cup olive oil
6 cloves garlic, smashed with side
of knife
1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
1 gluten-free baguette or loaf of Italian
bread, cut into 1-inch cubes (about
5 cups)
¾ cup finely grated Parmesan
cheese, divided

Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a small saucepan, combine the oil, garlic, and ½ teaspoon of the salt, bring the oil to a simmer over medium heat, and let the garlic simmer for 5 minutes, without browning, to infuse flavor. Discard the garlic; reserve the oil.

Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the bread cubes on prepared pan, drizzle with the garlic oil, sprinkle with the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and toss to help the bread absorb the oil. Spread the cubes in a single layer in the pan and bake for 5 minutes. Toss the croutons, and sprinkle with half of the Parmesan cheese. Bake until the croutons are golden and the cheese is melted, another 5 minutes. Toss the croutons again, gathering up the cheese onto the croutons, then sprinkle with the remaining Parmesan and bake until golden brown and crispy, another 5 to 8 minutes.





Caramelized Onion and Pancetta Frittata

SERVES 4 TO 6 Perfect for a weekend breakfast, this luscious frittata contains ricotta cheese, which creates pockets of creaminess that pair perfectly with the eggs and pancetta. Store leftovers refrigerated, in an airtight container, for 3 days.

3 tablespoons olive oil, divided, plus more for greasing

½ large yellow onion, thinly sliced (about 1 cup)

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

4 ounces pancetta, cut into small cubes

2 purple kale leaves, center ribs removed and discarded, chopped

8 eggs

1 cup half-and-half

⅓ cup sour cream

¼ teaspoon sea salt

Pinch of cayenne pepper

½ cup plus 3 tablespoons whole-milk ricotta

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves

2 tablespoons fresh cilantro or Italian parsley leaves, for garnish (optional)

Caramelize the onions: In your largest Dutch oven or heavy pot, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring occasionally and letting the onions stick to the pan a little to brown but not burn, about 25 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium if the onions are browning too fast or burning. Add 2 tablespoons water and continue to cook, stirring, for another 6 to 8 minutes or until onions are soft and golden brown. Set aside to cool.

Warm a saucepan over medium heat with remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring until lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove and reserve the pancetta,

remove all but 1 tablespoon of grease from the pan, then rewarm the pan over medium heat, add the kale, and toss until slightly tender, 1 to 2 minutes. Set aside.

In a blender, blend the eggs on medium-high speed until foamy, about 30 seconds. Add the half-and-half, sour cream, sea salt, ⅓ teaspoon pepper, and pinch of cayenne. Blend until smooth, up to 15 seconds.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly coat a 10-inch cast-iron or ovenproof nonstick skillet with olive oil, then heat over medium heat. Add the caramelized onions, kale, and the egg mixture, then quickly toss once or twice to combine. Sprinkle the pancetta on top, then quickly spoon dollops of ricotta and sprinkle thyme evenly over the frittata. Continue to cook, undisturbed, on the stovetop until the frittata begins to set, about 3 minutes, then immediately place the skillet in the oven and bake until just set, with a slightly wobbly center, 10 to 13 minutes. Garnish with the cilantro and serve warm.





Caramelized Onion and Blue Cheese Tart

MAKES 1 (10-INCH) TART Rich and creamy with hints of sweet, salt, and tang, this gooey-good tart is a fantastic appetizer, side dish, or entrée. It also features a superstar crust you'll want to use for other dishes, such as quiches and pies. Want a more crust-free, fondue-like experience? Bake the filling directly in a small, well-greased baking dish and serve it with your favorite gluten-free toasted baguette.

FOR THE CRUST:

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cold and cut into small cubes, plus more for greasing
⅔ cup (95 grams) brown rice flour
½ cup (75 grams) your favorite 1-to-1 gluten-free flour blend, plus more for dusting
¼ cup (35 grams) arrowroot flour
¼ teaspoon sea or kosher salt
1 egg yolk
3 to 7 tablespoons ice water

FOR THE FILLING:

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus 2 tablespoons more (for optional shallots)
6 cups thinly sliced yellow onions (from about 2 large onions)
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
3 to 4 medium shallots sliced into wedges through their stems (optional)
2½ tablespoons chopped hazelnuts
1 cup heavy cream
½ cup sour cream
2 egg yolks
3 tablespoons arrowroot flour
⅔ cup crumbled Gorgonzola cheese

Grease a 10-inch non-ceramic pie pan with butter. Prepare the crust: In a food processor, combine the three flours and the sea salt; pulse to mix. Add the ½ cup butter and pulse until the butter is the size of peas and the dough starts to clump together.

In a small bowl, whisk together the egg yolk and 3 tablespoons of the ice water. Slowly add the mixture to the dough while pulsing, until a slightly sticky ball forms. Do not over-pulse; stop as soon as the dough begins to clump, and there are nearly no flour bits left. Add a little more ice water only if necessary.

On a lightly floured surface, work the dough gently into a ball, flatten it into a 1-inch disk, wrap it in plastic, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Dust a rolling pin and clean surface with flour. Roll the dough into a disk large enough to cover the pie pan and about ⅛-inch thick. Cover the pie pan with the dough, gently pressing it to fit and pressing any cracks back together; trim and discard any overhanging dough. If the dough is hard to move, roll it onto the rolling pin, then unroll it onto the pan. Freeze the crust (this helps dough keep its shape during baking).

Make the filling: In a large, heavy pot, heat the 3 tablespoons olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions, ½ teaspoon salt, and pepper to taste, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions begin to stick to the bottom of the pot and form browned but not burned bits, 25 to 30 minutes. (Turn down the heat to medium if the onions start to burn.)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Add ¼ cup water to the onions and continue to cook, stirring, until onions are golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes more. Set aside to cool, discarding any extra oil in the pot.

Optional step for extra-beautiful presentation: Slice the shallots into wedges and brown lightly in a pan with the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat for 2 to 4 minutes, flipping halfway through cooking. Set aside.

In small saucepan over medium heat, toast the nuts until fragrant, 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk together the heavy cream, sour cream, and egg yolks. Add the arrowroot, ½ teaspoon salt, and 2 pinches pepper and whisk until smooth. Stir in the cooled caramelized onions, then fold in the Gorgonzola cheese. Pour the mixture into the prepared crust. Smooth the top with a spoon, decoratively arrange the shallots, cut sides up, then sprinkle the nuts on top.

Bake for 15 minutes, then lower the oven temperature to 375°F without opening the oven door. Continue to cook until the filling is just set and only slightly wobbly, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool for at least 15 minutes before cutting. Enjoy warm. ■