Get Cooking Class 1
with Chef John Eisensmith

Kitchen Basics: Set Up, Sanitation, Knife Skills 101, Searing, Stir Frying
- Food Safety and Sanitation Basics
- Kitchen Set Up- Tools, Equipment, Mis en Place, Storage, Knife Skills 101
- Kitchen Exercise- Make-Your-Own Stir-Fry with Choice of Protein, Vegetables and Rice

Concepts
Holding a Knife, Slicing Motion, Tiger Claw, Letting the Knife do the Work, Mental/Physical Mis en Place, Food Safety 101, Protein Food Safety, Searing, Pan Order, Sauce Thickening 101, Reading Recipes, Intro to Cuisines.

Recipe
Brown Stir-Fry Sauce
Yield - 3/4 c.

¼ c. Water
1 1/2 Tbsp. Tamari/Soy Sauce
2 Tbsp. Oyster Sauce
1 Tbsp. Shaoxing Wine (or Sherry Wine)
¾ tsp. Brown Sugar
2 tsp. Sesame Oil
¼ tsp. White Pepper, Ground
1 tsp. Chili Crisp
1 1/2 tsp. Cornstarch

Stir all ingredients together in a small bowl and add to the hot pan with cooked vegetables and/or protein. Be sure to stir the sauce right before adding to keep the cornstarch suspended. Bring sauce to a boil. Sauce will thicken when it comes to a boil. Add a little water if it thickens too much. Serve immediately.
Get Cooking Class 2
with Chef John Eisensmith

Class 2- Soups, Caesar, Sauce 101

- Knife Skills 201
- Building and Reinforcing Flavor
- Soups and Stocks
- Intro to Sauces and Variations (thickening, aioli/mayo, Caesar)
- Kitchen Exercise- Prepare Roasted Garlic Bread, Tuscan Kale Soup, Caesar Dressing

Concepts
Dicing, Cleaning Leafy Greens, Reinforcing Flavor, Thickening 201, Stocks, Soups, Intro to Emulsions, Flavoring of basic sauces

Tuscan Kale and White Bean Soup with Roasted Garlic Bread

History and Introduction
This soup can take many forms as it is derived from a basic peasant soup dating back to the Middle Ages in Italy called Ribollita, which literally translates to “Reboiled”. Historically, when the lords were being served, their food was served on large, dish shaped pieces of bread that would soak up the juices from the meal. These pieces of bread could then be eaten or given to the peasants. The “lucky” peasants then combined these with scraps of meat, bones, and what little vegetables or beans they had to make what is now a Tuscan specialty renowned worldwide.

Recipes for this soup vary widely because it is truly meant to be made from whatever leftover vegetables and protein you may have hanging around. Tuscan food, and to a larger extent, many popular Italian dishes rely on quality ingredients combined with love and care to produce food that is as simple as it is delicious! And this soup is a great example of this! Understanding of the idea is necessary, not memorizing a recipe!
The Basics and Their Roles

Because this soup can vary so widely in ingredients, I thought I’d talk about the common ingredients and the roles they play so you can understand this soup as an idea rather than a list of ingredients that need to be adhered to. As I try to teach people about cooking, I want you to use recipes as guides, rather than as strict rules that need to be followed to hopefully help you feel calmer, more confident, and more natural in a kitchen. This type of soup is a great example of this type of cooking style!

- **Onions and Garlic** - the background of flavor in almost every cuisine.
- **Pancetta, Bacon, Ham, Roasted Meat/Bones, Mushrooms** - gives a deep, umami flavor to provide depth of flavor and a little sweetness.
- **Parmesan Rind** - another one of the background flavors that gives this soup depth of flavor and a richness to it.
- **Beans** - gives the “bulk” to this soup to give it a fillingness and a bit of thickening from their starches.
- **Kale** - the bitterness of the greens balance the deep, umami flavors and the sweetness imparted by the pork to round out the flavor profile of the soup.
- **Stock** - another layer of depth in this dish. Old adage in the kitchen is “the better the stock, the better the dish.”
- **Tomatoes** - these add a little acidity to balance the richness of this soup.
- **Bread** - originally used as a thickener and adding a bit of flavor to this soup. Originally used to make use of day-old bread.

As this dish developed over hundreds of years and inevitably has thousands of variations, as long as you understand the idea of it and follow your palette, you can’t go wrong! Deep background flavors envelop beans and vegetables, and are balanced by the light bitterness and acidity from tomatoes and greens that can be thickened by bread if desired. The perfect meal for cooler weather that will get better as it ages and the flavors continue to mingle!

**Roasted Garlic**

The way I do roasted garlic is technically “confit” garlic, but it is the easiest way to get the same result, in my humble opinion, compared to roasting. Plus cooking it in oil gives you not only roasted garlic, but roasted garlic oil as well! This is simply submerging whole cloves of garlic in oil and cooking it very slowly to cook and soften the garlic while infusing the oil with garlic flavor at the same time. Then you can strain the oil off and use it for sauteing or for drizzling over anything you’d like! This is one of my favorite ways to add flavor to all kinds of dishes! This is a staple in our kitchen and hopefully it’ll be one in yours!
Stock: The Foundations of Flavor

Good food is full of flavor. One way to promote flavorful food is to start with good ingredients, hence the focus on ingredients in Class 1. Building flavor during the cooking processes (taught in Class 2) and combining complementary foods, which we will talk about in our discussion of cuisines later, are both excellent ways to promote good flavor in cooking. We’ll start our discussion on building flavor by learning how to build good flavor from the ground up, with stock. Stock is one of the foundational ingredients used to reinforce and enhance flavor throughout so much of cooking, so it is natural to start here.

What is Stock?

Stock is simply water cooked with bones, vegetables (mirepoix), herbs and spices to increase its flavor for later use. Stock is the basis for many things in cooking such as pan sauces, soups, reduction sauces or used as, or as a part of, the liquid for all moist heat cooking methods (braises, stews, poaching). Chefs love good stock in the same way they love great produce or proteins because they know that great ingredients produce great food.

Basic Stock Ratio

8 pounds of bones and/or trim of meat
1 pound of mirepoix
Aromatics (sprig of thyme, small handful of parsley stems, 2-3 garlic cloves, 4-5 black peppercorns, 2-3 bay leaves)
1 gallon of water
2/3 c. Tomato Paste, optional (only for brown stocks)
2 c. Wine reduced to a cup, optional (red wine for brown stocks, white wine for white stocks)
Mirepoix (mir-'pwä)

Mirepoix is simply a word to refer to the combination of aromatic vegetables commonly used in stock, soups or sauces. It can be cut very large if it will be simmered for a long time (over 2 hours) before being strained off and discarded or mirepoix can be cut small and left in the final preparation, as with soup, lentils, or grains. Either way, it simply describes a mixture of vegetables that will serve as a backbone of flavor for whatever dish you are preparing. There are 3 main types of mirepoix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Mirepoix</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Mirepoix</td>
<td>White Onions (50%), Carrots (25%), Celery (25%)</td>
<td>Any non-white stock, soup, sauce, stew, braise, marinade, or grain/legume dish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Mirepoix</td>
<td>White Onions and/or Leeks (50%), Parsnips (25%) and Celery (25%)</td>
<td>White stocks and pale/white soups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cajun Mirepoix</td>
<td>White Onions (50%), Green Peppers (25%), Celery (25%)</td>
<td>Cajun/creole style dishes</td>
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Aromatics

Herbs, Spices and Other Flavoring Ingredients

Aromatics are ingredients that even in small amounts add big flavors to dishes. The most common aromatics are herbs (dry or fresh) and spices but this category also includes ginger, garlic, chile peppers, mushrooms, or smoked meat or fish (ham hocks or bonito flakes).

Aromatics are typically added at the beginning of the cooking process to impart as much flavor as possible. They may also be wrapped in cheesecloth to make a sachet that can be removed during cooking (to control how much flavor they add) or after cooking (if not straining or serving in the final dish). With a little effort up front to make a sachet, they also make handling and controlling spices much easier during the rest of cooking.
Dry at the Beginning, Fresh at the End!

Leaves, when simmered for a length of time, can impart bitter flavors. Because of this, fresh leafy herbs, such as basil, parsley, cilantro, or sage should be added at the very end of cooking processes. However, the stems of fresh leafy herbs are commonly added in the beginning stages of cooking to impart flavor without concern for the bitterness of the leaves. Dry herbs, on the other hand, take more time to diffuse their flavors and thus should be put in at the beginning as well. And because they are dried, they don’t get bitter like fresh herbs cooked for a long time.

Different Types of Stock

Stocks are categorized by the type of bones used to make the stock as well as how the bones and mirepoix are treated before making the stock.

White Stocks

These are stocks that are made with raw (unroasted) bones, white wine (if using), and white mirepoix that hasn’t been caramelized before going into the stock. These stocks can be made from any type of bones (fish, beef, chicken, pork, or lamb) and are lighter in color and more delicately flavored than Brown Stocks. White stocks are best used with foods that are lighter in color and flavor so as to not overpower or change the visual appeal of the dish. Examples include poaching white fish in fish stock, making a lighter colored soup such as New England style clam chowder, or a potato or parsnip based soup made with chicken or fish stock, or even using a white stock to pan-steam vegetables in order to delicately impart or reinforce the flavor(s) of a dish.

Brown Stocks

These obtain their darker color (and deeper flavor) primarily from the roasting of the bones and caramelizing of the mirepoix before adding water. Often, tomato paste that has been caramelized and/or wine that’s been reduced are also added to these stocks to further develop their deeper color and more complex flavor. Brown Stocks are best used where you want maximum flavor added from the stock and the deeper color isn’t a problem. Common examples include braising liquid for pork, beef, or lamb dishes, reducing for brown sauce/demi glace, for background flavor in meat based soups (beef and barley/vegetable soup), or to add a touch of savoriness to a glaze or other type of sauce (like a brown sugar glaze for pork made from brown
pork stock). In certain dishes, brown stocks are an indispensable part of developing the deep flavors of those dishes.

Stock Tips
(that won’t get you in trouble with the SEC... ;)

- For any non-white stock, roasting the bones until they get a nice brown color before adding them to the stock will help develop a deeper color and flavor.
- Roasting, sweating, or caramelizing the mirepoix in a pan or in the oven will also deepen the flavor as well as removing the sulfur from onions (the stuff that makes you cry).
- For Brown Beef, Veal, or Pork stocks, tomato paste or puree is often added for flavor and color. Browning the tomato paste (in the pan or oven) will further deepen the flavor of the stock.
- Wine is often added to increase the flavor of stocks. If using wine, be sure to add it before the water and reduce it by at least half before adding water. This cooks out the majority of the alcohol in the wine and leaves behind the desired flavors in the wine.
- Stock can be reused again and again and will only get more flavorful with every use! When reusing stock, always check for seasoning as typically the stock is seasoned and then reduced during the initial use. Just add water or, preferably, more unseasoned stock to adjust!
- Simmer Slowly!!!!! It’s always best to bring stock to a boil then turn down to a very slow simmer for the duration of cooking the stock. A slow simmer will bring out all of the flavor from the bones and vegetables while keeping the stock from becoming cloudy by rapid boiling. This also allows the fat and impurities from the bones to rise to the top and be skimmed off thus adding to the clarity and purity of the stock.
- Because fish bones are much more delicate than bird or mammal bones (because they live in the water and don’t have to fight gravity to live), fish stocks only need 45-60 mins to extract all of the flavor from the bones.

All stock is not created equal! At the end of the day, making your own stock will almost always be way better than anything you can buy in the store. So even if you don’t follow all the tips above for increasing the flavor in your stock, just making your own, with as many bones as you can, will have you off to a great start to any soup, sauce or braise.
Emulsions

Emulsions are sauces that are mixtures of two things that don’t naturally mix together, like oil and water. An emulsion can either be oil-in-water or water-in-oil. Vinaigrettes, mayonnaise, hollandaise, and milk are examples of common oil-in-water emulsions in cooking. Water-in-oil emulsions are less common but do show up in the form of butter or margarine.

Oil-in-water emulsions are where oil is suspended inside a framework of water in tiny droplets. When looked at under a microscope, an oil-in-water emulsion looks similar to a sponge with the oil being the air pockets of the sponge and the water is the sponge material surrounding those air pockets (or vice versa for a water-in-oil emulsion).

Emulsifiers

Emulsifiers are ingredients that help to stabilize or hold together emulsions and are used in almost every emulsion. Common emulsifiers are egg yolks, mustard, garlic (roasted or fresh), honey, or soy lecithin. Emulsifiers are typically added before beginning to emulsify the ingredients.

Tips for Emulsification Sauces

Starting with a strong emulsion, temperature and over-saturation are the three reasons emulsified sauces “break” or separate back into their separate parts. If you pay attention to these three, your emulsions will be stronger and more stable.

Strong Start

The beginning stage of an emulsion is the most crucial part. Making sure you disperse the oil very well at the initial stages of emulsification is very important to forming a strong emulsion. When the emulsion starts off with the oil well dispersed in very tiny droplets, it will resist its natural inclination to form bigger droplets as you continue to emulsify and add more oil.
Allowing the temperature to rise, either through excessive mixing (possibly in a blender or food processor) or by lack of attention in holding or during mixing (in the case of hollandaise) causes the fat to become less viscous and easier to allow the water to fall or evaporate out of the thinned oil and thus separate.

**Over-saturation**

There is only so much oil you can add to an emulsion before it can no longer accept any more (aka becomes saturated). This can vary widely based on how stable of an emulsion you have to begin with, what type and quantity of emulsifiers are used, the temperature at which you are making or holding the emulsion, and time that it is held.
Recipes

Tuscan Kale and White Bean Soup
aka “Ribollita”
Yield- 3-4 qts soup

¾ c. Neutral Oil
¾ c. Garlic Cloves, peeled
½ c. Pancetta or Bacon, cut bite sized (optional)
2 Medium Onions, diced or sliced
2-4 Carrots, peeled and cut to bite size
2-3 Stalks Celery, cut to bite size
1 bunch Kale, cleaned and cut to bite size
1 piece Parmesan Rind, (optional)
1 (28 oz) Can Diced Tomatoes
2 qts Chicken/Vegetable Stock
2 cans (15.5 oz) Cannellini or Navy Beans, drained and rinsed well
½-1 tsp Dried Herbs of Choice (Oregano, Thyme, Rosemary, Parsley, etc.)
½-1 tsp Crushed Red Pepper
2-3 Thick slices Crusty Bread or ½ of a Baguette
To taste Salt
To taste Black Pepper

Place the garlic cloves in the oil in a small pot making sure the oil covers the garlic cloves. Turn on medium heat and as soon as it begins to bubble, turn to the lowest setting and cook very slowly until the garlic is soft, about 10-15 minutes. While the garlic is cooking, dice/prepare all the vegetables. In a medium soup pot, when the garlic is cooked, use some of the oil from cooking the garlic (now it is roasted garlic oil) to sweat the pancetta/bacon (if using) until it begins to render, about 2-3 minutes. Next add the Onion and sweat for another 3-4 minutes or until it begins to turn translucent then add in the carrots, celery and crushed red pepper. Continue sweating the veggies for a few more minutes then add in the parmesan rind, stock, tomatoes (with their juices), dried herbs, and beans. Bring to a simmer then taste and adjust for salt and pepper then add the kale. Simmer for another 5-10 minutes to cook the kale to your desired doneness. To finish the soup, carefully remove a few (3-8 ea) of the roasted garlic cloves from the oil and smash them with a spoon then stir into the soup and adjust seasoning if necessary. Drizzle the bread with the garlic oil, smash a few roasted cloves on it, season with salt and toast to serve on the side. The soup will continue to develop flavor as it sits over time.
Caesar Dressing

Yield- 1 c.

1 Egg
2 tsp. Red Wine Vinegar
½ tsp. Dijon
¼-½ tsp. Anchovy paste
¾ c. Canola Oil
1 cl. Garlic, minced
1 Tbsp Shallot/White Onion, minced
1-3 drops Tabasco
½ -⅛ tsp. Worcestershire Sauce
2-3 tsp. Lemon Juice
2-4 Tbsp. Parm, grated
½ -1 tsp. Salt
½ -1 tsp. Black Pepper

Separate the Egg and put the yolk in a medium bowl, reserve the white for another preparation or discard. Whisk in the vinegar, anchovy paste, and dijon into the yolk. While whisking, slowly add the Canola Oil to emulsify. When the oil is almost all in and the dressing begins to thicken, add in the rest of the ingredients and finish with the rest of the oil. Adjust salt, pepper, cheese, and lemon to taste. Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 1 week.
Get Cooking Class 3 
with Chef John Eisensmith

Class 3-Creative Salads, Pasta Sauces, Gnocchi
● How to build all types of salads (green, grain, vegetable, protein)
● Quick Pickling, Flavor Heroes, Vinaigrettes
● Mother Sauce intro- Bechamel, Tomato Sauce
● Homemade Gnocchi
● Kitchen Exercise- Prepare Pickled Onions, Herb Vinaigrette, Bechamel, Marinara, Potato Gnocchi

Concepts:
Quick Pickling, Herbs 101, Emulsions 201, Flavor Combining, Salad Composition, Gnocchi, Intro to Mother Sauces, Sauce Thickening 201

Salad Intro

A salad is simply just a mixture of ingredients that is typically seasoned with a vinaigrette, dressing or other condiments. Salads can be principally composed of Lettuce Greens, Pasta/Grains, Beans, Fruit, Vegetables, or Proteins with other ingredients that are used to accentuate the main ingredient. A salad is one of the purest forms of flavor combining because the ingredients are typically raw, or mixed cold. Because flavor pairing can be difficult for many, this can lead to relying on the same combinations, or having very basic salads which can make salads really boring! But they don’t have to be! In this class, you will learn how to create almost endless variations with your salads to keep them exciting and enjoyable!

Basic Salad Composition
Salads can be as simple or as complex as you want to make them, but generally they follow a basic pattern—Main Ingredient, Accent Ingredient(s), Dressing.

When we get a little more complex with our salads, there is still a bit of a pattern to a well balanced salad—Main Ingredient, Direction/Star, Flavor Hero, Balancing Ingredient(s), Texture, Dressing.

When creating salad combinations, it is helpful to start with the Main Ingredient then choose, one at a time, the rest of the ingredients and flavors in the salad so that each new choice works well with everything you have chosen thus far. Essentially working your way down the line from the most prominent ingredients and flavors to the more supporting or background ingredients.

I’ve created a flowchart to help with the decision making process when creating salads to make sure you are taking the different facets of flavor and texture into account when creating your salads!

**Flavor Heroes**

Flavor Heroes are simply ingredients that are very strong and/or complex in flavor. These are wonderful additions to salads because they give a “pop” of flavor that will excite the palate and make you want to go back for another bite. These can vary widely and can be anything that is very strongly flavored can be your Flavor Hero!

Some examples are Pickled Vegetables, Strong Cheeses, Flavored Nuts, Cured Meats, Fresh Herbs, Infused Oils, Grilled or Roasted Fruit/Vegetables/Meat, Brined/Cured Items such as Olives, Capers, Pepperoncini, Anchovies, Sardines, or Fried Items such as Oysters, Goat Cheese, or Shallots.

A Flavor Hero can be an ingredient in a salad or simply be a flavoring that is prominent throughout the salad. But either way, having a strong flavor to give a salad a direction is essential to creating interesting salads.

**Flavor Pairings**
When building salad combinations, you must consider flavor pairings because that is the main deciding factor in selecting what items will go well together in your salad. Flavor pairing is one of the most complex parts of cooking because of all the nuance in flavors of all the wonderful foods that we have available to us! But like most complex things, we can start with what we know and learn from others to help us make educated guesses and increase the chances of putting things together that taste good!

Start flavor pairing with combinations that you know! Tomatoes and Basil, Rosemary and Thyme with Chicken, Cucumbers and Tomatoes, Onions and Garlic, Olives and Cheese, etc. You may realize that you know more than you might think!

The next step in learning flavor pairing is to then go with classic combinations from different cuisines. All worldwide cuisines have their principle flavor combinations that have been tested over time so you know they are good together! If you have an ingredient that is common in a specific cuisine, have a quick google to see what that cuisine commonly pairs with the ingredient. This is a fantastic way to liven up your flavor pairings and to possibly use combinations that you like but that you might not have thought of to put in your salads. This is also a great way to learn more about other cuisines and cultures!

The next way to create flavor pairings is to think of ingredients for the roles they play and swap out ingredients for a new one that plays that same role. For example, Cucumbers are cleansing with a little bit of vegetal-green flavor. Zucchini also has the same flavor profile but is a little more dense. Honeydew Melons also have a green flavor with a good bit of water/cleansing and could be an interesting swap for a cucumber in a salad. Or you could use tarragon instead of basil because they both have a bit of an anise flavor to them. Or possibly swap out large diced Red Peppers for Cherry Tomatoes because they still give a pop of moisture and a lightly red flavor.

Just remember when swapping out different ingredients to think about the differences and adjust for them if necessary in other parts of the salad; if using Honeydew instead of Cucumber, maybe don’t use as much honey/sweetness in the dressing because of the added sweetness the melon brings. Or use a little more acid in the vinaigrette when swapping Red Pepper for Tomato because of
the lack of acid in peppers. Just think about the flavor differences and see if you need to account for them in the final salad composition.

The last way to make flavor pairings is to use help and experiment a little! The Flavor Bible by Karen Page and Andrew Dornenburg is the best book I have found to date that catalogs common flavor pairings by ingredient and is a fantastic reference to begin creating your own flavor pairings by scratch! I highly recommend buying this book and using it regularly to start putting your own flavors together. Start with your star flavor then pick something from the list and turn to that ingredient’s list and see what you want to put as the third flavor. Then turn back to the star flavor list and see if the 3rd flavor you chose works well with the first. You’ll be surprised how quickly you’ll get used to creating flavor pairings this way!

One last note about flavor pairing, don’t be afraid to try some crazy combinations! You can experiment with different flavor combos by simply trying one bite of the different flavors before constructing your whole salad. I have often done this by taking a little piece of the different ingredients and making a one-bite flavor combo to try out some of the stranger combinations before going to the trouble of prepping out a whole salad. Be bold! It’s just food and you’ll have many more meals after this one! Who knows, you just might find your newest favorite flavor combo!!

Balance

A well composed salad (or any dish for that matter) will have a balance to the different tastes and elements that it is composed of. Starting with the basic tastes, you want your Sweetness to balance Bitterness and your Sourness to balance Saltiness in your salads. These competing flavors help to make sure your palette doesn’t get too much of any one taste sensation, leading to an unpleasant bite.

Sweetness helps to coat the palette where Bitterness can strip/cleanse/refresh it. Keeping these in balance helps ensure your flavor combinations are not too coating (sickening sweet) or too austere (bitter or sharp). Saltiness can have a sharp/drying effect and balancing that with sourness
activates your saliva to help cleanse and refresh the palate from the salty sensation. To help keep these basic tastes in balance, think about them individually when tasting your salad. See if you can identify them independently and that will help you to begin to judge what may be missing and the more you practice this, the better your palette will become. Like with all things in cooking, the more you practice, the better you will become!

Texture and Creaminess

Texture and Creaminess are two of the final elements to consider when composing an interesting salad. Adding a bit of either (or both) can add complexity to the eating experience as well as great flavors into the mix.

Texture can come in the form of nuts, fried foods, or root vegetables. Depending on your choice of lettuce or main ingredient, you might not need any additional texture, or it just might be the element that brings the whole salad together!

Creaminess often comes in the form of cheese, meats, cooked beans, or soft roasted vegetables. When composing a greens salad, a bit of creaminess can be the coating factor that balances the bitterness of the lettuces or the sharpness of the acidity. This is why creamy dressings are preferred in some salads and why a simple vinaigrette may be preferred in others!

Choosing the Right Vinaigrette or Dressing

When considering the type of vinaigrette/dressing for your salad, think about all the elements that you have already chosen and make a vinaigrette/dressing that will accentuate the flavors of your salad. All vinaigrettes and dressings have an acid and some form of fat that will help brighten the flavors, tone down the bitterness, add seasoning, and potentially add additional accent flavors to your salad.

As a rule of thumb, the more complex your flavor combinations are in your ingredients, the more basic you want your vinaigrette/dressing to be so it doesn’t
overpower and lets the ingredients be in the forefront. If you have more subtly flavored ingredients, then a more heavily flavored or spiced vinaigrette/dressing might make more sense to let it be the star of the salad (I’m looking at you, Caesar!).

Lastly, the only difference between a vinaigrette and a dressing is that dressings tend to be creamier. Vinaigrettes are simply vinegar and oil emulsified together with seasonings. Dressings are typically mayo based that are then thinned with vinegar and/or citrus juice and are flavored with seasonings. They are basically interchangeable based on what else is in your salad!

Always remember balance when dressing your salad and that vinaigrettes and dressings are there to accent, not overpower your salads!

Gnocchi

History and Introduction

Gnocchi is a dumpling like pasta that originates from Italy but is found throughout Europe, the Mediterranean, and in parts of South America and Africa. The most common form is made with potato with the addition of flour (for structure), egg (for binding and leavening) and flavorings. After making the dough, it is rolled and cut before being boiled then seared and finished with sauce. Gnocchi is very versatile and can be made from a variety of ingredients such as sweet potato, ricotta, bread, other root vegetables or cheese and can be flavored with herbs, spices, cured meat, or cheeses.

Serving gnocchi

As with all pasta, the shape tells you what is best to pair with it. Gnocchi becomes even more versatile when it comes to this because it is chunky in shape, so it can go with chunkier sauces (like Bolognese, a chunky ragu, or puttanesca) or served with other vegetables or meats (like mushrooms, peas, ham, pancetta etc.).

Because it is delicate in texture, it also pairs well with simpler, smooth sauces such as bechamel, alfredo, marinara, gravy or pesto as with other delicate pasta types. Gnocchi almost always benefits from the addition of cheese, either in
the sauce or as a garnish on top because the delicately flavored little pillows are a great compliment to salty, creamy, fattiness of almost any type of cheese!

Whichever way you choose to serve your gnocchi, taking care in each step will ensure that it will be loved by all! Experiment and Enjoy!

**Tips for Making Great Gnocchi**

- Dry out the main ingredient either in the oven (vegetables) or by hanging in cheesecloth (ricotta) before making the dough to reduce the amount of flour needed and thus keeping the gnocchi lighter and less dense.
- If you do have a very wet base, adding some potato or potato starch (in addition to flour) will help to dry out the dough without adding the gluten that comes with flour.
- Don’t over knead the dough. Kneading brings out the gluten in the flour and thus creates denser gnocchi.
- When searing the gnocchi, make sure there is enough fat in the pan and give them a few minutes to develop a good sear before stirring or tossing to sear the other sides.
- Don’t overcrowd the pan when searing the gnocchi! Putting too many in the pan at once may cause these delicate dumplings to fall apart, stick together, or sear poorly. Only 1 layer at a time in the pan!
- Sear in batches if making a lot of gnocchi at one time. After they are all seared well, you can return them to one pan and either combine with the sauce in the pan or in a baking dish and finish in the oven.

**Storing Gnocchi**

Gnocchi are great because they can be made ahead of time and refrigerated for a few days or frozen for up to 2 months. If freezing, you can either freeze before or after they are boiled based on your preference, but make sure they freeze individually so they don’t freeze into a big clump. Then after they are frozen, you can transfer them to a bag or container for easier storage.

If you plan to store them in the refrigerator, you must boil them before storing so the dough doesn’t break down in the fridge. After they are boiled, make **sure you oil them** (as you would any pasta) before storing (in the fridge or
freezer) so they won’t stick together. To use after storing in the fridge, simply sear them and add any sauce you would like.

To use after freezing if they were previously boiled, thaw first then sear and add sauce. To use after freezing if they were not boiled before freezing, don’t thaw and put them directly into boiling water (don’t overcrowd the pot), wait until they float, then sear and add sauce.

Making these ahead of time is a great way to make an impressive dinner (party?) extra fancy without having to do it all at once!

Adjusting Sauces for Consistency

Other than good flavor, proper thickness (consistency) is the other main property of a good sauce. The ability to adjust a sauces’ consistency to your desired thickness is a crucial ability of any good cook. That’s where thickeners come into play.

Thickening Methods

- **Reduction** - Simply cooking out the extra water (typically used with stock based sauces/soups) ***When using this thickening method, always season with salt after reaching the desired consistency as salt doesn’t evaporate and will intensify with reduction.

- **Pureeing/ Adding a Vegetable Puree** - Increasing the solid to liquid ratio by adding more pureed vegetables (adding tomato paste to an already pureed tomato soup or sauce) or pureeing the vegetables already present (ie. pureeing a soup makes it thicker)

- **Using a Thickening Agent**
  - **Roux** - a cooked mixture of flour and butter
- **Slurry**- mixture of pure starch (usually cornstarch) and cold water

**Roux**

Roux is made by cooking flour and butter to form a paste, similar in texture to wet sand, that is then added to the liquid you want to thicken. When cooking roux, you should stir constantly to promote even cooking. The longer you cook roux, the more toasted and nutty flavors will develop as well as a darker color. Cajun and Creole cuisines typically require a dark roux to impart a deeper flavor to many of their dishes. The longer a roux is cooked, the less thickening power it will have as the cooking process breaks down the flour as it cooks.

To avoid clumping of the roux in the liquid to be thickened, avoid extreme temperature variances between the roux and liquid you are thickening (ie. add cool (not cold) liquid too hot roux or cool roux (not cold) to hot liquid). Roux will not reach full thickening strength until the liquid is brought to a boil after the addition of the roux. So when adding cool roux to hot liquid, add little by little and bring up to a boil between additions to avoid over thickening.

**Roux Ratio**

1x Butter to 1x Flour

(1 Tablespoon/Cup/Gallon of Butter to 1 Tablespoons/Cups/Gallons of Flour)

1 Tbsp of Roux thickens 1 Cup of liquid to a nape consistency (coats the back of a spoon)

**Roux- Sangé Method**

This is a variation on using roux. The sangé method is simply sprinkling flour over sauteeing/sweating vegetables to create a roux with the available fat already in the pan, just before adding liquid. This essentially creates a roux that is wrapped around the vegetables you are already cooking. This is particularly useful in making a pan sauce or for thickening a soup if you are sweating vegetables before adding your liquid to the soup.
**Slurry**

A slurry is made by mixing pure starch (usually cornstarch or arrowroot) with a cold liquid, typically water, to a consistency of thick cream. To thicken with a slurry, slowly drizzle the slurry into the simmering liquid you want to thicken while stirring constantly right where the slurry goes in. As with roux, slurry will not come to full thickening until the liquid comes to a boil so be sure to add little by little until you become familiar with this technique as slurries thicken at about twice the power of roux.

You can also use other types of pure starch to create a slurry such as rice flour/starch, tapioca starch, potato starch, or any other pure starch. Just be aware when using a different starch, it will have a different thickening strength because of differences in the raw ingredients they are made from.

**Slurry with Flour**

You *can* make a slurry with flour and water, but it isn’t recommended. Cooking flour in fat (aka. making roux) before adding it to a liquid deactivates an enzyme in flour that can make the flour clump up after its added to the liquid. It also cooks the raw, cereal flavor out and deepens the color of the flour that increases the flavor and color of the final dish. This is why pure starches are used for slurries and flour is used for roux.

**Recipes**

**Basic Vinaigrette**

Yield - 1 c.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1/3 c. Vinegar</th>
<th>Vegetable, cool or room temperature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Tbsp. Honey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp. Dijon Mustard</td>
<td>1 Tbsp Shallot, minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3 c. Neutral Oil, Canola or</td>
<td>1 cl. Garlic, minced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In a bowl, whisk together the vinegar, honey and mustard. While whisking vigorously, slowly drizzle the oil into the vinegar mixture to emulsify the vinaigrette. When all of the oil is in the vinaigrette, add the shallot, garlic, and salt and pepper to taste. Store in the fridge.

Quick Pickle Recipe
Yield - 2 c. Pickling Liquid

| 1 ½ c. Vinegar (White, Red, Rice) | to taste Salt (about 1 tsp) |
| ~1/4 c. Sugar (to taste) | t.t. Whole Spices of Choice (Black Pepper, Crushed Red Pepper, Coriander, Cardamom, Caraway) |
| ¼ c. Water | 1 cl. Garlic, crushed |

Put the vinegar, sugar, salt, and flavorings in a pot and bring to a boil. Put your vegetables of choice in a heat proof container. Pour the hot pickling liquid over the vegetables and let cool. Store in the refrigerator.

Spiced Nuts
Yield- 1 c.

| 1 c. Nut of Choice, raw | ½ tsp. Salt |
| 1 Egg White | 1 tsp. Sugar |
| ½ tsp. Chile Powder | ¼ tsp. Cinnamon |
| ⅛- ¼ tsp. Cayenne |

Preheat the oven to 350º F. Lightly whip the egg white just until it begins to get frothy. Then toss the nuts into the egg white and add the rest of the seasonings, stir to combine. Place on a Silpat lined (or liberally greased) baking sheet and bake for 5-7 minutes. Stir them then continue baking for another 2-4 minutes until they appear dry and begin to brown. Cool.
Potato Gnocchi
Yield: 5-8 portions

2# Idaho Potatoes (about 3-4 ea.)
1 Tbsp. Butter
1 Egg Yolk
1 Egg
1 # Flour (about 3¼ c.)
t.t. Salt
t.t. Pepper
Pinch of Nutmeg (optional)
2 Tbsp Butter (for searing)

Bake or peel and boil the potatoes until cooked. If boiling, do not overcook and dry in a low oven after boiling. Mash or press the potatoes through a food mill and into a bowl.

Mix the potatoes with the butter, egg, egg yolk and seasonings. Taste a little of the mixture for seasoning. Then incorporate just enough flour to be able to form a stiff dough. Be careful not to overmix.

Turn dough out onto a floured work surface, cut into strips and roll into ropes, about 1” thick. Cut into 2” pieces and roll them across the back of a fork onto a floured sheet pan.

Carefully boil the gnocchi in salted boiling water in batches and remove when they float and place on a lightly oiled plate. After they have been boiled off, heat the butter in a saute pan and sear the gnocchi to get a golden sear on the outside. This may need to be done in batches to not overcrowd the pan. Then add sauce and finish in the pan or put in a dish, top with sauce/cheese and finish in the oven.

Variations- Substitute sweet potatoes or ricotta cheese instead of some (or all) of the Idaho potato. Gnocchi can also be flavored with different herbs and/or spices.

Classic Tomato Marinara
Yield: 3-4 cups

2-3 Tbsp. Olive Oil (or Canola, Grapeseed, Avocado)
¾ c. Onion, minced
3-4 cloves Garlic, minced
3 oz. Tomato Paste
1 cans (28 oz can) Peeled Tomatoes (or Crushed)
¼- ½ tsp Crushed Red Pepper  (optional)
1 Bay Leaves
⅛ -¼ tsp Dry Oregano
1 tsp Salt
2 Tbsp. Parsley, chopped
1 tsp. Oregano, chopped
2 Tbsp. Basil, chiffonade
taste Salt

In a medium pot, heat the oil on medium heat until warm then add the onions and garlic and sweat them until they are translucent, about 3-5 minutes. When the garlic smells cooked, add the crushed red pepper, bay leaves and toast briefly (~30 seconds) then add the tomato paste. Cook the tomato paste briefly being careful not to burn. Crush the peeled tomatoes with your (gloved) hands so they break down easier and add them to the pot. Add the 2 tsp of salt and bring to a simmer stirring occasionally. Simmer, stirring occasionally for 20-30 minutes or up to 2-3 hours. When proper consistency and flavor has been achieved, turn off the heat, salt to taste and add the fresh herbs to finish. You can puree the finished sauce or use crushed tomatoes for a smoother Marinara.

Béchamel
Yield - 2 c.

2 Tbsp. Butter
2 Tbsp. Flour
2 c. Whole Milk
⅓ c. Parmesan (or cheese of choice)
t.t. Salt
t.t. Pepper, white or black

Melt the butter in a 2 qt pot then add the flour. Cook the roux until it begins to turn blond. Slowly whisk in the milk until incorporated and smooth. Bring to a simmer and cook the sauce, stirring frequently to prevent scorching, for about 5-10 minutes or until the flour taste has cooked out. Turn the heat off and mix in the cheese until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve or cool for later use.

Variations- There are innumerable variations to each of this sauces and can be made by simply adding ingredients at the end, such as herbs, spices, cream, vegetable purees, or cheeses. Alternatively, variations can be incorporated in the beginning by sweating or sautéing different vegetables and/or toasting spices in
the fat before adding the flour to make the roux. Flavoring agents added at the beginning may be strained or left in depending on preference.
Balancing Flavors

How to Compose a Salad
Get Cooking Class 4  
With Chef John Eisnesmith

Class 4-Timing, Flavor Development, & Sauce 201

- Searing, the Maillard Reaction, Building Flavor from Scratch, Protein Doneness and Selection
- Blanching and Shocking, Vegetable Doneness, Vegetable Purees
- Pan Sauces, Butter Sauces
- Timing of a Multi-Component Dinner, Efficiency in the kitchen
- Kitchen Exercise-Prepare Seared Pork Tenderloin, Mashed Potatoes, Lemony Garlic Green Beans, Mustard Pork Pan Sauce

Concepts:
Searing/Maillard Reaction, Building/Reinforcing Flavor, Doneness of Protein/Vegetables, Purees, Blanching and Shocking, Butter Sauces/Pan Sauces, Timing, Plating Techniques

Meat Doneness Temperatures

Many people enjoy eating meats that are cooked below the temperatures required by health code. Unless the meat is contaminated with the bacteria mentioned above, it is safe to eat meat that is cooked below the minimum required cooking temperatures required by health code with one exception, chicken and turkey.

Chicken and turkey always have salmonella and should always be cooked to at least 165º F.

Cooking meat to the proper doneness desired is a matter of cooking it to the correct temperature. It can be learned to approximate the doneness of meat by touch but at first it is best to use a thermometer to achieve the doneness you prefer.
### Meat Doneness Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doneness Level</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>120 F - 130 F</td>
<td>Red Throughout, Cool Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Rare</td>
<td>130 F - 140 F</td>
<td>Pink Edges, Warm Red Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>140 F - 150 F</td>
<td>Pink Throughout, Hot Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Well</td>
<td>150 F - 155 F</td>
<td>Gray Edges, Slight Pink Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Done</td>
<td>155 F +</td>
<td>Gray Throughout</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Serving or eating meat that is not cooked to the required internal temperatures comes with the risk of foodborne illness and should be done at one's own risk. ***

### Maillard Reaction

The Maillard Reaction, also known as a sear, is a brown crust that develops on the surface of meats and vegetables which are not primarily composed of sugar or starch. Similar to caramelization (the browning of sugars), the Maillard Reaction is the browning of proteins and is responsible for the brown colors and intense flavors of coffee, chocolate, baked goods, dark beer, roasted nuts, or grilled, roasted, or seared meat.

The Maillard Reaction, or searing, occurs between 285°F and 330°F. You can only produce the Maillard Reaction with dry heat cooking methods because moist
heat cooking temperatures are limited to 212°F, the boiling temperature of water. Because of this fact, some moist heat cooking methods begin by searing the food before adding liquid to take advantage of the wonderful flavor benefits of the Maillard Reaction.
Get Cooking Class 5
with Chef John Eisnesmith

Class 5- Collaboration Dinner Party
The class will combine to cook a Mediterranean feast!

- Hummus, Olive Tapenade, Tzatziki, Za’atar, Crudite
- Homemade Flatbread
- Herb Roasted Root Vegetable Salad
- Kefta- Grilled Lamb Sausages and Piquillo Brandy Cream
- Creamy Parmesan Polenta with Confit Cherry Tomatoes and Herbs
- Shopska Salad
- Apricot Sesame Baklava, Flan, Lemony Spiced Poached Pears

Concepts:
Teamwork, Batch Cookery, Timing, Custard Making, Dough 101, Intro to Cuisines, Recipe Converting, Culinary Recipes vs. Baking Recipes

- **Team 1**- Hummus, Carrot/Celery/Cuke Crudite, Zaatar, Tapenade
- **Team 2**- Quick Flatbreads, Tzatziki
- **Team 3**- Roasted Root Vegetable Salad with Rosemary Orange Vinaigrette
- **Team 4**- Apricot Sesame Baklava
- **Team 5**- Kefta- Grilled Lamb Sausages and Piquillo Brandy Cream
- **Team 6**- Creamy Parmesan Polenta with Confit Cherry Tomatoes and Herbs, Shopska
- **Team 7**- Flan, Lemony Spiced Poached Pears

**Team 1**

Hummus, Crudite (Celery, Carrot, Cucumber), Za’atar, Kalamata Tapenade
HUMMUS
(MAKE 4X FOR CLASS)
Yield - 1 ½ c.

1 can Cooked Chickpeas (or any bean) ½-1 c. Oil (Extra Virgin, Olive, Flavored)
1-3 cloves Garlic 2-6 Tbsp. Water
2-4 Tbsp. Tahini Paste Salt - Season to Taste!
1-2 Lemons

Drain and rinse the chickpeas well. Place them in a food processor with 1 clove of garlic, about 2 Tbsp. of Tahini, juice of half of a lemon and 2-3 tsp of salt. Pulse a few times to begin to puree. Then turn the machine on and begin to drizzle the oil into the mixture until it just begins to get liquidy. Stop and taste the mixture. Add more tahini, lemon, garlic, or salt to taste. Add more oil until it begins to look a little oily. Add water to thin and keep from getting oily. Adjust flavor and consistency to how you like it!

KALAMATA OLIVE TAPENADE
(MAKE 1X FOR CLASS)
Yield - 2 ½ c.

3 cups Pitted Kalamata Olives, drained 3 cl. Garlic
2 ea. Anchovies 1 ea. Lemon Juiced (3 tbsp)
¼ c. Capers ¼ c. EVOO
½ c. Parsley (1 bu.) chopped

Pulse the garlic, anchovy, and capers in the food processor until they are finely chopped. Then add the olives and pulse until you reach proper consistency. Then put in a bowl and mix with the EVOO, parsley, and lemon juice to taste.
**Za’atar**

**(Make 4x for Class)**

Yield - 1 Tbsp

- 1 tsp Sesame Seeds, Black preferably
- ½ tsp. Dried Thyme
- ¼ tsp. Dried Oregano
- ⅛ tsp. Ground Cumin
- 1 tsp. Sumac
- ¼ tsp. Paprika, smoked

Toast the Sesame seeds in a dry pan until fragrant. Place in a bowl and mix in the rest of the spices.

**Team 2**

Quick Grilled Flatbreads, Tzatziki

**Tzatziki**

**(Make 2x for Class)**

Yield - 2 - 2 ½ cups (depending on the size of the cucumber)

- 1 ea. Cucumbers, large
- 1 ½ tsp. Dill, chopped
- 5 tsp. Lemon Juice
- 2-3 tsp. Mint, roughly chopped
- 1 cl. Garlic
- 1 1/2 c. Greek Yogurt
- 2 tsp Salt (more to taste)
- ¼ tsp. Black Pepper (to taste)

Peel, deseed, and rough chop the cucumbers and toss in 2 tsp salt. Put in a colander and drain for 30 minutes. When the cucumbers are ready, put all the ingredients in a food processor EXCEPT the yogurt. Puree until pretty smooth then add to the yogurt and finish with remaining salt and black pepper. Let rest for 2 hours to set.
No Yeast Flatbread Dough
(Make 6x for Class)

Yield - 6 each (6”-8” round)

2 c. AP Flour 2 Tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 ½ tsp. Baking Powder 1 tsp. Sugar/Honey/Agave
2 tsp. Salt ¾ c. -1 c. Water or Milk, cold
½ tsp. Garlic Powder/Granulated Garlic (optional)

Stir together the flour, Baking Powder, Salt, Garlic Powder (if using), and Sugar in a bowl. Make a well in the center and add the Oil, Syrup (if using), and ¾ c. of the Water/Milk. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry until a smooth dough forms. Add more water/milk if necessary. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth, about 3-5 minutes. Lightly grease a bowl and place dough in a bowl, covering with plastic wrap. Let rest for 10-15 minutes.

Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and cut into 6 equal pieces. Roll the pieces into small balls and cover loosely with plastic.

Preheat a skillet, grill, or pan to moderately hot. Using a rolling pin, roll out the flatbreads until they are about ¼ inch thick and pat to remove any excess flour. Lightly grease the skillet with oil and gently place the flatbreads, one by one, in the skillet. Cook for about 2-3 minutes on each side, until cooked through. Repeat until all flatbreads have been cooked. If you notice black specks on your flatbreads, this is simply burnt flour. Wipe out the pan with a paper towel and tongs and they will be gone. Serve immediately or cool and reheat later.

Team 3
Roasted Root Vegetable Salad with Parsnips, Golden Beets, Red Bliss Potatoes, Red Onions, Parsley, Rosemary and Orange
Roasted Root Vegetable Salad with Orange Rosemary Vinaigrette

(Make 1x for Class)

Yield- 6 qts

6-8 ea. (2 1/2 qts cut) Parsnips, peeled and roll cut (or large chunks)
2 1/2 # (2 1/2 qts cut) Golden Beets
4-6 ea. (2 1/2 qts cut) Sweet Potatoes, peeled and cut large dices
2-3 ea. (1 1/2 qt. cut) Red Onions, peeled and cut in either wedges or 1/8” rings
2 bunches Flat Leaf Parsley, chopped
1 bunch Rosemary, chopped
1/4 c. Garlic, minced
2 Tbsp. Orange Zest

For the Dressing:
6 Tbsp. Red Wine Vinegar
1/4 c. Orange Juice, Freshly Squeezed
2 tsp. Dijon
2 tsp. Honey
1 c. Olive Oil
1 Tbsp. Orange Zest
2 tsp. Garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. Onion, minced
1 Tbsp. Rosemary, minced
2 tsp. Salt (More to taste)
1 tsp. Black Pepper (More to taste)

Preheat the Oven to 375° F. Rinse then put the beets in a baking dish with ~1/4 c. of water, 2 cloves of garlic, 2 sprigs of rosemary and a liberal amount of salt and black pepper. Cover with foil and seal tightly. Bake in the oven until soft, about 45-60 minutes. If they are very large, you can cut them in wedges before baking.

Next, prepare the Parsnips and Sweet Potatoes. Toss the parsnips in olive oil, salt and pepper and place on a lined baking sheet. Repeat with the Sweet Potatoes and place both trays in the oven.

Next, cut and lay out the red onions on a lined baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper. Place in the oven.
Check the vegetables every 15-20 minutes until they are almost cooked through. When the Sweet Potatoes, Parsnips, and Onions are just about done, add some minced garlic, some rosemary, some parsley, and Orange Zest to the sheet trays and stir around briefly then finish cooking for the last few minutes to cook the garlic and infuse them with the Orange and herb flavors.

While the veggies are cooking make the vinaigrette. Place the Vinegar, Dijon, and honey in a bowl and whisk to combine. Slowly add the Olive Oil to emulsify then add the Garlic, Onion, Orange Zest, Rosemary, Salt and Pepper. Taste and adjust Salt and Pepper to your preference.

When the beets are cooked through. Wearing gloves, use paper towels or a dish towel to remove the skins. Cut in wedges or large dice.

Combine all the roasted vegetables into a bowl and toss with the dressing. Garnish with any additional parsley and/or rosemary.

Serve warm, chilled, or at room temperature.

**TEAM 4**

Apricot Sesame Baklava

**APRICOT SESAME BAKLAVA (NUT FREE)**

**(MAKE 2X FOR CLASS)**

Yield- 16 servings (8x8 baking dish or double the recipe for a 13 x 9 dish)

½ c. Shredded Coconut, sweetened or unsweetened
½ c. Dried Figs, stems removed
1 ½ c. Dried Fruit (mix of Dried Apricots, Raisins, Currents, Blueberries, etc.)
¾ c. Granulated Sugar
½ tsp. Cinnamon
2 Tbsp. Black Sesame Seeds

½ of a 16 oz. Package Phyllo dough (16 sheets)

¾ c. Butter, melted

2 Tbsp. Honey

1 c. Granulated Sugar

½ tsp. Cinnamon

1 Orange

½ c. Water

For the Syrup

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Place the coconut and dried fruit in a food processor with the sugar and cinnamon. Pulse until rather finely chopped (if you like bigger chunks, process less. If you want it to be finer, process more.). It may come together as a single mass and that’s ok!

Brush your baking dish with the melted butter. Lay out your phyllo dough and cover with plastic wrap and a damp towel to keep it from drying out while you are working with it. Place one sheet of dough in the baking dish and fold over any extra that might not fit. Brush the dough with melted butter. Repeat with another 2 sheets, buttering each one as you go. Next spread/spoon ⅓ of the filling mixture across the layered dough, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and add another 3 layers of dough, brushing each with butter as you layer them in. Add another ⅓ of the filling, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and continue with another 3 layers of dough, buttering each as you go. Finish with the remaining ⅓ of filling, sprinkle with sesame seeds, then top with the remaining layers of dough, continuing to butter each layer. Using a sharp knife, cut the unbaked baklava in fourths, then make diagonal cuts to create diamonds (or cut whatever design you’d like). Bake in the oven for 30 minutes then reduce the oven temperature to 325 F and bake for another 10-15 minutes or until the top is golden brown.

While it is baking, make the syrup. Using a peeler, peel the zest off of the orange in large sections and place in a small pot. Add the rest of the ingredients for the syrup and put on low/medium heat to melt the sugar. When the sugar is melted and a nice syrup has formed, turn off the heat and carefully use a fork to remove the orange zest.
When the baklava has finished baking, slowly pour the syrup over the top making sure to get an even coating all over the baklava. Let it cool in the pan and serve!

**Team 5**

Kefta- Grilled Lamb Sausages and Piquillo Brandy Cream

**Lamb Kefta**  
*(Make 3x for Class)*

Yield- 6 servings (~15-20 pieces)

| 2 # Ground Lamb | 2 Tbsp. Mint, chopped |
| 1 c. White Onion. Minced | 3 cloves Garlic, minced |
| 1 Tbsp. Cumin, ground | 2 Eggs |
| 1 tsp. Cinnamon, ground | 2 c. Breadcrumbs |
| 1 Tbsp. Smoked Paprika | Salt to taste (start with 1 Tbsp.) |
| 2 Tbsp. Cilantro, chopped | Pepper to taste (start with 1 tsp.) |

Mix all ingredients together and cook off a small patty to test seasoning. Form into 2” long patties around skewers. Cook off on a medium-hot pan, griddle, or grill until cooked through, about 3 minutes on each side.

**Piquillo Brandy Cream**  
*(Make 2x for Class)*

Yield- 1 ½-2 c. (6-8 servings)

| 2 Tbsp. EVOO | 6 ea. Piquillo Peppers, roasted and deseeded (substitute Roasted Red Pepper if necessary) |
| 2 Tbsp. Butter | ½ c. Brandy |
| ⅛ c. White Onion, small diced | 4 cloves Garlic, smashed |
½ c. Heavy Cream  Salt, to taste

Heat the Olive Oil and butter in a wide saute pan over medium heat. Add the Onions and garlic cloves and sweat until translucent. Next add the peppers and a little bit of salt and increase the heat a little to brown the peppers a little, turning when necessary. After the peppers have browned a little, remove from the heat and add the brandy. Return to the heat and cook for another 2-4 minutes to cook out the alcohol. Remove from the heat and transfer to a blender. Add the cream and puree until smooth. Add salt to taste. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**Team 6**

Creamy Parmesan Polenta with Confit Cherry Tomatoes and Herbs, Shopska

**Confit Tomatoes**

*(MAKE 2X FOR CLASS)*

Yield- 2 c.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 c. Grape/Cherry Tomatoes</th>
<th>1 ½ - 2 c. Olive Oil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-3 cloves Garlic, peeled and crushed</td>
<td>Herb sprigs of choice (Thyme, Parsley, Rosemary, Oregano work great)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crushed Red Pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salt</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

You can do this recipe in the oven or on the stovetop. Place the tomatoes in a saute pan or baking dish. If using the oven, preheat to 300F. Top the tomatoes with enough olive oil to cover ½-¾ way up the tomatoes. Add in the herb sprigs of choice, crushed garlic clove, a little Crushed Red Pepper, and Salt. Place in the oven for 1 ½-2 hours or until they begin to wrinkle. If doing on the stovetop, place the pan on a burner and turn to medium until the tomatoes just barely begin to bubble, then turn to very low and cook until they begin to soften (about 30-45 minutes). Be careful not to let them cook too quickly or you will burn the herb/garlic! Serve warm or at room temperature. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to a week or in the freezer for 2+ months.
**SHOPSKA**

*(MAKE 3X FOR CLASS)*

Yield- 4 c. (6-8 servings)

1 c. Red or Green Peppers, med dice
1 c. Cucumbers, peeled, seeded and med dice
1 c. Tomatoes, cored and med dice
½ c. Red Onion, med dice
3 Tbsp. Kalamata Olives, halved
3 Tbsp. Italian Parsley, picked, washed and sliced (not finely chopped)

**Dressing**

¼ c. Red Wine Vinegar
½ c. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
~2 tsp Salt (to taste)
~½ tsp. Black Pepper (to taste)

**Garnish**

½ c. Feta Cheese, crumbled

Mix dressing and mix all ingredients and either toss in dressing or serve dressing on the side. Garnish with crumbled feta over top.

**CREAMY POLENTA**

*(MAKE 3X FOR CLASS)*

Yield- 4 cups

1 c. Polenta
4 c. Stock, Chicken, Beef, Pork, or Vegetable or simply water
2 Tbsp. Salt

¼ c. Parmesan, grated fresh (optional)
4 Tbsp. Butter (optional)
½ c. Milk/Cream (optional)

Bring the stock (or water) to a boil and add the salt. Whisk in the polenta and lower the heat to low. Cook, stirring consistently for 2-3 minutes, or until desired thickness is reached. Be sure to scrape the bottom of the pot while stirring so it doesn’t scorch. When you are happy with the consistency, finish with the Parmesan, Butter, and Cream and adjust seasonings to taste.
Polenta can be varied in infinite ways by adding different cheeses, purees, stocks, forms of dairy, nuts, vegetables, herbs and/or spices.

**Team 7**

Flan, Lemony Spiced Poached Pears

**Flan**

*(MAKE 3X FOR CLASS)*

*(SO EVERYONE CAN TAKE ONE HOME)*

Yield- 8 ea. 4 oz ramekins

**For the Caramel:**

- 1 c. Sugar
- 3 Tbsp. Water

**For the Custard:**

- 3 c. Heavy Cream
- 1/2 Vanilla Bean, split and scraped
- 1 dzn Egg Yolks
- 1 c. Sugar

Preheat the oven to 325°F and grease your ramekins (you can use butter or vegetable based pan spray).

Next, make the caramel by placing the sugar and water in a medium saucepot and put on medium-high heat. Swirl pan to dissolve sugar, then let boil for 6-8 minutes until it turns a dark amber color. Be careful not to burn! When the caramel is ready, pour a little into each ramekin.
Now make the custard. In a medium bowl, whisk together the yolks and half of the sugar. In a medium pot, heat the cream, remaining sugar, and vanilla bean pod and scraped interior until it just begins to simmer and turn off.

While whisking the yolks, slowly add a couple of ladles of the warm cream mixture to temper the yolks before stirring in the rest of the cream slowly. Strain the mixture through a mesh strainer. Pour the custard base into the ramekins, on top of the caramel, filling them not quite full. Place the ramekins in a pan and add water in the pan submerging the ramekins about halfway. Be careful not to get water in the ramekins!

Bake at 325°F for about 35-45 mins, until just barely set (middle will be slightly wobbly). Cool then refrigerate until fully cold and fully set. To serve, run a paring knife around the edges of the custard and turn out onto a plate.

**Lemony Spiced Poached Pears**

*(Make 2x for Class)*

Yield: ~2 c. (6-8 servings)

- 3-4 ea. Pears, ripe, but firm (all varieties work great)
- 2 c. Wine (red, white, rose, orange, sweet, fortified, etc.)
- 1 c. Water
- 1 c. Sugar (or sweetener of choice-
  Honey, Agave, etc.)
- 2-3 Lemons
- 1 stick Cinnamon
- 2-4 Allspice Berries
- 2 Cloves
- Pinch Nutmeg

Juice and Zest the lemons then mix together with everything except the pears in a medium pot. Heat to combine flavors and melt the sugar. Peel the pears and dice them to your desired size. Place them into cold water with a little lemon juice (or the rinds) to keep them from oxidizing while cutting. Add them to the pot and lightly
simmer just until they are soft (about 5-7 minutes depending on size). Using a slotted spoon, remove the pears from the liquid and cool the pears. Remove the whole spices from the pears. Take the remaining poaching liquid and reduce it by half or until it becomes syrupy. Serve the chilled pears and drizzle the syrup over top.

This recipe can be varied in numerous ways by changing the spices, type of wine, citrus, or sweeteners. Get creative!! This method can also be done with whole pears or apples (peel first).