

Happy 4707!



Year of the Ox

Dinner Party Menu and Recipes

Here are the recipes for everything I made for this year's event. As far as I can tell, everything was enjoyed (although Karl found the peanut sauce was too peanut-buttery). Let me know if you have any questions, concerns or ideas at mail@nermo.com

Apéritif:

Tet-Nis Shot

- 1 part Campari
- 1 part Sweet Red Vermouth
- 1 part Shiso-infused Vodka

Shake with ice and serve up. It's a bitter pill, but definitely stimulates the appetite.

Amuse Bouche:

Oxtail Pâté

- 1/2 pound braised oxtail
 - 1 shallot, finely diced
 - 1 tablespoon butter
 - 2 teaspoons fresh-squeezed blood orange juice
 - 1/4 teaspoon drained bottled green peppercorns
 - 1 teaspoon braising liquid
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - dumpling size wontons, quartered and deep-fried
 - pickled carrots and daikon radishes, jalapeno pepper and cilantro (optional)
1. Remove meat from fat and bones, reserving 1 tablespoon braising liquid.
 2. Saute shallot in butter for 3-4 minutes.
 3. Combine all ingredients, except wontons in a food processor and pulse until smooth.
 4. Serve at room temperature on crispy wonton crackers.
 5. Garnish with pickled shreds of carrot and daikon radish, paper thin jalapeno rings and a small cilantro leaf.

Starters:

Spring Rolls

- 15 Rice paper rounds
 - 1/2 cup Hoisin Sauce
 - 1 tablespoon chili garlic paste
 - 3 tablespoons chopped peanuts
 - 1 pound firm tofu, cut into 1/2 inch thick spears and flash fried
or 1 pound shrimp, cooked and shelled, **or** 1/2 pound of each
 - 1 large carrot, shredded long (cut lengthwise into strips almost to the top, then use a peeler along cut side to make long shreds)
 - 1 medium cucumber, seeded, long julienne
 - 1 fist-full of romaine Lettuce (I haven't decided how much lettuce to use)
 - 2 or 3 Scallions, cut into long ribbons
 - 1 cup cooked rice stick noodles
 - 1/2 cup cilantro leaves
 - 1/2 cup mint leaves
1. Soak the rice papers one at a time in warm water until soft but not limp. Layer between damp paper towels and set aside.
 2. Mix hoisin sauce, chili garlic paste and peanuts in a small bowl and set aside.
 3. Right before serving, combine 1/15 of the remaining ingredients on each of the sheets of rice paper, roll like a burrito and cut in half at a diagonal.
 4. Serve cold with sauce for dipping.

For a party, I like to prep all the ingredients through step 2, including a stack of layered rice paper and damp paper towels, a cutting board and an instruction sheet and then have daring guests build their own spring rolls. I've had several people tell me that was their favorite part of the night.

BBQ Pork Buns

- 3 pounds pork shoulder
 - 1 teaspoon 5-spice
 - 1/2 cup soy sauce
 - 1/2 cup hoisin
 - 1/4 cup mirin
 - 1/4 cup honey
 - 1/4 cup oyster sauce
 - 6 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1/4 cup white sugar
 - 1 3/4 cup warm water
 - 1 tablespoon active dry yeast
 - 1 tablespoon baking powder
 - 2 tablespoons shortening
1. Cut pork into 2-inch strips and sprinkle with 5-spice.
 2. Combine other ingredients in crock pot and add pork.
 3. Cook on low for 10 hours (and then it sat on "warm" another 8 hours, but I am not sure if that was essential).
 4. Dissolve sugar in water, and add yeast. Let stand for 10 minutes/until frothy.
 5. Sift flour and baking powder into a large bowl. Add shortening and yeast mixture and knead until smooth and elastic.
 6. Place the dough in a greased bowl, cover with cling wrap and allow to rise in a warm place for 2 hours, or until tripled in volume.
 7. Flatten a golf ball size lump of dough into a 4-inch disc, place a 1-inch ball of meat in the middle and wrap dough to encapsulate the meat.
 8. Let completed buns sit in the steamer baskets another 30 minutes and then steam for fifteen minutes. Serve hot.

Crab Mangoon

- 2 (8 ounce) packages softened cream cheese or Neufchatel cheese
 - 2 mangoes, seeded, peeled and finely diced
 - 1 (8 ounce) package faux crab legs, broken into pieces (real crab or lobster if you are feeling fancy, but really the fake works better)
 - 2-3 scallions, white end half removed, cut into thin rings
 - 1 teaspoon chili pepper flakes
 - 1 teaspoon sesame oil
 - Won ton wrappers
 - Oil for deep-frying
1. Combine everything but the wrappers and frying oil and leave the mixing bowl in the refrigerator for 1-2 hours to allow the flavors to meld and the cheese stiffen.
 2. Scoop about a tablespoon of filling onto each won ton, wet two adjacent edges and pinch them together to make a pregnant triangle. Use a fork to crimp the sealed edges.
 3. Submerge in hot oil until golden.
 4. Drain on paper towels for five minutes, but serve them quickly or else they will become flaccid and soggy.
 5. Serve with duck sauce, sweet chili sauce or both...or something else.

OMG Ribs

- 4 pounds pork spareribs, cut to 2-inch lengths and separated
- ¾ cup soy sauce
- 2 inches fresh ginger, peeled and minced
- 8 scallions, roughly diced
- 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
- 1 cup chicken broth 1 cup maple syrup
- 2 tablespoon orange zest
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

1. Combine ribs, ½ cup soy sauce, ½ of the ginger, scallions and star anise in a large pot. Add water to cover. Cover and simmer until cooked through, 20-30 minutes.
2. Cool to room temperature in cooking liquid, then drain, or just refrigerate covered, in the liquid overnight.
3. Combine ¼ cup soy sauce, remaining ginger, broth, syrup, zest and garlic in an oiled stir-fry pan or large skillet over high heat and cook down to thicken (3-4 minutes).
4. Add ribs and stir-fry about 5 minutes until ribs are coated in a thick glaze.

Note: Alternately, follow steps 1, 2 and 3 but brush the sauce onto the ribs as a glaze on a hot grill.

Noodle Course:

Peanut Sauce

- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 inch fresh ginger, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons Sriracha
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 cup veggie (chicken if you aren't feeding vegetarians) broth
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- 4 scallions, finely chopped

Mix all ingredients.

Asian Pesto Sauce

- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 1 cup cilantro leaves
- 1/2 cup Thai basil
- 1/2 cup mint leaves
- 1/4 cup scallion
- 1 green chili, seeded
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper.

1. Combine in blender.
2. Blend.

Coconut Curry

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 gloves garlic, minced
- 2 inches fresh ginger, minced
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 cups canned chopped tomatoes
- 1 14-ounce can coconut milk
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice

1. Add oil to large pan over high heat. Add onion and garlic, stir-fry until softened.
2. Add all but the last three ingredients and fry 2 to 3 minutes more, until aromatic.
3. Add last three ingredients and simmer to thicken, about ten minutes.

Dessert

Haupia with Pineapple Pearls

- 3 13.5-ounce cans coconut milk
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- Vanilla (about 1/2 of a bean scraped out or a 1 teaspoon extract)

Whisk together all ingredients in saucepan over low heat. Simmer, whisking until thickened. Chill.

- 3 cups pineapple juice
 - 1 tablespoon sodium alginate
 - 1 cup water
 - 1 teaspoon calcium chloride
1. In a small saucepan, gradually sprinkle sodium alginate into the juice while whisking vigorously over medium heat.
 2. Bring the mixture to a boil and simmer for one minute.
 3. Remove from heat and strain into a plastic squeeze bottle and let cool to room temperature. A short stint in the freezer will expedite the process.
 4. Combine water and calcium chloride in a bowl, stirring to dissolve.
 5. Drip juice mixture into the water until the bottom of the bowl is covered in a solid layer of spheres. Let sit one minute.
 6. Place strainer over a second bowl, then pour through the strainer.
 7. Rinse the pearls in the strainer and transfer to a kitchen towel to dry.
 8. Repeat until you run out of juice.
 9. Spoon alternating layers chilled pudding and pineapple pearls into cups and serve.

Digestif

Orange Slice Jello Shots

(Adapted from [WikiHow](#))

- 6 oranges
 - 2 cups boiling water
 - 6 oz. package of orange Jello
 - 3/4 cup cold water
 - 1 1/2 cups chilled vodka
1. Slice oranges in half (from top to bottom, as they would hang, not around the equator) and slide a spoon between the skin and fruit to cleanly remove the fruit*.
 2. Bring water to a boil, and remove from heat.
 3. Stir Jello into hot water until dissolved, then stir in cold water and vodka.
 4. Set orange peel cups into shallow cups and glasses on a tray so that the edge is level and fill with jello liquid to the rim.
 5. Let cool overnight in the refrigerator and slice each cup into thirds with two vertical cuts.

*Reserve the orange fruit to juice for mimosas in the morning. If you have executed the rest of this recipe properly, you will need them.