

FOR DORIE GREENSPAN, the holidays mean Paris. The cookbook author, food writer, and frequent *Bon Appetit* contributor has been spending Christmas in the City of Light for the past 13 years. She and her husband, Michael, invite friends to their apartment in the 6th arrondissement (son Joshua joins them whenever he can) to toast the season with a delicious dinner—like this one adapted from the pages of Dorie's recently released cookbook, *Around My French Table*. Guests, who start arriving around nine, are greeted with salmon rillettes and glasses of bubbly. Then there's pea soup (a clever use of frozen peas), rich short ribs, a classic potato gratin, and a sweet-savory mix of roasted endive, apples, and grapes—and, in typical French fashion, chocolate mousse for dessert. But as fabulous as the food is, Dorie likes another aspect of these dinners even more. "I love looking around the table and seeing people having a wonderful time," she says. "If the conversation is good and easy and we linger around the table until after midnight, that's a great party."

Salmon Rillettes

PREP 35 minutes **TOTAL** 2 hours 35 minutes
(includes chilling time)

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS Rillettes—a spread made from meat or fish that's traditionally cooked in fat—is a classic of French cuisine. This lighter take on the dish uses a mix of fresh and smoked salmon and a bit of butter. It's fantastic with Champagne.

- 1 large lemon
- 1 2-inch-long red jalapeño chile
- ½ cup dry white wine or white vermouth
- ½ cup water
- 5 white peppercorns
- 5 coriander seeds
- 1 Turkish bay leaf
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 green onions, green tops and white parts finely chopped separately
- 1 8-ounce skinless salmon fillet, cut into ½-inch cubes (about 1 cup)
- 4 ounces thinly sliced smoked salmon, coarsely chopped (about ¾ cup)
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon pink peppercorns, finely cracked
- Freshly ground white pepper
- Baguette slices, crackers, or toasts

Using vegetable peeler, remove one 3-inch-long lemon peel strip from lemon and place in medium saucepan. Finely grate enough remaining peel from lemon to measure 1¼ teaspoons; place in small bowl and reserve. Squeeze enough juice from lemon to measure 5 teaspoons and reserve. Cut 1-inch-long ¼-inch-wide strip from jalapeño and remove seeds; place jalapeño strip in saucepan with lemon peel strip. Finely chop enough of remaining jalapeño to measure 1½ teaspoons; place in another small bowl and reserve. Add wine, ½ cup water, peppercorns, coriander seeds, bay leaf, ½ teaspoon salt, and green onion tops to saucepan with lemon peel strip and jalapeño strip; bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 5 minutes. Add salmon cubes; cover and cook 1 minute.

Transfer salmon mixture to strainer set over medium bowl and drain. Transfer poached salmon pieces to another medium bowl; discard liquid and spices. Using fork, lightly mash poached salmon. Add smoked salmon, 1¼ teaspoons reserved grated lemon peel, 1½ teaspoons reserved chopped jalapeño, and 2 tablespoons white parts of green onions and stir to blend. Add butter and mix in with fork until thick spread forms. Stir in 5 teaspoons reserved lemon juice. Stir in cracked pink peppercorns. Season to taste with salt and white pepper.

Transfer salmon rillettes to glass jar or bowl. Press piece of plastic wrap directly onto surface of rillettes and chill until firm, at least 2 hours. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Keep chilled.

Serve rillettes with baguette slices, crackers, or toasts.

Cheating-on-Winter Pea Soup

PREP 25 minutes **TOTAL** 30 minutes

4 SERVINGS Frozen peas let you outsmart winter with this fresh, vibrant soup.

- 2 teaspoons butter
- ½ cup coarsely chopped onion
- 3 cups (or more) low-salt chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 8 ounces frozen peas (do not thaw)
- 4 cups (lightly packed) sliced romaine lettuce (½ of medium head)
- Crème fraîche or sour cream
- Crumbled cooked bacon

Melt butter in large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion; sauté until beginning to soften, about 3 minutes. Add 3 cups broth; bring to boil. Stir in peas and lettuce. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until peas are tender and flavors blend, about 10 minutes. Cool slightly.

Working in batches, puree soup in blender until smooth. Return soup to same saucepan and bring to simmer, adding more broth by ¼ cupfuls to thin soup to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper.

Divide soup among 4 bowls. Top with dollop of crème fraîche and/or bacon.

Short Ribs in Red Wine and Port with Tangerine Gremolata

PREP 2 hours **TOTAL** 4 hours

4 SERVINGS This hearty, homey dish gets dressed up with a sprinkling of parsley, tangerine peel, and garlic—a modern take on classic gremolata. If the short ribs have not been trimmed, ask the butcher to remove the tough membranes from the meat for you.

ribs

- 2 fresh parsley sprigs
- 2 fresh thyme sprigs
- 2 Turkish bay leaves
- 1 fresh rosemary sprig
- 1 whole star anise



- Leaves from 2 celery stalks
- 8 3½- to 4-inch beef short ribs (about 3½ pounds), tough membranes removed
- 2 tablespoons grapeseed oil or canola oil
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 carrots, trimmed, peeled, thinly sliced into rounds
- 2 celery stalks, trimmed, thinly sliced
- 5 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped peeled fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 cups fruity red wine (such as Syrah)
- 1 cup ruby Port
- 3 cups low-salt beef broth
- 1 tablespoon all purpose flour

gremolata

- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley

- 1 tablespoon finely grated tangerine peel
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

special equipment

- Cheesecloth
- Kitchen string

INGREDIENT INFO Star anise is a brown star-shaped seedpod that's available in the spice section of some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Asian markets.

RIBS Position rack in top third of oven (about 6 inches from heat source); preheat broiler. Line large rimmed baking sheet with foil. Lightly dampen large piece of cheesecloth and place on work surface. Place parsley, thyme, bay leaves, rosemary, star anise, and celery leaves in center of cheesecloth; gather cloth around herbs and tie bundle at top with kitchen string, enclosing herbs completely.

Arrange short ribs, bone side up, on prepared sheet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Broil ribs 5 minutes. Turn ribs over and broil on meat side until browned and sizzling, about 10 minutes. Transfer ribs to large bowl. Position rack in center of oven and reduce oven temperature to 350°F.

Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add onions, carrots, sliced celery, garlic, and ginger; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until vegetables are softened and browned in spots, about 10 minutes. Add tomato paste; reduce heat to medium and stir constantly for 2 minutes. Add wine, Port, and herb bundle. Increase heat to high; boil 5 minutes. Add ribs, bone side up and in single layer, to pot; add broth and bring to boil. Cover pot with foil, then lid; transfer to oven. Braise until meat is very tender and falls off bones, about 2 hours.

Transfer ribs to large bowl. Spoon off fat from surface of pan juices and reserve 1 tablespoon fat (discard remaining fat). Pour pan juices through strainer set over medium

bowl, pressing on solids to extract liquid. Discard solids. Return juices to pot; boil until reduced to 2 cups, about 15 minutes. Whisk reserved 1 tablespoon fat with 1 tablespoon flour in small bowl; whisk flour mixture into juices and boil until sauce thickens, about 2 minutes. Season with pepper. Return ribs to pot. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cool slightly. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and keep chilled. Before continuing, rewarm ribs in sauce until heated through, 5 to 10 minutes.

GREMOLATA Mix parsley, tangerine peel, and garlic in small bowl.

Divide ribs and sauce among 4 plates. Sprinkle each serving with gremolata.

Potato Gratin with Gruyère

PREP 30 minutes **TOTAL** 1 hour 40 minutes
4 SERVINGS

- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
- 1 large garlic clove, peeled
- 1½ pounds russet potatoes, peeled, cut into ¼-inch-thick rounds
- 1½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ cup whole milk
- ½ cup coarsely grated Gruyère cheese

Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350°F. Generously butter 9-inch-diameter glass pie dish. Place pie dish on rimmed baking sheet. Combine cream and garlic in small saucepan and bring to simmer over low heat. Cover and remove from heat.

Arrange ½ of potato rounds, slightly overlapping, in concentric circles in prepared pie dish; sprinkle with ½ teaspoon thyme and season lightly with salt and pepper. Pour ¼ cup garlic cream over. Repeat layering 2 more times with remaining potato, thyme, salt, pepper, and garlic cream. Pour remaining garlic cream over, then ¼ cup milk. Sprinkle cheese over.

Bake gratin until golden on top and potatoes are very tender, 1 hour to 1 hour 10 minutes. Let potato gratin rest 10 minutes before serving.

Endive, Apples, and Grapes

PREP 50 minutes **TOTAL** 50 minutes
4 SERVINGS This deliciously unusual recipe (sweet, savory, herbal) is from French chef Alain Passard.

- 2 large unpeeled tart-sweet apples (such as Fuji or Gala)
- 1½ tablespoons salted butter
- 2 large heads of Belgian endive (12 to 16 ounces total), halved lengthwise
- 4 small clusters green grapes
- 5 small fresh rosemary sprigs
- Fleur de sel or other sea salt
- 2 to 3 tablespoons water

Quarter and core apples. Using vegetable peeler, shave off thin strip of peel down center of each apple quarter, leaving remaining peel intact. Melt butter in large nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add endive, cut side down, to skillet. Add apple wedges, 1 cut side down, to skillet. Add grape clusters and scatter rosemary sprigs over; cook, uncovered, without turning or stirring, until endive is caramelized on bottom and apples are just tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Carefully turn endive, apples, and grapes over; baste with liquid in skillet and cook until apples are very tender, 5 to 10 minutes longer. Season with fleur de sel and freshly ground black pepper.

Transfer endive mixture to platter. Add 2 to 3 tablespoons water to skillet, scraping up any caramelized bits, forming small amount of sauce. Spoon sauce over endive mixture and serve.

Top-Secret Chocolate Mousse

PREP 25 minutes **TOTAL** 4 hours 25 minutes (includes chilling time)

4 SERVINGS For years, Dorie tried to learn the secret to her French friends' incredible chocolate mousse. She finally discovered that they were all using a recipe from the back of a Nestlé chocolate bar. It couldn't be simpler—or more wonderful.

- 3½ ounces bittersweet chocolate (do not exceed 61% cacao), chopped
- 3 large eggs (preferably organic), separated, room temperature (see Food Safety Note)
- Pinch of salt

- 2½ teaspoons sugar, divided
- ¾ cup chilled heavy whipping cream

FOOD SAFETY NOTE Raw egg is not recommended for infants, the elderly, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. To avoid the risk of salmonella infection, use pasteurized egg yolk.

Place chocolate in medium metal bowl. Set bowl over saucepan of simmering water and stir until chocolate is melted and smooth. Remove bowl from over water. Add egg yolks to melted chocolate and whisk until smooth. Using electric mixer, beat egg whites and pinch of salt in another medium bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add 1½ teaspoons sugar, beating constantly until whites are glossy and medium-firm peaks form. Using silicone or rubber spatula, fold ¼ of beaten whites into chocolate mixture to lighten. Gently fold remaining whites into chocolate mixture just until incorporated (do not overmix or mixture may deflate).

Divide mousse among 4 bowls. Cover and chill until set, about 4 hours. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Keep chilled.

Beat cream and 1 teaspoon sugar in another medium bowl until peaks form. Spoon whipped cream atop mousse.

WHAT TO DRINK

RILLETTES Dry pink bubbly will start the evening on an effervescent note and is delicious with the rich salmon pâté. Try LUCIEN ALBRECHT NV CRÉMANT D'ALSACE BRUT ROSÉ (France, \$20), which is made just like traditional Champagne but is much less expensive.

SOUP Sauvignon Blanc is the perfect pairing for the pea soup. Sancerre, in the Loire region of France, is known for its Sauvignon Blanc. Try the FRANCK MILLET 2008 "VIEILLES VIGNES" SANCERRE BLANC (France, \$19).

SHORT RIBS With the ribs, try a full-bodied red with rich fruit flavors, like the CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL 2008 "COUDOULET DE BEAUCASTEL" CÔTES DU RHÔNE ROUGE (France, \$30).

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From left:
CHOCOLATE,
ALMOND, AND
RASPBERRY
TART; WHITE
CHOCOLATE
ESPRESSO
TORTE WITH
HAZELNUT
PRALINE.