

GOURMET RECIPES

A Dinner with Herbs

Lucy Waverman and Yvonne Tremblay are absolutely tops when it comes to wonderful recipes and information. They've each got a new cookbook out; Lucy's is *Home for Dinner: Fresh Tastes, Quick Techniques, Easy Cooking*, while Yvonne has just produced *Thyme in the Kitchen: Cooking with Fresh Herbs*.



Lucy Waverman is a household (shouldn't that be kitchen?) name in North America, and for good reason.

Her cookbooks and food columns are chock full of recipes that we need and use everyday. Lucy's latest, *Home for Dinner*, features recipes for the 21st century: dishes with interesting themes, perfect for relaxed entertaining or family dinners. While the recipes are easy, we were intrigued that each one has a flavour twist that takes it out of the ordinary.

She also provides excellent basic information that will make your life easier all round. The Store Cupboard section tell you what to have on hand at all times to produce "instant" tasty meals that you would be proud to server to anyone, anytime. Thank you Lucy, for making our meals simple yet wonderful and so very good!

For years, home economist Yvonne Tremblay has taught classes on how to cook with fresh herbs and realized that many of her students would say they liked to grow them, but didn't know what to do with the crop! In *Thyme in the Kitchen*, Yvonne has provided information on how to grow your own herbs, when to pick them, when to add them to food and how to store them so they will last, plus a wonderful, eclectic collection of recipes for their use.

Yvonne told us that "the recipes in this book are simple and easy to follow.

You do not have to be a great cook to master the skill of using fresh herbs, but your results will make people think you are."

We were especially pleased to see the Primer on Herbs section, which covers much-needed basic information such as ingredients for herb mixtures – always wondered just what was in a Bouquet Garni or Herbes de Provence? The Herb Directory describes our most popular herbs: how to grow, the flavour profile and, most importantly, uses in food. It's here, and much more; our personal favourite was the information on making and using herb vinegars, oils, mustards, butters, honeys and Syrups, plus herb sugars, jams, jellies, chutneys... and, lest we forget, edible flowers.

Yvonne Tremblay may have named her book *Thyme in the Kitchen*, but we're calling it the Herb Bible.

On today's menu:

- [Twice Cooked Goat Cheese Soufflés](#)
 - [Mexican Chicken with Grilled Tomato Avocado Salsa](#)
 - [Chocolate Mint Fondue](#)
 - [Rosemary Syrup](#)
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Twice Cooked Goat Cheese Soufflés

From Home for Dinner, by Lucy Waverman.

Lucy says, "This is an impressive first course that's stress-free, since the soufflés are cooked ahead of time and then reheated.

They puff up again when they're re-baked. Surround with a mesclun salad dressed with a mustardy vinaigrette." We say, "Bravo Lucy!"



Serves 6

- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 5 Tbsp butter

- 5 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 2 cups warm milk
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 8 oz Goat cheese, crumbled
- 6 eggs, separated
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 cup whipping cream

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Oil six 1-cup soufflé dishes and dust with Parmesan. Reserve remaining Parmesan.

Heat butter in pot on medium heat and slowly stir in flour. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring. Slowly stir in warm milk and thyme. Bring to boil, stirring. Stir in mustard and half the goat cheese until combined. Cool slightly.

Beat egg yolks and whisk into milk base. Season with salt and pepper.

Whisk egg and whites in large bowl until they hold soft peaks. Stir one-quarter of egg whites into milk yolk mixture to lighten it. Fold in remaining whites and goat cheese.

Fill souffle dishes. Place dishes in roasting pan and fill roasting pan with hot water until it comes halfway up sides of soufflé dishes.

Bake for 15 minutes or until well risen and golden.

Remove soufflés from oven and let sit on rack for 10 minutes. Loosen sides of soufflés with knife. Turn and refrigerate for up to one day. Return to room temperature before baking. Preheat oven to 400°F.

Pour cream over and around soufflés in baking dish. Sprinkle tops with remaining Parmesan.

Bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until puffed and golden. Serve immediately.

Accompanying wine? Tony recommends...

Go for a new World Sauvignon Blanc that has lots of fruit extract – from New Zealand or California.

Mexican Chicken with Grilled Tomato Avocado Salsa

From Home for Dinner, by Lucy Waverman.

Oh, we loved this recipe. It's a new set of flavours, easy to make, and your friends and family will relish every juicy bite.



The slightly spicy, citrus-scent chicken should be served with warm tortillas. Sounds Mexican, but really, it's very "Moorish!" Sorry, couldn't resist, and you won't either when you try this dish.

Serves 4

- 2 large tomatoes
- 1 small red onion
- 2 jalapeño peppers
- 3 cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 2 Tbsp orange juice
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- Salt to taste
- 4 boneless single chicken breasts with skin
- 1 avocado, peeled
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh coriander

Cut tomatoes and red onion into slices ½ inch thick. Cut jalapeños in half and remove seeds.

Place tomatoes, onion, jalapeños and garlic cloves in grill basket or directly on grill and grill for about 2 minutes on each side, with lid down, until vegetables are charred and garlic skin comes off. Remove from grill, cool and chop. Stir in orange juice, lemon juice and 2 Tbsp olive oil. Season with salt.

Chop ½ cup tomato mixture finely. Spread 2 Tbsp finely chopped mixture

under skin of each chicken breast.

Brush chicken with remaining 1 Tbsp olive oil. Grill for 5 minutes per side or until juices are clear. Chop avocado while chicken is cooking and stir into remaining tomato mixture. Stir in coriander.

Slice chicken into ½-inch slices and serve with salsa.

Accompanying wine? Tony recommends...

I would suggest a named village Beaujolais, such as Moulin-à-Vent or Fleurie, lightly chilled. If you'd prefer a white, make it an off-dry Riesling (Kabinett or Spätlese Trocken if it's from Germany).

Chocolate Mint Fondue

From Thyme in the Kitchen, by Yvonne Tremblay

Did your mint bed overrun the garden? Well, here's another way to use it, and after you've tried this fondue, you'll be happy it keeps growing. Serve the fondue sauce with slices of fresh pineapple, small strawberries, cubes of angel food cake, etc. Recipe may be doubled! Good thing, too!

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- ½ cup whipping cream (125 mL)
 - ½ cup chopped fresh mint (spearmint, orange mint or chocolate mint) (125 mL)
 - 6 oz. bittersweet chocolate (175 g)
1. In a small saucepan, combine cream, mint and chocolate. Heat just to boiling point; remove from heat. Let stand for 20 minutes.
 2. Strain through a sieve; discard mint. When ready to serve, transfer to a fondue pot and warm slowly.

Accompanying wine? Tony recommends...

Chocolate and mint are two of the most difficult flavours to match. Make sure the wine you choose is sweeter than the chocolate – I'd suggest either a cream sherry or a Late Bottled Vintage port.

Rosemary Syrup

From Thyme in the Kitchen, by Yvonne Tremblay

What, boring old fruit for dessert tonight? Not anymore – you'll elevate it from ordinary to gourmet with this easy Rosemary Syrup. Yvonne suggests these variations: Use 1 cup dry white wine and ¼ cup water in place of the 1 cup water for a syrup that is tasty over fresh fruit as a dessert. Or try orange juice in place of water and pour over citrus fruit salad, melons or cantaloupe. Oh yum. Seconds, please!

Makes 2 cups (500 mL)

- 1½ cups water (375 mL)
 - 1 cup granulated sugar (250 mL)
 - 1/3 cup packed fresh rosemary leaves (75 mL)
 - Whole spices such as cinnamon or cloves, optional
 - Lemon or orange rind, optional
1. In a small saucepan, combine water, sugar and rosemary. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat, over and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat; let stand 30 minutes.
 2. Strain through fine sieve; discard solids. Refrigerate in a glass bottle or jar for up to 2 months. (For half the recipe, use 3 Tbsp/45 mL chopped fresh herbs.)

We wish to thank the following for permission to publish recipes and photographs:

Random House Canada for *Home for Dinner: Fresh Tastes, Quick Techniques, Easy Cooking*, by Lucy Waverman. © 2002 by Lucy Waverman. Photography by Colin Faulkner.

Prentice Hall Canada, a Pearson Company, for *Thyme in the Kitchen*, by

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To preview and order your own copy of *Thyme in the Kitchen*, go to Yvonne's website, www.yvonnetremblay.com.

Happily tested by Helen Hatton and Ron Morris.