



Gourmet Recipes

Food writers Helen Hatton and Ron Morris are old friends and colleagues of mine. They are providing recipes for wine lovers and I am recommending wines to complement their dishes.

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California Wine Fair Fare

California Wine Fair, here it comes, and not a moment too soon! Each year in April, sunshine-starved and winter-weary Canadians are treated to the best of the California wineries when they come to our cities proudly showing off their award-winning products. Of course they're wonderful; California is known for its unique combination of ideal growing conditions plus dedicated vintners and winemakers who together create some of the finest wines in the world.

At the Fair, you'll sample more than 250 premium wines from 70 Golden State wineries that continue to make their mark on the international wine scene and garner attention throughout the world! Beginning in Toronto April 10, the California Wine Fair moves on to Ottawa April 11, Montreal April 15, Quebec City April 17, and finishes in Halifax April 19.

Can't get to these cities? Well, treat yourself to a Festival of California Weekend on April 12–14 at the Chateau Montebello resort in Quebec, surely the world's most glamorous log building!



These are easily the wine events of the year that you won't want to miss, but hey, if you just simply can't get there, all is not lost. Read on... here's how to do your own California celebration!



A gorgeous new publication, *Dean & DeLuca: The Food & Wine Cookbook*, is just out, and anyone passionate about eating well with good wine to match simply must have this book.

Joel Dean and Georgio DeLuca know what they're talking about. They opened their eponymous food and wine emporium in New York City's bustling downtown SoHo in 1977 and the store soon became a destination for passionate food-savvy people in search of the freshest and best foods, ingredients and kitchenware from around the world. Timing was perfect, for the food revolution was on, and within a few years Dean & DeLuca expanded westward, finally opening a wine-country store in the Napa Valley town of St. Helena.

It goes without saying that one of the world's great purveyors of all things kitchen would produce a cookbook to match. The photography and recipes are glorious, and the food is seamlessly matched with two or more California varietal wines. We loved reading the recipes and moaning with anticipated pleasure, and trust us, the cooking and eating is even better! California, here we come.

On today's menu:

- [Bresaola-Wrapped Arugula with Saffron Aioli](#)
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Bresaola-Wrapped Arugula with Saffron Aioli



It's so simple, and so perfect. Best of all, it's fast and it's pretty! This great little starter features Bresaola, the smoky sweet air-dried beef, teamed with sharp crisp Arugula. Top it all with a saffron aioli for absolute perfection.

Makes 12 bundles, serves 4 as an appetizer

- 48 arugula leaves
- 1 Tbsp Virgin olive oil
- 12 paper-thin slices bresaola or prosciutto

Put the arugula in a small bowl and drizzle with the olive oil. Toss gently. Lay the slices of bresaola or prosciutto on a work surface. Layer 4 arugula leaves on top of each slice and roll.

To serve as a passed hors d'oeuvre, place the rolls on a serving plate, seam side down, with a bowl of the aioli in the center. For a first course, divide the rolls among 4 plates with a dollop of aioli on the side.



***Accompanying wine?
Tony Recommends...***

I would go white with this dish because of the saltiness of the air-dried beef and the bitterness of arugula. Choose a medium-bodied dry white. An oaked-aged Inama Soave would be perfect, or a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc or Ontario Chardonnay.

Saffron Aioli

Called aioli after the French *ail*, or garlic, this delicious sauce is ubiquitous in Mediterranean countries with dishes ranging from seafood stews to meats. The golden saffron variation is even more seductive than the plain. You're going to love this! Best if made one day in advance.

Mayonnaise

2 egg yolks at room temperature

1 Tbsp Dijon mustard

Salt to taste

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

½ cup canola oil

2 pinches saffron threads

1 clove garlic, minced

In a medium bowl, combine the yolks, mustard and salt and whisk to blend. Gradually whisk in 2/3 of the oil; add the saffron threads and continue adding remaining oil to make an emulsified sauce. Or pulse the yolks, mustard and salt in a food processor. With the machine running, add 2/3 of the oil in a fine stream; add the saffron threads and continue adding remaining oil. Stir in garlic.

Use immediately, or cover and store in the refrigerator for up to two days.

(We find Hellmann's mayonnaise is the perfect base if you don't want to make your own.)

Baked Brie with Curried California Walnuts



Oh, this is so decadant and wonderful. The rich, nutty flavour of the walnuts complements the velvety texture of the Brie. Serve with crackers and fruit like crisp apples and grapes.

1 Tbsp olive oil (15 mL)

1 Tbsp butter (15 mL)

1/2 tsp curry powder (2 mL)

1/3 cup diced red pepper (75 mL)
2 Tbsp finely chopped green onion (30 mL)
1 cup coarsely chopped California Walnuts (250 mL)
2 round Brie cheese (125 g each)
Salt and pepper

In large saucepan, heat oil, butter and curry powder over medium heat. Add red pepper and green onion and sauté 2 to 3 minutes; stir in walnuts, cook 1 minute. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper. Place Brie in ovenproof serving dish. Divide walnut mixture evenly and place on top of rounds. Bake in 350°F (180°C) oven for 10 to 15 minutes or until cheese just starts to melt.



***Accompanying wine?
Tony Recommends...***

The curried element demands some sweetness in the wine but with balancing acidity. A bold white with good fruit – Alsace Pinot Gris (Zind-Humbrecht would be amazing) or Viognier.

Makes 2 rounds.

Sautéed Scallops in Spiced Carrot Juice



What a great combo, and so very California. Plump, sweet sea scallops bathed in spiced fresh carrot juice and warmed with cinnamon and nutmeg. Perfect!

Serves 4 as a main course

8 oz. fava beans or other large shelling beans, shelled

2 cups carrot juice
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter cut into pieces, plus 4 Tbsp
¼ cup diced carrots
¼ cup diced zucchini
Pinch of cayenne pepper, or to taste
Pinch of ground cinnamon
Several gratings of nutmeg
Sea salt to taste
12 large sea scallops (about 1½ lbs.)
8 ounces dried orecchiette or shell-shaped pasta
4 sprigs flat-leaf parsley for garnish

Blanch the fava beans in boiling water for about 2 minutes. Drain and pinch off the skins with your fingers. Set aside in a small bowl.

In a large saucepan, combine the carrot juice, ½ cup butter, and carrots. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer and stir until the butter is melted. Add the zucchini, cayenne, cinnamon, nutmeg and fava beans. Simmer until vegetables are tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Add salt. Cover and keep warm over very low heat.

In a large sauté pan or skillet, melt the 4 tablespoons butter over medium-high heat. Pat the scallops dry with a paper towel and add them to the pan one at a time. Sauté until browned on both sides and slightly firm to the touch. Transfer to an ovenproof platter and keep warm in a low oven.



Accompanying wine?

Tony Recommends...

Match with a dry, medium-bodied white – my choice would be Pouilly-Fuisse from Burgundy or a New Zealand Chardonnay.

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pasta until al dente, about 10 minutes. Drain well and divide among warmed shallow bowls. Ladle a generous amount of the carrot sauce over each pasta portion and place 3 scallops on top of each serving. Garnish with parsley and serve at once.

Seared Foie Gras with Arugula and Roasted Asian Pear Compote

Foie gras is a phenomenally rich delicacy that seduces the palate with its velvety texture and concentrated flavour. In this recipe, the sweetness of pears and spicy

arugula add interesting highlights. Asian pears are crisp and round and almost as hard as an apple; if you can't find them, Bosc pears are fine.

Serves 4 as a very rich first course

Pear compote:

2 unpeeled Asian pears, halved and cored
1 tsp canola oil
1 tsp hazelnut oil
1 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 tsp off-dry wine such as Riesling or Gewürztraminer
2 tsp honey
¼ tsp coarse salt
Pinch of freshly ground black pepper

1 lobe (12 oz) fresh foie gras
¼ tsp kosher or coarse salt, plus salt to taste
Several grindings of pepper, plus pepper to taste
3 bunches (about 4 ounces each) arugula, stemmed



To make the compote: Preheat the oven to 375°F. Coat the pear halves with the oils and place cut side down in a pie pan. Bake for 35 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool for 20 minutes. Carefully peel the pears and cut into ¼-inch wide lengthwise slices, then into ¼-inch-thick crosswise slices to make 1 inch long matchsticks. In medium bowl, combine the pear pieces and the juices remaining in the pie pan. Add all the remaining compote ingredients and toss so that the pear pieces are well coated. Set aside.

With a paring knife, gently cut, pull or scrape away as many veins from the foie gras as possible. With a long, slender, sharp knife that has been dipped in very hot water, cut the liver into 8 approximately ½-inch-thick crosswise slices. Be careful not to force the knife through too quickly, which could damage the foie gras. Dip the knife into the hot water after each slice.

Heat a large nonstick sauté pan or skillet over medium-high heat until very hot. (If you don't have a nonstick pan, watch the foie gras very carefully to prevent burning.) Gently lay the foie gras slices in the pan and sear until evenly browned on the first side, about 1 minute. Turn the slices, season with the ¼ tsp salt and the pepper, and

cook 1 minute longer. Using a slotted spatula, transfer to paper towels to drain. Pour out all but 1 tsp of the fat and juice in the pan. Add the arugula and quickly sauté over medium heat until the leaves wilt, about 10 to 15 seconds. Season with salt and pepper.

Arrange a small bed of wilted arugula in the center of each of 4 warmed salad plates. Place 2 slices of foie gras on top of the greens on each plate and spoon 2 Tbsp of the pear compote over each serving.



Accompanying wine?

Tony Recommends...

a sweet white wine, well chilled – Rheingau Riesling Auslese quality, Vouvray Demi-Sec or Late-Harvest Riesling.

Flourless Chocolate-Walnut Torte with Pinot-Noir-laced Strawberries and Whipped Cream



D&DL author Jeff Morgan comments, "The inspiration for this dessert comes from northern Italy, where *pizza di noci*, a thin chocolate-nut torte, is one of the best-loved desserts. The meringue base makes this cake lighter than you would expect. In place of the balsamic vinegar, commonly used to macerate strawberries in Italy, we've used Pinot Noir, which is less acidic and pungent. Use a fairly good Pinot, one that offers plenty of rich cherry and berry flavors. Enjoy the rest of the bottle with your main course." Sounds like a plan to us!

Makes one 9- or 10-inch torte; serves 6 to 8

Pinot Noir-Laced Strawberries

1/3 cup sugar

1 cup Pinot Noir wine

2 cups fresh strawberries, hulled and halved

Flourless Chocolate-Walnut Torte

5 eggs, separated
½ cup plus 5 Tbsp sugar
1 cup (6 ounces) bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
2 cups (8 ounces) walnuts, chopped

Whipped Cream

1 cup heavy cream
2 tsp sugar

To make the strawberries: In a medium bowl, combine the sugar and Pinot Noir. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Add the strawberries and let sit for 2 to 3 hours.

To make the torte: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line the bottom of a 9- to 10-inch springform pan with a round of parchment paper. In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks until pale in color. Gradually beat in the ½ cup sugar and continue beating until the mixture is thickened. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites until foamy. Gradually beat the 5 Tbsp of sugar into the egg whites, 1 Tbsp at a time. Continue to beat until stiff, glossy peaks form.

Alternately fold the chopped chocolate, walnuts, and meringue into the yolk mixture by thirds until well blended. Pour into the prepared pan and bake until the torte is firm to the touch, does not jiggle when shaken and has risen to the top of the pan and turned golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool to room temperature on a wire rack.

To unmold, run a knife around the edges of the pan to detach. Invert onto a plate and peel off the parchment paper. Invert again onto a serving plate.

To make the whipped cream: In a deep bowl, combine the cream and sugar. Beat until soft peaks form.



Accompanying wine?

Tony Recommends...

a sweet red or Demi-Sec
Champagne – Banyuls, Late
Harvest Zinfandel, ruby port or Pol
Roger Demi-Sec Champagne.

To serve, cut the torte into wedges and top with the strawberries and whipped cream.

For more information on the California Wine Fair and upcoming California wine events, go to www.calwine.ca, call 1-800-558-CORK (2675) or email calwine@sympatico.ca.

Chateau Montebello: call 1-800-441-1414 or visit www.fairmont.com.

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Happily tested by Helen Hatton and Ron Morris.