

Ver-Monte Cristo great brunch-wich

Ver-Monte Cristo might be a play on words, but it's a sandwich that plays well at Sweetwaters in Burlington, Vt. It has been on the menu for two years and is still a favorite with the brunch crowd.

The sandwich holds its own among the omelets and French toast that are the usual "backbone" of brunch fare. A great example of how basic ingredients come together with very special results, this sandwich is made with cinnamon-raisin bread spread with apple butter, then layered with apple slices, smoked ham and sharp Cheddar cheese. It's grilled and served with maple syrup — deliciously appealing to both the eye and palate.

Chef Rodney Rehwinkel says sharp Cheddar is a must for this sandwich; it's the "binding" ingredient that provides just the right contrast to the subtle sweetness imparted by the other ingredients.

Sweetwaters is in a converted bank building on the busiest corner in town. Winner of eight Taste of Vermont awards for culinary excellence, the restaurant always takes advantage of the

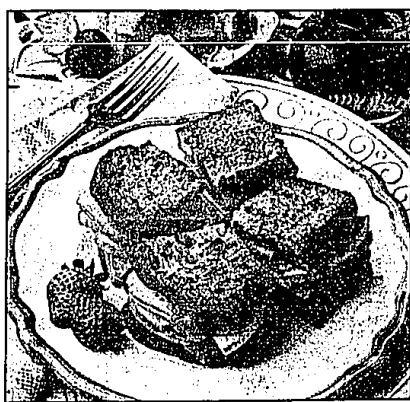
superior selection of dairy products and fresh produce from surrounding farms.

When you serve brunch at home, wow the family and guests with an easy adaptation of the Ver-Monte Cristo. The convenient ingredients are as close as the supermarket. Fresh fruit and cafe au lait make perfect go-withs.

VER-MONTE CRISTO

- ¼ cup apple butter
- 4 slices cinnamon-raisin bread
- 4 slices (1 ounce each) sharp Cheddar cheese
- 8 to 10 apple slices, ¼ inch thick
- 4 ounces thinly sliced smoked ham
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Confectioners' sugar, if desired
- Maple syrup, if desired

Spread half of apple butter on one side of two bread slices; top each with 1 cheese slice, half the apple slices, half the ham and remaining cheese slice. Spread remaining bread slices with remaining apple butter and close sand-



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Brunch favorite: Sharp cheddar cheese helps make the Ver-Monte Cristo a brunch favorite. It's so easy to assemble with cinnamon-raisin bread, apple butter, apples and ham.

wiches. Beat eggs until blended; carefully dip both sides of sandwiches into eggs.

Melt butter in large non-stick skillet over medium-low to medium heat. Place sandwiches in

skillet; cook each side until golden brown and sandwich is heated through. Cut into quarters. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar and serve with maple syrup. Makes 2 sandwiches.

Grilled fresh fish healthy summer meal

AP — Simple and light, grilled fresh fish is a smart pick for nutritious summer eating. Most types of white fish are low in fat, and the fat they do contain is partly omega-3 oils.

These unsaturated fatty acids seem to lower triglyceride levels, thereby decreasing the risk of heart disease.

Heart healthy as fish may be, it also tastes delicious, especially when brushed with the fresh herb sauce below, then smoked gently over hot coals. To remove the fish easily from the grill, put it in a grill basket before grilling.

SWORDFISH WITH ORANGE-BASIL SAUCE

- 1½ pounds swordfish steaks, cut into 6 portions
- ¼ cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
- 2 tablespoons snipped fresh basil or 2 teaspoons dried basil, crushed
- 1 tablespoon snipped fresh mint or tarragon or 1 teaspoon dried mint or tarragon, crushed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil or cooking oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

2 cloves garlic, minced
4 small zucchini and/or yellow summer squash, halved lengthwise

Fresh mint or basil (optional)
Thaw fish, if frozen. For sauce, in a small mixing bowl combine concentrate, snipped basil, snipped mint or tarragon, oil, water, Worcestershire sauce and garlic.

Rinse fish; brush with sauce. Brush a wire grill basket with additional oil. Place fish in the basket, tucking under thin ends to make an even thickness. Measure steak thickness. Close basket.

Place grill basket on an uncovered grill directly over medium-hot coals. Place zucchini on grill next to basket. Grill until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork and zucchini is tender. For fish, allow 4 to 6 minutes for each 1½ inch thickness. For zucchini or squash, allow 5 to 6 minutes. During cooking, brush fish and vegetables often with sauce and turn vegetables occasionally. If fish is more than 1 inch thick, turn halfway through grilling. If desired, garnish with mint or basil. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per serving:
229 cal., 11 g fat, 46 mg chol., 23 g pro., 7 g carbs., 1 g fiber, 135 mg sodium. RDA: 6 percent vit. A, 37 percent vit. C.

Sensational fat-free salsas sizzle with summer flavors

AP — Salsas are virtually fat-free. Colorful and brightly flavored, a well-prepared salsa is a feast for the senses. And if you're ready to set aside that familiar bottle of ketchup for a flavorful new condiment, two new books offer a variety of recipes: "Salsas, Sambals, Chutneys & Chowchows" by Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby (William Morrow, \$20) and "Salsa" by P.J. Birosek (Collier Books, \$10).

RED ONION RELISH IN THE LATIN STYLE

2 red onions, diced small

- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 5 tablespoons lime juice (about 2½ limes)
- 1 jalapeno pepper, chopped, or 1 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

In a medium-sized bowl, combine all ingredients. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate, up to one week. Goes well with grilled pork chops, black

beans and rice. Makes 1½ cups.
Recipe from: "Salsas, Sambals, Chutneys & Chowchows" by Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby. William Morrow. \$20.

BANANA-LEMON-GINGER CHUTNEY

- 1 tablespoon peanut oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- 4 almost-ripe (but not green) bananas, cut into 1-inch-thick rounds
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice (about 1 lemon)
- ¼ cup red-wine vinegar
- ¼ cup orange juice
- Pinch each of ground mace, ground nutmeg, ground cloves and ground cinnamon

Salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

In a large saute pan, heat the peanut oil over high heat until hot but not smoking. Add the onion slices and saute, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 6 to 8 minutes. Lower the heat to medium, add the ginger, and saute an additional 1 minute. Add all the remaining ingredients, bring to a simmer, reduce heat to low and cook until the liquid is about as thick as ketchup, about 10 to 15 minutes.

This chutney will keep, covered and refrigerated, about 2 weeks. Goes well with roasted or grilled game such as rabbit, duck or quail. Makes about 3 cups.

Recipe from: "Salsas, Sambals, Chutneys & Chowchows" by Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby. William Morrow. \$20.

DRUNKEN SALSA

- 6 fresh New Mexican long red chilies, roasted, peeled, seeded, cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 6 fresh New Mexican long green chilies, roasted, peeled, seeded, cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 4 green onions (scallions), diced
- 2 large tomatoes, seeded and cut into ½-inch cubes
- ½ small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ ounces tequila
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ½ teaspoon chili powder

Mix all ingredients well in a medium bowl; serve immediately. It

can be stored for only one day in the refrigerator. Makes about 3 cups.

To roast chilies: Place one or more chilies on a grill next to a grill rack and broil about 4 inches away from heat until the top side is toasty brown. Turn the pepper over and repeat the process; the skin will blister and split. Remove the roasted skin entirely before preparing salsa by peeling, using rubber gloves, under cold water. Some people prefer to place roasted chilies inside a sealed plastic bag or in a plastic-coated bowl and let them "sweat" for 15 to 20 minutes prior to removing the skins by hand. You can also roast chilies by spearing them on a metal skewer and exposing them to an open flame until the skin darkens, then peel as described above.

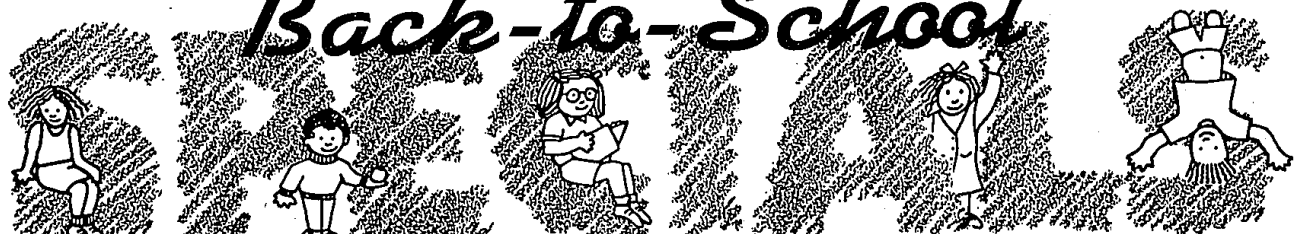
Recipe from: "Salsas" by P.J. Birosek. Collier Books. \$10.

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