

Valentine's Day from page B1

the potatoes in a heart-shaped cookie cutter before roasting; the egg firms the potatoes making them easy to remove from the pan.

Scott's meal is good for people on a budget, she said. She chose raspberry vodka and Chambord raspberry liqueur — and maybe even some small bottles of Pommery Pop champagne for the beverage. Those drinks will go well with the entire meal and with the perfect dessert.

"Chocolate," Scott said. "Definitely chocolate."

On Valentine's Day, Big Rock will serve chocolate truffles and a flourless chocolate torte. Chocolate fondue is also romantic and trendy. Use strawberries, grapes and bananas with dark melted chocolate for a sensual dessert, Angelosante suggested. A fondue pot isn't even needed. Slowly melt the chocolate in a double boiler,

transfer to a deeper pan and put that pan in Earthenware.

Creative appetizers

Chef Rowland offered creative hors d'oeuvre recipes that won't leave you feeling overly stuffed after your meal. Pistachio-encrusted salmon, shrimp and leek strudel — and a stuffed Portobello mushroom with sundried tomatoes and Asiago cheese are among his suggestions. The mushroom hors d'oeuvre almost resembles pizza — the mushroom is like the crust.

Rowland is also a dietitian and believes in creating healthy, but fabulous foods to please your loved ones. His recipes are pretty enough to enhance a night of romance, and contain interesting ingredients that would make a wonderful conversation piece for those spending Valentine's Day with friends.

Order in

Angelosante created a four-course Valentine's Day menu that can be delivered to your doorstep. This way, the evening can be focused on love rather than food. The dinner for two starts with Appetizer's tossed salad or endive and arugula salad with gorgonzola cheese and walnut vinaigrette dressing. It's accompanied with fresh bread.

Entree choices are: Rack of Lamb with pistachio nut crust or honey mustard grilled salmon or shrimp, scallops and peapods or roasted tenderloin with wild mushroom sauce. It's accompanied with choice of roast potatoes or pasta vellmann, which is penne pasta with gulf shrimp, shallots, roasted garlic and peppers.

Dessert is Tiramisu or praline cups and fresh peccan diamonds.

Nina Scott of Big Rock Chophouse's Meal

VALENTINE DRINKS FOR TWO

2 1/2 oz. chilled Stoll Raspberry Vodka
1/2 oz. Chambord raspberry liqueur

Blend together both ingredients and serve in a chilled martini glass garnished with a fresh raspberry. Serves one. Or, in case you wish to pop the question, pick up some Pommery Pop champagne. Champagne goes beautifully with Chateaubriand and Pommery Pop comes in 187.5 ml bottles, perfect for Valentine's Day.

FRESH OYSTERS ROCKEFELLAR — APPETIZER

6 fresh oysters (popular ones are blue point, belon, pearl point, wellfleet and malpeque)
1 package Aunt Maud's fresh baby spinach
2 shallots, minced
1/2 quart heavy cream
1/2 tablespoon Pernod (may substitute with Absinthe wine)
1/4 cup grated fresh parmesan cheese
1/2 cup breadcrumbs, toasted

In heavy bottom saucpan place Pernod, minced shallots, over medium high heat, cooking it until reduced to half. Add cream and reduce to half again. Add spinach until wilted, then add Parmesan cheese. Stir until thick. Top freshly shucked oysters with one tablespoon of the mixture. Top with breadcrumbs. Place in broiler until light brown on top.



Accommodating: Chef Nina Scott, of Big Rock in Birmingham, provided recipes that are considered interesting yet not difficult to prepare.

CHATEAUBRIAND FOR TWO — BIG ROCK STYLE

22-ounce center-cut tenderloin, marinated in your choice of marinades, grilled to your preference
Chateau Potatoes
3 pounds potatoes, peeled and cooked
2 egg yolks
1 ounce fresh horseradish root, minced
1/4 cup sour cream

1/2 cup heavy cream
salt and pepper to taste
chopped parsley for color

Blend all ingredients for the potatoes with mixer or by hand until smooth.

Place mixture in pastry bag with star tip.

VEGETABLES TO ACCOMPANY

2 ounces baby carrots
2 ounces fresh broccoli
2 ounces fresh cauliflower
2 Roma tomatoes, halved
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1/2 cup bread crumbs
kosher salt
pepper

Toss carrots, broccoli and cauliflower with olive oil, kosher salt and pepper; roast in oven until soft. Top Roma tomatoes with chopped parsley, grated parmesan cheese and bread crumbs. Just before serving, place under broiler until browned.

Method of Assembly

As tenderloin is cooking, roast vegetables and Roma tomato halves. Pipe potatoes on non-stick cookie sheet. When potatoes are golden brown, slide onto serving plate. Arrange vegetables around the potatoes and place tenderloin in center. Slice, serve and enjoy.

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Invest in your future!

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(three glasses) by *Gambero Rosso*, Italy's leading wine magazine, every time it has been entered in competition.

This 100+ percent chardonnay, which spent eight years on the yeast, is delicately sparkling, soft and broad on the palate, with lots of ripe chardonnay characters. It matches perfectly with Linguine alla Carbonara or any chicken or pork dish.

Gifts for your valentine

You're a Real Wine Lover! When... by Bert Witte, \$9.95, just published by The Wine Appreciation Guild ISBN 1-891267-25-5 is a very humorous collection of wine cartoons.

On the serious side, the Wine Appreciation Guild's new *Global Encyclopedia of Wine* \$75, ISBN 1-891267-35-8 is a must have reference for novice or connoisseur. It comes with a well-thought-out CD Rom, providing easy access to wine information. When we recommend an encyclopedia, we check to see that it includes a discussion of the best producers in each region. This one does, and for that, gets high marks. It limps somewhat in California coverage, but then there are at least 10 other great books on California wineries, none of which cover the rest of the world!

If you have difficulty sourcing either of these books, phone the Wine Appreciation Guild at (800)231-9483.

The Healds are Troy residents who write about wine, spirits, food, and restaurants for the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. To receive them a voice mail message, dial (734) 963-2047, mailbox 18644.

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