

CHEERS FOR BEER



CHEF JOSEPH STYKE

Warm up with soup, bread, firebrewed beer

Well, here it is, the end of September — my favorite time of the year. I love that sky of blue you only get in the fall, the beautiful, not-too-hot, not-too-chilly days, when there's just enough nip in the air at night so I can wear my favorite sweatshirt. Football is in full swing, and the Lions are playing pretty well this year.

The end of September is also the unofficial start of the home brewing season for many of us. In my household, it's also the start of soup-and-bread season.

I was in the market a few days ago, with nothing planned, just checking out what looked good. Then it hit me — the mushrooms looked great, and there were so many kinds. What to make for dinner was an easy decision — mushroom soup and Porcini Sun-dried Tomato Bread.

Now that it's getting a bit brisk, you might want to try a real firebrewed beer such as Rauchensfels Steinbier to go with your soup and bread.

Beer with a past

Firebrewed beer has an interesting story. Long ago, in a land far, far away, before there were metal brew kettles, stones were heated in a fire and added to large wooden barrels filled with wort to boil the beer. As technology enabled larger metal kettles to be made, the style died out, except for an Austrian brewery, into the early 1900s.

In 1982, Gerd Borges read an article about firebrewed beer and decided to revive the style. He bought a stone quarry in Kitzbuechel that contained a type of sandstone called grauwacke. This sandstone can be heated to 2,200°F without exploding.

Rauchensfels is brewed at the Ewald Werner Brewery in Neustadt, Germany. It is made with an equal amount of malted barley and malted wheat and very soft water. The wort is brought to a near boil. A steel basket containing 880 pounds of stones is heated outside in a fireplace that holds 212 cubic feet of beechwood. When the stones reach the right temperature, an overhead crane picks up the basket, brings it to the brewery, and lowers it into the brew kettle. The wort begins boiling dramatically, and a lot of the sugars are caramelized on the outside of the stones.

After hopping with Hallertau and Tettnang, the stones are removed at the end of the boil, placed in lagging tanks to await the beer after fermentation, then lagged for around 90 days. The result is a beer that is kinda smoky, toffee flavored, very smooth, with a nice balanced finish.

Here are my bread and soup recipes to enjoy with a Rauchensfels Steinbier.

Renovations at the Bus Bar in downtown Plymouth are moving right along. I'll keep you posted.

PORCINI MUSHROOM SUNDRYED TOMATO BREAD

1 package dry yeast

3 cups bread flour

1/4 teaspoon salt

4 tablespoons honey

1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms

1 ounce sun-dried tomatoes

2 cups hot water

1 cup hot water

Combine flour and salt in a food processor or mixing bowl. Bring mushroom back to life in 2 cups of water and the tomatoes in 1 cup of water. Reserve the mushroom water but throw away the tomato water.

You'll need 3/4 cup of the reserved water, cooled to 90°F. Dissolve the yeast and honey in the water and let it stand 10 minutes.

Please see CHEERS, D2

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

■ Focus on Wine

■ Hearty breakfasts

Look for recipe to share on the third Sunday of the month in Taste.

Cooks get ready for hot competition

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Like they say about the weather in Mexico, "Chili today and hot tamale."

But north of the border in Plymouth? Well, it's been hot, hot, and it's going to get even hotter when the Great Lakes Regional Chili Cook-off and Salsa Competition comes to town Sunday, Oct. 3.

Salsa? Si! Salsa was part of the Michigan State Chili Championship held during the Plymouth Fall Festival on Sept. 11, and it was a big hit, with 29 entries.

"It was fabulous," said Annette Horn, co-owner of Native West Gallery in downtown Plymouth, who organized that event, and is busy getting ready for the 3 a.m. salsa competition and chili cook-off. "Chili cooks from around the country could not believe how many salsa entries we had."

Horn, who likes her salsa with a little cilantro and a little garlic, was a judge. "In judging salsa, every person likes something different. I tend to like the fresh, chunky salsa, not too many. It shouldn't be ketchup, and it must have a bite."

Linda Sholar of Canton took second place for her Tomato Mango Salsa at the festival and plans to re-enter her recipe slightly altered in the upcoming Salsa Competition.

It's a version of a standard salsa recipe she's made for her husband's football buddies for years. "I've got to improve it a



STAFF PHOTOS BY PAUL HURSCHEMER

Chillheads: Linda and Jim Sholar of Canton pose for a photo while preparing their "Colonel Jim's Butt-Smokin' Chili" recipe during the Fall Fest Chili Cook-Off in Plymouth on Sept. 11.

bit more. Annette said she wanted it a bit hotter ... I don't want to give out the recipe yet, not before the chili cook-off."

Linda said her husband, Jim, will make another huge batch of his "Colonel Jim's Sell-Out Chili" for the cook-off. He made some for the fall festival, and it was the first chili that sold out. He didn't win a prize, but he did with the best booth award.

"He gave me the trophy and the money because I did the decorations while he was preparing his chili. I already

Please see COMPETITION, D2

Fired-up: Gary Ray of Livonia (left) prepares his "Old No. 7" chili recipe, while wife Lauren stirs her own entry, "Gambler's Chili."

Photo by PAUL HURSCHEMER

Cook-off schedule

WHAT: The Great Lakes Region Chili Cook-off and Salsa Competition

WHEN: Sunday, Oct. 3. Cooking begins 11 a.m., chili submitted for judging 2 p.m. Awards ceremony 4 p.m.

WHERE: In The Gathering, on Penniman Street, across from Kellogg Park, downtown Plymouth. Call (734) 455-8838 for more information

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- Harley-Davidson bike show — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Live bands — noon to 5 p.m.
- Chili booths and food booths — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Chili dogging — throughout the cook-off
- Children's activities — All day near the fountain in Kellogg Park
- Downtown Plymouth stores open — noon to 5 p.m.

Judging guidelines

Everybody thinks they make the best-tasting chili. But what you serve to friends and family on a Sunday afternoon is not necessarily competition-style chili, said Annette Horn, Great Lakes Regional Chili Cook-off organizer and long-time chili cook-off judge.

If you're thinking about competing in a chili cook-off, judges look for the following characteristics:

Good flavor. "I look for the yummy factor," said Horn.

Meat texture. Meat and quality will determine tenderness and length of cooking time. You don't want squishy meat.

Visual factor. Meat must be cut in consistent pieces. Vegetables must not be visible.

Consistency. Chili must not be too thick or too thin.

Aroma. If it smells good, it most likely will taste good.

Color. Don't worry, color is not a factor in determining winners.

■ For more information about chili cook-offs, visit the International Chili Society web page, www.chilicookoff.com. You can call them at (702) 643-5700 or write to International Chili Society, 6755 Speedway Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89115.

Award-winning dessert pizza a delicious slice of fall

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
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What's your favorite recipe to share?

Send us your recipe, and if it's chosen to be featured in Taste, we'll send you a newly-published cookbook.

Send recipes for consideration in Recipe to Share to:

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Look for recipe to share on the third Sunday of the month in Taste.

CARAMEL APPLE PIZZA

COOKIE:
Recipe makes 2, you'll need one 12-inch Peanut Butter Cookie for pizza

1 3/4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar

1/2 cup Land O Lakes Margarine
1/2 cup peanut butter

1 egg
1 tablespoon milk
1 teaspoon vanilla

Frosting:
(8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla

Toppings:
2 to 3 apples, peeled, cored and sliced
Lemon lime soda pop
Caramels
2 tablespoons milk

Dry roasted peanuts, chopped
Cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Combine all cookie ingredients in a large mixer bowl. Mix on lowest speed with electric mixer until dough forms. Put half of cookie dough into a 12-inch circle on baking sheet. Bake at 350°F for 12-15 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool completely.

Cut cookie into serving squares or wedge slices. Combine frosting ingredients. Spread over cooled cookie. Peel, core and dice apples. Place in bowl and cover with lemon lime soda pop to prevent apples from browning. Let soak 10 minutes.

Remove apples and drain on paper towel. Arrange apple pieces over frosting. Melt caramels and milk in microwaveable bowl for 30 seconds. Stir, repeat if necessary until creamy. Drizzle caramel sauce over apples. Garnish with cinnamon and chopped peanuts.

Makes 24 servings. Preparation time is 30 minutes.

Recipe compliments of the Broome family of Canton.

