

Heat up your spring appetizers with Asian flare

When we started to think up the concept for the Corner Bar here at The Townsend Hotel last year, everyone thought that I was crazy to want to serve appetizers of Asian style foods.

Thankfully the concept was a great success and very well received. With the help of restaurant chef Vuong Loc, a native of Vietnam and very talented, we brought the concept to life.

I thought that I would share with you some of the items that we have served in the Corner Bar. These can be served as appetizers or larger as main entrees.

All of these ingredients can be found locally at Asian food stores.

WHITE MISO VINAIGRETTE

- 2 ounces white miso paste (Soy-bean paste). (If you cannot find white, then any type of miso paste would do.)
- 5 ounce Dijon mustard
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 ounce sugar
- 2 ounces rice wine vinegar
- 5 ounce mirin
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 5 oz dark sesame seed oil
- Salt and pepper

Same method as above. (I prefer to do Romaine hearts with this one.)

ASIAN ROCK SHRIMP SALAD

- Oriental Salad Blend
- 1 ounce fat soy greens or baby spinach
- 1/2 ounce julienned carrots (fine strips)
- 1/2 ounce sliced red onions
- 1 ounce Napa cabbage (sliced)
- Chopped cilantro to taste

Mix all items together well.

CRAB SPRING ROLL

- Peanut Sauce:
- 1 tablespoon minced lemon grass
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1 tablespoon garlic
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 1 tablespoon Sambal paste
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 1 ounce fish sauce
- 1/2 tablespoon lime juice
- Sugar, salt, pepper (to taste).

Place all ingredients in a sauce pan and cook for 10-15 minutes. Adjust consistency with chicken stock.

Dragon Sauce:

- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup sweet Thai chili sauce
- 1/8 cup of black bean chili sauce
- 1 ounce lime
- 1 ounce fish sauce
- 1 ounce cornstarch water mixture

Bring ingredients to a boil and thicken with cornstarch, allow to simmer for 10 minutes.

Filling:

- 2 "u15" shrimp or tiger shrimp for each portion.

Mix the following ingredients together.

- 1/2 cup crab meat
- 1/2 cup sautéed mushrooms, preferably Shiitake
- 1/4 cup bean thread noodles, soaked in cold water
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 scallions, finely chopped
- 1/4-inch chopped ginger root
- 1 whole egg
- 4 scallions, finely chopped
- 1 packet or 1/2 cup bean sprouts
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- Salt and Pepper

CARROT AND GINGER VINAIGRETTE

- 1 cup cooked diced carrots
- 1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger
- 1/2 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 ounces sugar
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 ounces rice wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup blended olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- Salt and pepper

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and puree until smooth.

Check seasoning and toss salad leaves just before serving.

SPRING ROLL WRAPPERS

- Egg white to seal the spring rolls
- Garnish: Julienned Pickled Daikon and Daikon Sprouts

Follow directions on spring roll wrapper package as to how to roll spring roll. It's very easy.

LEMON GRASS BEEF

- 1 pound thinly sliced beef tenderloin
- 2 ounce very finely minced lemon grass
- 3 tablespoons minced ginger
- 4 ounces fish sauce
- 2 minced whole jalapeno
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons fresh ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons oyster sauce

Slice the tenderloin and pour all ingredients to marinate for at least 12 hours, or the day before would be fine.

In a hot skillet pan-fry the beef quickly for color on each side but keep rare.

Serve with thinly sliced cucumber and your choice of noodles or over salad greens.

Here are two of my favorite dressing for mixed salad leaves. They are both very simple and flavorful.

GREEN CURRY SAUCE

- 1/2 cup green curry paste
- 1/2 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1/2 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1/2 tablespoon minced lemon grass
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- 1 tablespoon chopped scallions
- 1 tablespoon chopped mint
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 ounce fish sauce
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 cup coconut milk

Place all ingredients in a saucepan and cook for 10-15 minutes.

Season to taste with salt and pepper.

This recipe goes very well with chicken or beef and with pork. Just season meats and pan-fry until cooked then pour over sauce.

Serve with sticky rice or noodles of your choice.

WINE PICKS

Everyday drinking best buys from around the globe: Australia - Hands down at \$7, Yellow Tail Chardonnay, Shiraz, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and the newest Shiraz-Cabernet are tops from Down Under at this price. The new Shiraz-Cabernet is juicy, mellow, fruity and easy-drinking.

More guts requires a few more bucks: 2001 Black Opal Shiraz-Cabernet (\$10); 2001 Penfolds Thomas Hyland Cabernet Sauvignon (\$15); 2000 Tait Shiraz (basket-pressed) (\$23); and 1998 Blesdale Reserve Shiraz (\$28).

WINE

FROM PAGE B1

the thousands of acres planted in the Lodi appellation, vintners from other California wine regions, such as Fetzer, Ravenswood, Kenwood, Beringer and E. & J. Gallo add to the hundreds of Lodi appellation labeled wines.

NEW LABEL

Ironstone Vineyards, about which we wrote a column in early 1999, recently launched its second label, Leaping Horse Vineyards, with wines from the Lodi area. These wines differ from any made by wineries mentioned above in that Leaping Horse wines, as part of Ironstone Vineyards, is the only one that grows, produces and bottles all of its wines. All the grapes come from one of Lodi's most reputable family vineyards.

The best point of all: Each of the following wines are \$6 and offer some of the best everyday drinking available from California at this price.

2001 Leaping Horse Chardonnay (\$6) sports fresh, bright apple aromas with well-mirrored flavors in a balanced wine, just for quaffing or to accompany a simple, grilled preparation of whitefish.

2000 Leaping Horse Merlot (\$6) blends classic cherry fruit with interesting herbal and black olive characters. Try it with grilled swordfish or roast chicken.

2000 Leaping Horse Cabernet Sauvignon (\$6) is the epitome of a drinkable, accessi-

ble cabernet at a wallet-friendly price.

The Heads are Tricy residents who write about wine, sports, food, and restaurants for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. To leave them a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047, mailbox 1864#.



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