

Nora

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2001 Zinfandel by Downing Family Vineyards
paired with
GRILLED ROSEMARY-MARINATED NEW YORK STRIP STEAK
WITH RATATOUILLE

MARINATED NEW YORK STRIP STEAK

Marinade

2 TBSP tamari or soy sauce
1 TBSP minced onion
2 TBSP minced garlic
2 TBSP olive oil
1 tsp minced rosemary
3-inch piece of ginger, peeled and minced
1 TBSP Dijon mustard

4 New York strip steaks or other steak, about 8 ounces each

Combine the tamari, onion, garlic, olive oil, rosemary, ginger and mustard in a medium bowl and whisk to blend.

Put the steaks in a glass or non-reactive baking dish and pour the marinade over them. Allow to marinate for at least 2 hours, but preferably overnight, in the refrigerator.

Preheat the grill or broiler.

Grill or broil the steaks for about 4 minutes on each side, for medium rare, or until of desired doneness.

NORA'S NOTE: Our beef comes from Garnett Farm in Virginia and is especially raised for us by Steve Garnett. Organic meat is extremely lean and very flavorful but tougher than what you might be accustomed to. When I came to this country over 25 years ago as a newlywed, my former husband, Pierre, and I discovered and fell in love with the custom of eating barbecued steaks. We got into the habit of barbecuing some inexpensive chuck steaks nearly every night because they fit our appetites and budget. We ate them with a big green salad and French bread and drank red California jug wine. And would you believe that that during this year of steak, I lost 20 pounds! It just goes to prove that meat isn't always fattening. During this same era, Pierre and I took a car trip to the West. On that trip we lived on steak and baked potatoes. The further west we got, the bigger the steaks and the baked potatoes got. After a while, the plates were hardly big enough to hold them. Never-mind, we just dug in. And we never ordered anything

different. Why should we? As recent arrivals from France, steak was the best and most affordable American luxury.

EGGPLANT - RED PEPPER RAGOUT

1 medium onion, chopped
3 TBSP olive oil
1 tsp minced garlic
1 1/2 pounds eggplant with peel, cubed
1/2 tsp sea salt
3/4 pound zucchini, sliced into 1/2 inch rounds
3 medium red or yellow peppers, cut into 2-inch pieces
1/4 cup chopped, mixed fresh herbs such as thyme, oregano and parsley
freshly ground black pepper
bouquet of fresh herbs, for garnish

Sauté the onion in the olive oil in a large sauté pan for 3 to 4 minutes or until soft. Add the garlic and eggplant and, stirring to combine, coat with the oil. Season with salt to release the juices of the eggplant. Sauté until the eggplant gets soft, about 5 minutes, stirring from time to time. Add the zucchini, stir, and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the peppers, the mixed herbs and sauté for another 3 to 5 minutes. Taste for seasoning. Remove the ragout from the heat when the peppers are nearly tender. The heat of the pan will finish cooking them. Cool to room temperature.

Assembly: Put one steak on each of 4 dinner plates. Mound a generous serving of eggplant ragout next to it. Garnish with a bouquet of fresh herbs.

NORA'S NOTE: If you have leftovers, scramble some eggs with the eggplant ragout for a great breakfast or, for lunch, add slices of prosciutto or some other cured ham. Wrap the ragout in Greek filo dough with goat or feta cheese for a vegetarian strudel. Scatter the lamb bones, carrot, celery, onion and tomato on the bottom of a roasting pan. Add the water. Put the lamb on top and roast for about 35 to 45 minutes or until the internal temperature is 130° F for medium rare or pink, or 140° F for medium.

Make the rosemary sauce. Remove the lamb from the roasting pan and keep it warm by covering it with aluminum foil. Discard the bones and the vegetables. Pour off as much fat as possible from the roasting pan leaving the accumulated meat juices. Put the roasting pan over medium heat and pour in the wine deglazing the pan by scraping all the browned and caramelized juices from the bottom and mixing them with the wine. Strain this liquid into a small saucepan, bring it to a boil and whisk in the mustard and the remaining rosemary, stirring to combine. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

NORA'S NOTE: If you want to do a simpler version of this recipe, season the butterflied leg with the anchovies, garlic, rosemary and pepper and omit the step of rolling and tying the lamb into a roast. Place the lamb on a preheated grill or under a broiler and cook for 10 to 15 minutes per side or until medium rare. Slice it in long strips before serving.

ROASTED SWEET POTATOES

1 1/2 pounds jewel yams, or sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks
1 TBSP olive oil
sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Put the yams into a medium bowl, add the olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Toss to coat. After the lamb has been cooking for 15 minutes, add the yams to the same roasting pan, if you have room, or in another roasting pan, if you don't, and roast them in the same oven as the lamb, for about 30 to 40 minutes or until browned and soft.

NORA'S NOTE: Leftover roasted sweet potatoes make a great salad the next day when tossed with a mustard dressing. You can also mash them, add some sautéed onions, and make a delicious sweet potato pancake.

SUGAR SNAPS

1/2 pound sugar snaps, strings removed
1 tsp olive oil
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Steam the sugar snaps in a small saucepan using a collapsible steamer or blanch them in boiling water. Drain, toss with the olive oil and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Assembly: Place 3 or 4 slices of lamb on each of 4 dinner-size plates and spoon some rosemary sauce over the meat. Put a large spoonful of sugar snaps and roasted sweet potatoes next to the meat. Garnish with rosemary sprigs.

NORA'S NOTE: Sugar snap peas are eaten whole. When they are very fresh you can eat them raw. They make a delicious appetizer dipped in a spicy salsa, hummus or peanut sauce.