

Dinner and A Book Episode #412

Menu:

Martinis
Champagne
Chicken Piccata
Parsley Potatoes
Summer Squash
Rice Rings
Coffee and Brandy
After dinner cigars

Someone has to be dressed in a Winston Churchill jumper suit, the kind he wore throughout the war. A cigar is always in vogue.

Recipes:

Chicken Piccata Serves 6

6 Chicken breast halves, skinned and boned
1/2-cup flour
1-teaspoon flour
1-teaspoon salt
1/2-teaspoon black pepper
1/2-cup butter
1/4-cup olive oil
1/4 cup dry white wine
Juice of 1 lemon
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
Capers (optional)

Pound chicken breasts to flatten. Mix flour, salt, pepper. Roll chicken in mixture to coat. Shake off excess flour. Chill. (Chicken may be cooked without chilling but chilling retards burning when sauteing). Heat butter and oil in large skillet over medium heat until it sizzles. Sauté breasts three at a time for about 3 minutes or less per side. Remove from pan. Keep warm until all are cooked. Stir wine and lemon juice into drippings in pan and scrape bottom of skillet to deglaze. Heat but do not boil. Return chicken to the pan and turn to coat with pan juices over chicken. Remove chicken from pan, pour pan juices over chicken. Sprinkle with parsley and capers if desired. Serve immediately.

Parsley Potatoes

Cook 6 new potatoes in water until done. Drain water. Cover with fresh chopped parsley and butter. Serve in a bowl.

Summer Squash

Steam 4 summer squashes cut on fourths in a covered pan on the stove for about 40 minutes. Scoop out squash, chop and add:

1/4-teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire
1/4-teaspoon salt
1 Tablespoon butter
1/2 cup grated cheese
1/4-teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4-teaspoon curry powder

Mix well. Put into a buttered casserole dish and bake for 20 minutes.

Rice Rings Serves 6

This dessert is frequently served in Europe, where rice puddings are highly appreciated.

Cook:

1-1/2 cups rice
2 cups hot milk
1/2-teaspoon salt

When the rice is tender, cook it slightly and add to it:

1-1/2 tablespoons butter
2 teaspoons vanilla or 1-teaspoon vanilla and 1 teaspoon lemon rind.
2 teaspoons sugar.

Pack the rice into buttered individual ring molds or ramekins. Chill it. Turn it out onto plates. Fill the center with: Stewed or canned fruit, or crushed, sweetened berries.

Serve martinis before dinner, white wine with the dinner, champagne with the rice rings and brandy after dinner with coffee. Move to the living room or library for the coffee and brandy. It would be fun to choose a central character from this historical period, dress in their apparel, read some quotes from their writings and have a generally great time filled with rye comments about British and American history and how the war is coming along. I would suggest play magisterial music before dinner and Glenn Miller music after dinner. By all means, invite people steeped in history who love to discuss politics with a rye sense of humor. You could follow the dinner with the movie *The Gathering Storm* which stars Vanessa Redgrave as Clementine Churchill and Albert Finney as Winston Churchill.