



IN THE MOOD TO NEST? INVITE YOUR LAZIEST FRIENDS OVER—AND GET READY TO BINGE-WATCH TV.





A COMFORT FOOD PASTA BUFFET.









COMFORT BINGE

AN HERBALLY-DELICIOUS COMFORT COCKTAIL AND WINTER WHITES.



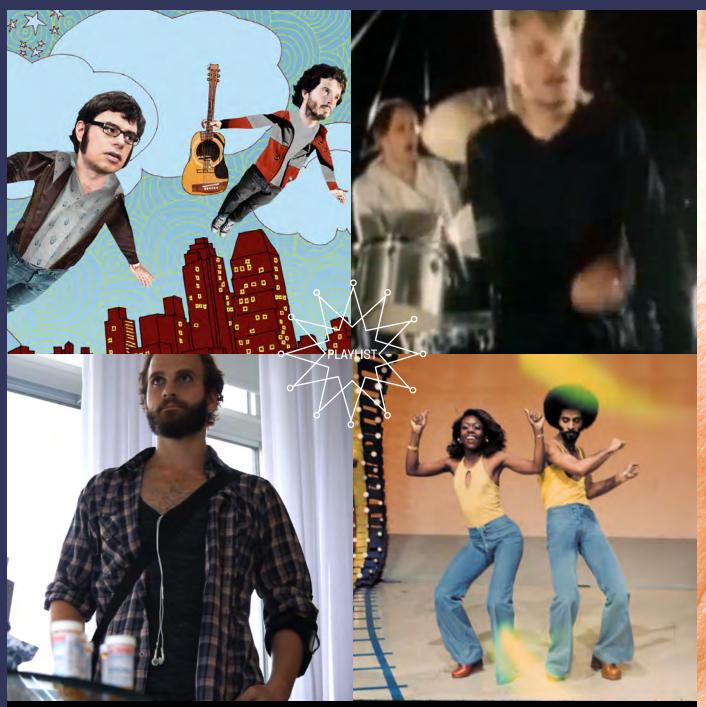




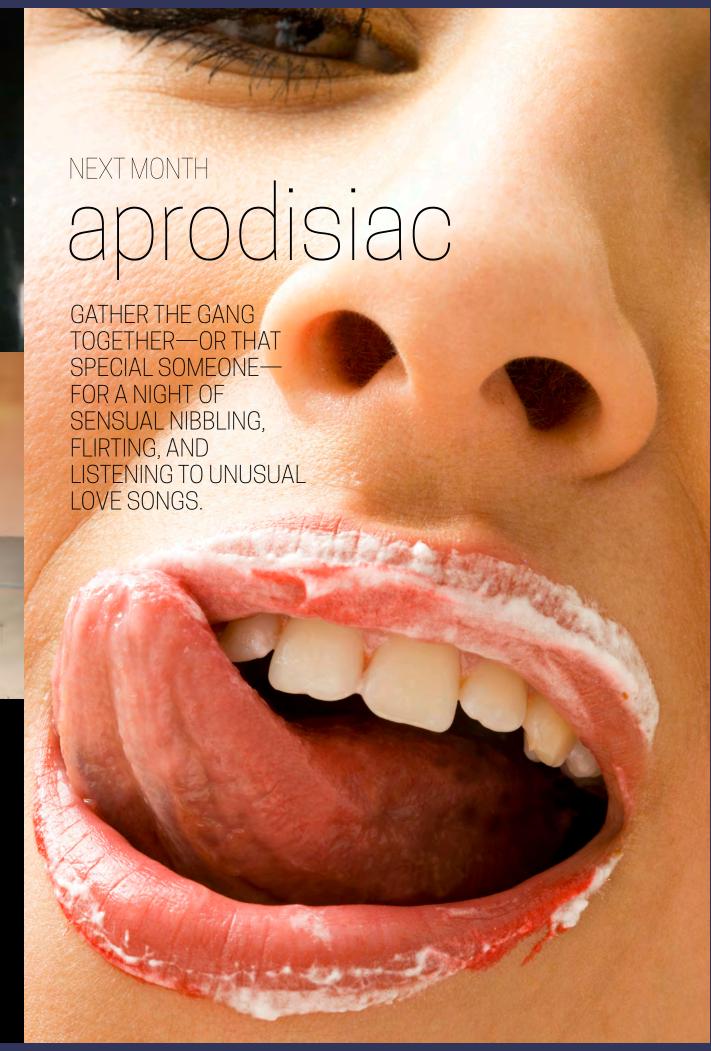


settle Stage

WRAP GUESTS IN CUDDLY-SOFT FAUX FUR WHILE INDULGING IN BINGE-WATCH TV.



We've all indulged in mindless TV viewing. For this month's party playlist, have each guest come with their favorite guilty pleasure. HOBNOB suggests. top left: The Flight of the Conchords on HBO; top right: videos from your favorite 80s bands; below: Soul Train's style and dance moves; bottom left: High Maintenance, tales of the pot dealer on Vimeo.





Blandy's 5 Year Old Bual Madeira

Fentiman's Dandelion & Burdock Soda

Fee Brothers Plum Bitters

SIGNATURE COCKTAIL: THE MAD HERBAL

MAKE THE COCKTAIL

1 part Blandy's 5 Year Old Bual Madeira, chilled

1 part Fentiman's Dandelion & Burdock Soda, chilled

3 drops Fee Brothers Plum Bitters In a coup glass, fill up halfway with madeira, then top with the soda, add 3 drops of the bitters.

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Due to the fact that I already had a bottle of Madeira on hand for the creamy porcini sauce, I thought a cocktail with the wine would pair nicely. This cocktail is a good welcoming taste for the comfort to come.

MAKES ONE COCKTAIL





PASTA PLANNER

Tempt your friends with a menu of comfort foods, with just minimal effort required on your part. The pasta buffet is designed to appeal to all—with three basic sauces, and a heap of add-ins for vegetarians, meat-lovers and traditionalists. Choose only what works for your crowd.

SAUCES [Pick 1-2]

Creamy Madeira Porcini Sauce [Recipe]

Pecan Parsley Pesto [Recipe]

Spicy Oil & Garlic Sauce [Recipe]

TOPPINGS: PROTEIN [Pick 1-2]

Melty Short Ribs [Recipe]

Chorizo Crumble [Recipe]

Steamed Shrimp

TOPPINGS: VEGGIE [Pick 2]

Roasted Kabocha Squash [Recipe]

Caramelized Peppers & Onions [Recipe]

Green Peas

TOPPINGS: FRESH GREENS [Pick 1]

Watercress

Arugula

Sea Beans

TOPPINGS: FINISHERS [Pick 2]

Prosciutto Bacon [Recipe]

Grated Olieman Gouda Cheese

Red Pepper Flakes



2.5 OZ dried porcini mushrooms

butter

large onion

6 cloves garlic

madeira wine

heavy cream

half + half

fresh thyme

fresh oregano

fresh rosemary

lemon

s + p

SAUCE: CREAMY MADEIRA PORCINI

SOAK THE MUSHROOMS

2.5 OZ dried porcini mushrooms

2.5 CUPS boiling water

In a medium bowl, pour boiling water over the mushrooms. Let mushrooms soak, covered, about 15 min. Strain mushrooms through mesh seive, reserving the liquid. Chop mushrooms.

MAKE THE SAUCE

3 TB butter

1 large onion, cut in half, then sliced thinly

6 cloves garlic, minced

--

soaked mushrooms

1 ½ CUPS madeira wine

--

1 pint heavy cream

½ CUP half + half

1 TB thyme, chopped

1 TB oregano, chopped

2 TB rosemary, chopped

½ CUP soaking liquid from mushrooms

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juice from ½ lemon

2 tsp salt

1 tsp fresh black pepper

In a medium saucepan, melt butter, add onions and garlic. Saute over medium heat 7 min. Add mushrooms and madeira, raise heat to high and boil until liquid is reduced by half, about 5 min. Add cream and herbs, stir to combine. Carefully pour in mushroom soaking liquid, leaving behind the sediment. Boil 5 min, then lower heat to simmer. Simmer for another 5 min. Mix in lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper.

Dried mushrooms are comfort food's best friend. Here, porcinis add a depth of flavor to a luscious cream sauce and work wonderfully with madeira wine.

MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART

[I found excellent, bulk porcini mushrooms, sourced locally, from Eataly, at a fraction of the cost of the Italian brand. Look for them near the produce.]



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olive oil
4-5 cloves garlic
fine salt
red pepper flakes
parsley

SAUCE: SPICY OIL & GARLIC

MAKE THE SAUCE

1 CUP EV olive oil

4-5 cloves garlic, chopped

--

1 tsp fine salt

1/4 tsp red pepper flakes

1 TB parsley, chopped

Gently heat oil. To test if oil is ready, add a piece or two of the garlic, it should sizzle softly and immediately. Cook on low flame for 5 min, till garlic is slightly brown. Strain into heatproof container. Stir in the salt, pepper flakes and parsley.

<< **BACK**

This is my go-to comfort sauce: a simple garlic and oil with a little kick. This is even better the next day.

MAKES ABOUT ONE CUP (ENOUGH FOR 1 LB PASTA)





pecans
pine nuts
salt
hot pepper flakes
fresh oregano
fresh parsley
garlic
2 CUPS EV olive oil
Olieman Gouda
cheese

SAUCE: PECAN PARSLEY PESTO

TOAST THE NUTS... GET OUT THE FOOD PROCESSOR

1 CUP pecans, roughly chopped
½ CUP pine nuts
sprinkle of salt and hot pepper flakes

Toast pecans on a heated skillet, about 3 min. Add pine nuts, toast another 2 min, shaking pan frequently so as not to burn. Move to a small bowl.

PULSE TOGETHER

toasted pecans and pine nuts

2 TB oregano, minced

3 CUPS parsley

3 cloves garlic, chopped

1 CUP EV olive oil

3 - 4-inch piece of Olieman Gouda cheese, grated

2 tsp salt

In batches, pulse together all the ingredients.

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Pecans and parsley mix together for an edge-ier pesto that hits the comfort spot. There will be extra sauce which you can put out so guests can add more to their plate, or save for future. To store, put in a glass container, cover with oil so it will not turn dark.

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS (ENOUGH FOR 1 LB OF PASTA WITH EXTRA)





SHORT RIBS:

2 LB boneless beef short ribs

canola oil

s + p

large onion

carrots

10 cloves garlic

15 Castelvetrano olives

Arrowhead Mills organic spelt flour

tomato paste

thyme

oregano

rosemary

Brandy

beef stock

CHORIZO CRUMBLE:

canola oil

1 LB chorizo meat

TOPPING: SHORT RIBS

PREHEAT OVEN TO 350°F... SEAR THE MEAT

2 LB boneless beef short ribs3 TB canola oil

s + p

Let meat come to room temp, pat with paper towels. Heat oil in a Dutch Oven over medium-high heat. Sear meat on all sides, about 2 min each side. Remove from the Dutch Oven and season generously with s + p.

ADD FLAVOR... COOK

1 large onion, chopped

3 carrots, sliced thinly

10 cloves garlic, peeled

15 Castelvetrano olives

--

3 TB organic spelt flour

1 TB tomato paste

make a bouquet garni with thyme, oregano, rosemary

--

1 ½ CUPS Brandy seared meat

--

2 CUPS beef stock

Add onions, carrots, garlic, and olives to Dutch Oven, saute over mediumhigh heat, about 5 min. Add flour and tomato paste and herbs, stirring constantly, 2 min. Add brandy, scrape the bottom of the pan, and add meat back to the pot, fat side up. Reduce liquid to half, about 10 min. Stir in stock, scrape bottom, and bring to a boil.

Cover and transfer to oven, middle shelf. Cook about 2.5 hrs, till the meat is falling apart, remove Dutch Oven and let the meat cool in the pot. When ready to serve, cut into 1/2-inch thick slices and set in a small bowl.

TOPPING: CHORIZO CRUMBLE

BROWN THE MEAT

1 TB canola oil

1 LB chorizo meat

Heat a frying pan, add oil. When oil is hot, add the sausage meat and break into pieces with a wooden spoon. Cook for 12 min, stirring occasionally, for extra crispy bits. Remove from pan with a slotted spoon.

Make the short ribs a day ahead: the flavors meld, plus skimming off the fat day 2 gives you pure meaty joy minus the artery clog.

MAKES TEN 1/2-INCH-THICK SLICES

A sprinkle of chorizo works with all three sauces, for those who enjoy a touch of heat and meat.

MAKES ABOUT 1.5 CUPS





SQUASH:

3.3 LB kabocha squash

EV olive oil

s + p

harissa (optional)

PEPPERS & ONIONS:

2 red bell peppers

2 large red onions

olive oil

salt

white wine

TOPPING: ROASTED KABOCHA SQUASH

PREHEAT OVEN 400°F

3.3 LB kabocha squash, cut into 1-inch cubes

2 TB EV olive oil

s + p

--

harissa (optional)

Toss squash, oil and s + p together in a bowl. Spread out on a baking sheet lined with parchment. Roast for 30 min. While still hot, sprinkle with harissa, if you would like a little more flavor.

TOPPING: CARAMELIZED PEPPERS & ONIONS

GET OUT A SAUCEPAN..

2 red bell peppers, cut into thin strips

2 large red onions, cut in half, then into thin strips

2 TB olive oil

2 tsp salt

--

½ cup white wine

Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat, add peppers, and onion, saute for 5 min. Reduce heat, cook another 15 min, stirring occasionally, till the onions brown and the peppers are nice and soft. Stir in the wine and cook until the it evaporates; about 6 - 7 min.



<< **BACK**

Cutting the squash is the tough part. If you have a very sharp knife, use this method for peeling and dicing the squash.

www.askachef.tv/videos/how-peeland-dice-kabocha-squash

I started with this technique and switched to a very sharp peeler, which made it easier to get around the curves.

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

The peppers and onions add a nice pop of color and a touch of sweetness. I had a bottle of prosecco openened, which worked nicely in this dish—and in my glass while I was cooking.

MAKES 2 - 3 CUPS





shopping list
6 slices La Quercia

prosciutto

olive oil

TOPPING: PROSCIUTTO BACON

FRY IT UP

6 slices La Quercia prosciutto, cut into strips

1 tsp olive oil

Add strips to a hot skillet and saute until crispy.

MAKES ABOUT 3/4 CUP

dishes.

You might get into the habit of

doing this and adding it to lots of

<< BACK

