

A Meal To Remember

Recreating The Last Meal On The Titanic

BY SUSAN M. SELASKY
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Interest in the Titanic sails on as the 100th anniversary of its April 15, 1912, sinking draws near.

Museums, theaters and even hotels are preparing special menus to mark the centennial.

Some organizers took menu cues from "Last Dinner on the Titanic: Menus and Recipes from the Great Liner" by Rick Archibold and Dana McCauley (Madison Press, \$25.95).

Then, like chef-owner Greg Reyner of Cafe Muse in Royal Oak, Mich., they looked for ways to modernize and economize.

"One of the menus had marrow," said Reyner, who is preparing the sold-out strolling buffet for 250 at Royal Oak's Baldwin Theatre on April 12. "We had to find things that were comparable."

For example, Reyner will serve caviar-topped deviled eggs instead of oysters. Beef consommé topped with scallops will become a tomato-based consommé served in cucumber cups.

One of Reyner's entrees will be Chicken with Braised Leeks, Spinach and Apples, a take off on the Titanic's Roast Squab with Watercress.

"And we are contrasting the opulent first class with the steerage-esque, so to speak, third class," Reyner said. So a boiled dinner is also on the menu.

This is the 14th year for the Titanic dinner at the Kirby House in Saugatuck, Mich. Owner Jim Gowran began the events the year James Cameron's film won the Academy Award.

"We rotate the main entree each year," Gowran said.

This year, it's Filet Mignon Lili with creamed carrots and chateau potatoes.

Gowran's event April 14 will feature guests dressed in period costume or black tie. Each is given the name of a passenger and information about them.

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KATHLEEN GALLIGAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS/MCT
Braised chicken with leek, spinach and apples is part of a menu inspired by meals served on the Titanic.

of boiling salted water, cook the asparagus spears 3 minutes or until they are tender but not limp. Drain and run them under cold water until they are completely cooled; drain well. Set aside.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, stir the

safron into the teaspoon of boiling water. Let stand for 2 minutes or until safron is softened. Stir in the vinegar, mustard and sugar. Whisk in the olive oil. Season the mixture with salt and pepper to taste. If you want the vinaigrette thicker, add more Dijon. Add

the asparagus and diced pepper; toss gently to coat with the vinaigrette. Line a platter with lettuce leaves and arrange the asparagus mixture on top.

From "Last Dinner on the Titanic: Menus and Recipes from the Great Liner" by Rick Archibold and Dana McCauley (Madison Press, \$25.95).

Tested by Susan Selasky in the Free Press Test Kitchen.

84 calories (76 percent from fat), 7 grams fat (1 gram sat. fat), 5 grams carbohydrates, 2 grams protein, 8 mg sodium, 0 mg cholesterol, 2 grams fiber.

Canapé's A L'Admiral

Makes: 20 canapé's / Preparation time: 25 minutes / Total time: 1 hour

SHRIMP BUTTER

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 large shallot, peeled, ends removed, minced
1 clove garlic, peeled, ends removed, minced
8 ounces shrimp in shell, rinsed
1/4 cup brandy
4 ounces cream cheese, softened (regular or reduced fat)

2 tablespoons butter, softened
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
Dash of vanilla

CANAPÉ'S

20 slices (about 1/2-inch thick) baguette
1 teaspoon lime juice
10 small cooked shrimp, halved lengthwise
20 fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
2 tablespoons caviar (see note)

To prepare shrimp butter: In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the shallot and garlic. Cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes or until softened.

Increase the heat to high and add the shrimp. Saute the shrimp for 4-5 minutes or until the shells are pink and the flesh is opaque. Remove the shrimp and cool. When cool enough to handle, peel shrimp and discard shells. Transfer the shrimp mixture to a blender or a food processor fitted with the steel blade. Then return the skillet to the heat and add the brandy. Cook, stirring, for about 30 seconds or until the brandy is reduced to a glaze. Scrape the glaze into the shrimp mixture.

Pulse the shrimp mixture until it is coarsely chopped. Add the cream

cheese, butter, tomato paste, salt, pepper and vanilla. Process until almost smooth. Set aside.

To prepare the canapé's: Place the baguette slices on a baking sheet and toast under the broiler for 1 minute per side or until lightly golden. Remove from broiler and set aside. Drizzle the lime juice over the cooked shrimp halves; stir and reserve.

To assemble canapé's: Place the shrimp butter in a pastry bag fitted with a decorative tube. Pipe the shrimp butter onto the toasted baguette slices, or spread mixture on slices using a table knife. Top each with a cooked shrimp half, parsley leaf and small amount of caviar.

Cook's note: Sautéing the shrimp in their shells enhances their flavor, but you can peel and devein the raw shrimp first. If desired, substitute lumpfish caviar for caviar.

From "Last Dinner on the Titanic: Menus and Recipes from the Great Liner" by Rick Archibold and Dana McCauley (Madison Press, \$25.95). Tested by Susan Selasky in the Free Press Test Kitchen

92 calories (45 percent from fat), 5 grams fat (2 grams sat. fat), 7 grams carbohydrates, 5 grams protein, 196 mg sodium, 38 mg cholesterol, trace of fiber.

Braised Chicken With Leeks, Spinach And Apples

Serves: 8 / Preparation time: 15 minutes / Total time: 1 hour, 25 minutes

Greg Reyner, chef-owner of Cafe Muse in Royal Oak, developed this recipe based on one of the courses of the last first-class dinner on the Titanic — originally roast squab with watercress. Reyner substituted chicken thighs and spinach.

Flour for dredging (about 1 cup)
Olive oil for frying (about 1 cup)
8 large skinless, boneless chicken thighs

Sea salt and fresh cracked pepper to taste
2 leeks (white parts only), sliced, rinsed well, diced
4 cloves garlic, peeled, diced
1 cup dry white wine, such as Chardonnay

1 large apple (such as Granny Smith), peeled and diced
2 cups fresh spinach, washed and torn

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place flour in a shallow dish or pie plate. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Pat chicken thighs dry with paper towels, dredge with flour and shake off excess. Working in batches, carefully add thighs to the skillet. Salt and pepper to taste. Once you have nice color on the thighs, turn and brown the second side. Once the chicken is browned, transfer to a baking dish. Add leeks and garlic to the skillet and saute for a minute, until softened. Deglaze with wine and add the diced apple. Pour everything over thighs. Cover tightly with foil and bake until chicken is tender, about 1 hour. Chicken should be tender but not falling apart. At this point, stir in the spinach and cook 10 minutes more, uncovered. Test for seasoning and add more salt and pepper to taste, if needed.

From Cafe Muse, Royal Oak. Tested by Susan Selasky in the Free Press Test Kitchen. Analysis based on 4 ounces cooked chicken thigh meat.

366 calories (46 percent from fat), 18 grams fat (4 grams sat. fat), 13 grams carbohydrates, 32 grams protein, 227 mg sodium, 109 mg cholesterol, 3 grams fiber.

Asparagus Salad With Champagne-Saffron Vinaigrette

Serves: 6 / Preparation time: 20 minutes / Total time: 20 minutes

This is an ideal way to serve spring's favorite vegetable, asparagus. Using safron in the vinaigrette lends a floral note.

1 1/2 pounds asparagus, rinsed
Boiling salted water
1/4 teaspoon safron threads
1 teaspoon boiling water
1 1/2 tablespoon Champagne vinegar or white wine vinegar
1/2 to 1 teaspoon Dijon-style mustard

Pinch of sugar
3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 sweet red or yellow pepper, diced

6 leaf or butter lettuce leaves
Holding the asparagus halfway up the stalk, snap off the woody ends at a natural breaking point and discard. In a wide, deep skillet or large pot

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