

EAT & DRINK

Celebrating the Food & Drink
of British Columbia

Spring Issue

- *salt cod
- *sauvignon blanc
- *rhubarb
- *cheese
- *za'atar
- *olive oil

Salted Caramel-Bourbon Blondies

EXCEPTIONAL
EATS! AWARD WINNERS

Spring Chicken



Blonde on Blonde

A simple, comfort food menu featuring some golden hues of early spring.

Sometimes we just want blond food. That's blond, not bland—early spring comfort food like local, golden-roasted chicken legs made heady with earthy, unctuous morel sauce and balanced with the spring freshness of tender asparagus. Pair that with a scoop of creamy blond potatoes mashed with cauliflower (this year's darling of the vegetable world) and seasoned with spring chives and fresh mint. Complete the comfort-food theme with the brownie's fairer cousin, a blondie bar tinged with amber bourbon and dunked in salted caramel sauce.

Crispy Chicken Legs with Morels and Asparagus

Local, free-range chickens elevate this dish, and by using the legs only, you save the breasts for another dinner. Morels are early harbingers of spring so use fresh. (To clean fresh morels, place in a bowl, cover with water, stir in a pinch of salt and soak for 5 minutes, then drain. Rinse and repeat two more times.) Serves 4.

Chicken

2 to 3 garlic cloves
Sea salt, to taste
2 knobs of butter, softened
1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tsp chopped thyme leaves
1 tsp grated lemon peel
6 chicken legs
½ onion, chopped

Morel Sauce

½ onion, chopped
¼ lb fresh morels, cleaned, sliced in quarters
½ tsp flour
½ cup white wine
1 to 2 cups chicken broth

To make the chicken, mince garlic, then sprinkle with pinches of sea salt. Using the flat side of a chef knife, mash garlic to form a paste. Mash in butter, then scrape into a bowl and stir in Dijon, thyme and lemon peel.

Place legs, flesh-side down, on a cutting board. Cut legs halfway through joints (where thigh meets drumstick): they'll cook faster. Flip legs over. Loosen skin on top of each leg to form a pocket. Divide and tuck in garlic mixture. Massage skin to evenly distribute. If you have time, cover and refrigerate 1 to 2 hours or overnight. A little marinating time strengthens flavours.

Preheat oven to 450°F. Coat a large frying pan with a little oil and add another small knob of butter. Set over medium-high heat. When melted, add 3 legs, skin-side down. Cook until golden, 2 minutes, then turn over and cook 1 to 2 minutes. Place in a roasting pan and repeat with remaining chicken legs. Season with salt and pepper. Roast in oven for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, fry onions in chicken fat in frying pan over medium heat. When soft, add morels. Sauté until soft, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat. Once chicken has roasted for 25 minutes, add asparagus to the roasting pan, tucking in as best you can. Continue roasting until chicken is cooked through and asparagus is tender-crisp, 12 to 15 minutes. Baste with pan juices a couple of times.

Place chicken and asparagus on a platter. Drain pan drippings into frying pan with onions and morels and increase heat to medium-high. When bubbly, stir in flour and cook for 1 minute. Gradually whisk in wine. Let simmer for 2 minutes, then gradually stir in broth, a little at a time, until sauce is as thick as you like. Spoon over chicken and squeeze fresh lemon overtop (if you have one kicking around).

CONT'D ON NEXT PAGE

A top-down photograph of several blonde brownies on a white parchment paper-lined surface. The brownies are square-shaped and have a light, golden-brown color. Some are topped with a thick, orange-brown caramel sauce that is drizzled over them. A small glass jar filled with the same caramel sauce is positioned in the upper right corner. A silver spoon with a dollop of caramel sauce is in the lower right corner. The background is a solid, light pink color. The text "Blonde Brownies" is overlaid in a large, white, cursive font in the center-right of the image.

*Blonde
Brownies*

Cauliflower and potato mash

- 2 large white potatoes, unpeeled, cut into chunks
- 1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 1 cup milk, warmed
- 1 knob butter (optional)
- Handful fresh mint, chopped
- Handful chives, chopped

In a large saucepan, boil potatoes for 10 to 15 minutes, then add cauliflower. Continue to boil until both are tender, then drain well. Place back in pot and set over low heat to absorb excess moisture. Mash, then stir in milk, a little at a time, until mixture is fluffy. Stir in butter, chives and fresh mint.

Salted Caramel-Bourbon Blondies

This popular new incarnation of the old standby is chewy, gooey and boozy.

Sauce

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup water
- ¾ cup unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 1 cup 35% whipping cream
- 1 to 2 Tbsp bourbon or rum
- 1 Tbsp fleur de sel, maldon or your favourite sea salt

Blondies

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp bourbon or rum
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking soda
- Pinches of sea salt
- 1 cup chopped dark chocolate
- 1 cup toasted chopped almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts or pecans (optional)

For the caramel sauce, pour sugar into a medium-to-large, heavy-bottomed saucepan and whisk in water to dissolve. Heat over medium-high heat, swirling pan often, until sugar turns deep amber and smells toasty. If using a candy thermometer, temperature should register 350°F.

Turn off heat, but leave pan on stove. Carefully whisk in butter cubes, a few at a time (don't be shocked when mixture bubbles up like a volcano) until completely mixed in and melted. Remove from heat and gradually whisk in cream until well mixed. Whisk in bourbon, then salt.

To make the blondies, line a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with parchment paper. Preheat oven to 350°F. Melt butter, then pour into a bowl. Add sugar; using an electric mixer, beat until smooth. Let cool. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Beat in bourbon, then vanilla.

Stir flour with baking soda and salt. Mix in flour, in three additions, on low speed, just until mixed. Fold in chocolate and nuts.

Scrape two-thirds of the batter into pan and evenly spread out. Drizzle ¾ of a cup of cooled caramel sauce overtop. Drop remaining blondie batter by spoonfuls overtop of caramel sauce.

Bake until edges are brown and centre is set, about 25 to 30 minutes. Cool completely before cutting into squares. Dish up with more caramel sauce for dunking.

PIZZA, PASTA

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