

Friday Night Dinner For Two

Written by Debbi Covington

Tuesday, 14 October 2008 07:54

Marinated Rib Eye Steaks • Twice Baked Potatoes with Goat Cheese & Parsley • Mesclun Salad & Strawberries with Lemon-Mustard Vinaigrette • Bananas Foster



Steak and baked potatoes are Friday-night favorites at our house! Served along with Twice Baked Potatoes with Goat Cheese and Parsley, Marinated Rib-Eye Steaks are a delicious way to start the weekend. When you're in the mood for something one notch above your usual steak recipe, whip up this delicious and simple marinade. The marinade, which combines Dijon mustard, garlic, vinegar, olive oil, salt, and freshly ground black pepper, comes together in no time. It flavors the meat beautifully without overshadowing it, as many commercial marinades do. The steaks can be grilled inside or out, or can be quickly seared to medium with a mere two or three minutes per side under the broiler. Don't limit your meat selection to rib-eyes when whipping up this marinade. It also pairs exceptionally well with London broil or flank steak. If you decide to use London broil or flank steak, be sure to marinate the meat overnight before grilling. Begin your steak dinner with Mesclun Salad and Strawberries with Lemon- Mustard Vinaigrette and a glass of your favorite red wine. Bananas Foster is a classic dessert that's quick and easy! When flambeing the bananas, use a long-handled match. Hold the lighted match just above the liquid mixture. You want to light the fumes, not the liquid itself. Most importantly, don't lean over the pan. Stand back to ignite the mixture.

Marinated Rib-Eye Steaks

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons white balsamic or white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 (8-ounce) rib-eye steaks

Place mustard, garlic, vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper in a gallon-sized zip-lock plastic bag. Squeeze well to combine. Add the steaks and marinate, refrigerated, for 1 hour. Cook the steaks 3 to 5 minutes per side on a hot grill, or 2 to 3 minutes per side under the broiler. Serves 2.

Twice Baked Potatoes with Goat Cheese and Parsley

2 russet potatoes (about 3/4 pound each), scrubbed
3 tablespoons butter
1/3 cup heavy cream, warmed
2 ounces Goat cheese, crumbled
1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley

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Salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place the potatoes on the center rack and bake until tender, 60 to 70 minutes. About halfway through the baking, prick the skins in a few spots with a fork to allow steam to escape. Remove the potatoes from the oven and place on a cutting board. Holding each potato with a towel or pot holder, slice the top quarter lengthwise off of the potato. Scoop out the flesh with a tablespoon into a mixing bowl. Leave enough pulp in the potatoes so that the skins stand up on their own. Remember to scoop the flesh from the lids, too. Mash the potatoes with a fork and add 2 tablespoons of the butter. Work in the cream until fluffy and smooth, then beat in the goat cheese, parsley, salt, and pepper. Spoon the filling into the skins, mounding it nicely on top, and put the filled potatoes on a baking sheet. Pinch off bits of the remaining 1 tablespoon of butter to dot the potatoes before you bake them. You can make the potatoes ahead until this point and refrigerate them for several hours or even overnight. Heat the potatoes in a 350degree oven and bake them until the filling is hot throughout and the tops are lightly browned, 20 to 25 minutes. (If you've refrigerated the stuffed potatoes, expect them to take 40 to 50 minutes to heat through.) Serve hot. Serves 2.

Mesclun Salad and Strawberries with Lemon-Mustard Vinaigrette

4 tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon hot Chinese mustard
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 cup vegetable oil
3 cups mesclun salad or spring mix
2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
4 green onions, sliced
Romano cheese, freshly grated
Black pepper, freshly ground

Combine first 7 ingredients in blender. Mix well. Toss salad greens with pine nuts, strawberries, and green onions. Toss with Lemon-Mustard Vinaigrette and Romano cheese. Top with freshly ground pepper. Serves 2.

Bananas Foster

1/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 bananas, split and quartered

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1/4 cup light rum

Vanilla ice cream

Combine first 3 ingredients in a large skillet; cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until bubbly. Add bananas; cook 2 to 3 minutes or until thoroughly heated, basting constantly with syrup mixture. Heat rum in a small saucepan over medium heat (do not boil). Quickly pour rum over banana mixture; immediately ignite with a long match. Let flames die down; serve immediately over ice cream. Serves 2.

The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of the cookbook, Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Debbi's website address is www.cateringbydebbicovington.com. She may be reached at 525-0350 or by email at covingtoncats@embarqmail.com