

Cherry Tomato Jam with Cheese

Makes 1 ½ cups/360 ml

Ingredients:

2 cups/340 g cherry or grape tomatoes

¾ cup/150 g sugar

3 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

Zest of 1 lemon

½ tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped

Directions:

Heat the oven to 350 ° F/180 ° C.

Cut the tomatoes in half and place on a baking sheet/tray lined with aluminum foil. Bake for about 15 minutes to loosen the skins. Remove the tomatoes from the oven and let cool slightly before carefully peeling away the skins.

Place the tomatoes and the sugar over medium heat and gently melt the sugar. Bring to a boil and cook, boiling rapidly, for 5 to 7 minutes, or until thick and syrupy. Remove from the heat and stir in the lemon juice, lemon zest, and rosemary.

Transfer to a clean, sterilized jar and seal well. The jam can be kept refrigerated for 2 weeks, though I doubt it will make it that long! (p.37, *The Cheesemonger's Kitchen*, by Chester Hastings)

Roasted Butternut Squash with Fresh Tuscan Pecorino and Devil's Honey

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients:

For the Squash

2 butternut squash

6 tbsp/ 90 ml extra-virgin olive oil

Sea salt

½ lb./225 g fresh pecorino cheese, cut into ¼-in-/6-mm-thick squared slices

For the Devil's Honey

½ cup/120 ml wildflower honey

¼ tsp crushed red chilies

Directions:

To prepare the squash

Preheat the oven to 375 °/190° C

Peel the squash and cut the neck of each squash into 1-in/2.5-cm rounds. Reserve the bottoms of the squash for another use. Drizzle with a little olive oil. Use your fingers to coat every side of the squash rounds with the oil. Season with sea salt.

Bake the squash rounds on a baking sheet/tray for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the squash is tender to the touch of a fork. Set aside until cool enough to handle.

Lightly oil a baking dish and either layer the slices of cooked squash and cheese au cheval (shingled like fallen dominoes) or stack up in towers. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the cheese is runny and gooey.

To prepare the devil's honey

Combine the honey and chilies in a small saucepan. Cook gently over medium heat until the honey just begins to bubble. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature.

Drizzle the honey over the squash before serving. (p.104, *The Cheesemonger's Kitchen*, by Chester Hastings)

Focaccia with Venetian Black Truffle Cheese and Potatoes

Makes one 12-by-16-in/30-by-40-cm Focaccia

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups/360 ml lukewarm water

2 ¼ tsp active dry yeast

½ tsp salt

½ tsp sugar

3 ½ cups/440 g all-purpose/plain flour

6 tbsp/90 ml extra-virgin olive oil

3 oz/85 g Sottocenera al tartufo cheese, sliced thin

1 large russet or Yukon gold potato

1 tbsp roughly chopped fresh sage leaves

Sea salt and freshly cracked black pepper

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400° F/200° C

When the dough is ready to bake, slice the potato paper-thin using a mandoline or very sharp knife. Doing this at the last minute will help prevent the potato from oxidizing.

Lay slices of potato over the Sottocenere in an overlapping pattern that the French call *au cheval*, or horseback.

Scatter the sage leaves over the potato slides and drizzle the remaining olive oil over the entire surface. Sprinkle with sea salt and pepper.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the top is golden and the bottom is cooked through. This focaccia is best served slightly warm from the oven, but never serve it hot. (p. 119, *The Cheesemonger's Kitchen*, by Chester Hastings)

Brie de Meaux and Roasted Fennel Sandwich

Serves 2 to 4

Ingredients:

For the Roasted Fennel

2 bulbs fresh fennel

¼ cup/60 ml extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly cracked black pepper

For Assembling the Sandwich

1 baguette

12 oz/340 g Brie De Meaux or other good-quality Brie cheese

2/3 cup/115 g best-quality sun-dried tomatoes in oil

Directions:

To Prepare the Fennel:

Preheat the oven to 400° F/200° C

Chop the long stalks off the fennel and save for soups. Wash the bulbs well. Trim away any brown or tough bits. Cut the bulbs in half and then turn, cut-side down, and cut into ¼-in-/6-mm-thick slices. Spread the fennel slices on a baking sheet/tray and drizzle with the olive oil, being sure to coat well. Season with salt and pepper.

Roast the fennel for 25 to 39 minutes, stirring from time to time, until tender and deep golden. Remove from the oven and keep warm.

To Assemble the Sandwich:

Cut a baguette in half horizontally. Cut the cheese into ¼-in-/6-mm-thick slices and place on one side of the bread to cover completely. Heap the roasted fennel atop the cheese, reserving any oil, and then scatter the sun-dried tomatoes over the top. Drizzle the interior of the top piece of the baguette with any reserved cooking oil and then place atop the tomatoes. Cut into eight pieces and serve wrapped in parchment/baking paper. P. 141, *The Cheesemonger's Kitchen*, by Chester Hastings)

Melted Fromager D’Affinois and Madrange Ham Sandwiches

Serves 3

Ingredients:

1 baguette

8 oz/225 g Fromager d’Affinois cheese

2 oz/55 g Madrange ham, prosciutto cotto, or other high-quality cooked ham/gammon, cut into paper-thin slices

Directions:

Preheat a panini press to medium-high

Cut the baguette into three equal pieces and slice the pieces in half horizontally. It is best to slice the cheese as you work to avoid a gooey mess. Cut the cheese into slices about ¼ in/6 mm thick and distribute equally among the three bottom pieces of baguette. Drape the ham/gammon over the cheese, distributing it equally as well. Replace the tops of the baguettes to close the sandwiches.

Place the sandwiches on the panini press and gently close the lid. After the lid is closed (make sure the tops have not slipped off the sandwiches), press firmly down on the handle for a few seconds. Then release and let the sandwiches cook for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the cheese is melted through and the baguette is crisp and toasted. Cut the sandwiches in half and serve hot. (p. 145, *The Cheesemonger's Kitchen*, by Chester Hastings)

Apple Tart with Les Delice Des Cremiers, Almonds, and Honey

Makes one, 15-in/38-cm tart

Ingredients:

For the Dough:

7 tbsp/100 g unsalted butter, chilled

3 cups/380 g all-purpose/plain flour

¼ cup/60 ml crème fraiche

Directions:

To Prepare the Dough:

Cut the butter into small cubes and place in a medium mixing bowl with the flour. Rub the butter into the flour with your hands until a coarse meal is formed. Transfer the mixture to the bowl of a food processor fitted with the blade attachment. Add the crème fraiche and pulse just until the dough forms. Stop the machine immediately.

Take the dough in your hands and slam it down onto a very lightly floured work surface. Gather up the dough and continue to slam it down hard, a good ten to twelve times more. (This will help prevent the dough from rising too much during baking.) Wrap the dough in plastic wrap/cling film and chill for at least 1 hour. Preheat the oven to 400° F/200°C.

For the Tart:

3 Tart Green Apples

3 tbsp unsalted butter

2 tbsp wildflower honey

8 oz/225 g Les Delice des Cremiers or similar triple-cream cow's milk cheese

½ cup/30 g slivered almonds

To Assemble the Tart:

Peel and core the apples. Cut them into 1/8-in-/3-mm-thick slices. Heat 2 tbsp of the butter with the honey in a frying pan over low heat. Add the apple slices and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, or until slightly gilded but still quite firm. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

Turn the wheel of cheese on its side and cut it into discs as thin as possible. Roll out the pastry dough to a 15-in/38-cm circle. Place the dough circle on a baking sheet/tray and prick it all over with a fork. Arrange the apple slides in a concentric circle, leaving about a ½-in/12-mm border. Roll up the edges of the tart and pinch to form a simple crust. Scatter the slides of cheese and the almonds across the top of the apples. Dot with the remaining butter and bake for 15 minutes, or until the dough is cooked on the bottom and the cheese is melted and bubbly. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Fresh Goat Cheese with Brandied Golden Raisins

Makes 6 2-oz/55-g buttons

12 oz/340 g fresh goat cheese

¼ cup/150 g golden raisins/sultanas

2 tbsp brandy, Armagnac, or Calvados

Directions:

Divide the goat cheese into six equal portions. Roll the cheese into smooth balls and then use your fingertips to shape the ball into a neat little square. Soak the golden raisins/sultanas in the brandy for 30 minutes. Drain and gently pat dry with a clean kitchen towel. Arrange the golden raisins/sultanas in even rows atop the goat cheese squares and gently press them into the soft cheese. Reshape if needed. Serve the same day for maximum freshness.

Baked Brie with Figs, Honey, and Pistachios

Ingredients:

1 small wheel of Camembert brie

1 tsp olive oil

7 dried mission figs

½ c pistachios shelled

2-4 tbsp honey

Directions:

350°F in oven. Cut 3 figs in half. Brush small cast iron skillet or baking dish with oil and place brie in skillet. Top with pistachios and figs. Drizzle honey and bake 15-18 minutes until gooey.