

## Vegetables and Side Dishes

### Picnic Beans

- 2 cans (15 oz.) Pork and Beans
- 1 can (16 oz.) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15 oz.) Lima or butter beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ½ cup Traditional balsamic vinegar or espresso balsamic vinegar
- 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl, transfer to a greased 2-1/2 quart baking dish, cover and bake for 1 hour at 350 degrees, bake 30 minutes more uncovered. Makes 8-10 servings.

### Creamy Sweet Onions

- 5 large white onions, thinly sliced
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup lemon balsamic
- 1 cup water
- 4 tsp. salt
- 1 cup sour cream
- 3 tbsp. Mayonnaise
- ¼ tsp. celery seed
- Salt and pepper to taste

Place the onions in a large bowl. In a saucepan, combine sugar, lemon balsamic, water and salt. Bring to a boil; pour over onions. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Drain onions, discard liquid in a bowl, combine the sour cream, mayonnaise, and celery seed, salt and pepper, and mix well. Add onions and toss to coat. Makes 4 cups.

### Fresh Tomato Slices

- 3-4 heirloom tomatoes sliced (1/2 inch slices)
- 2 tbsp. oregano white balsamic vinegar\*
- 2 tbsp. premium garlic olive oil
- 2 tbsp. grated asiago cheese
- Sea salt to taste

Whisk balsamic vinegar and garlic olive oil together, pour over tomato slices, sprinkle with asiago cheese, and add salt to taste. Makes 4-5 servings.

\*can substitute with garlic cilantro balsamic vinegar

## **Easy Caprese Flatbread**

2 cups chopped cherry or grape tomatoes  
1 tbsp. chopped garlic, divided  
¼ cup chopped fresh basil, divided  
1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil, Tuscan herb or pesto olive oil  
1 pkg. (11 oz.) refrigerated thin crust pizza dough  
¼ cup mayonnaise  
1-1/4 cup shredded parmesan cheese  
Traditional Balsamic

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In a bowl, toss tomatoes with olive oil, 2 tbsp. basil and 1 tbsp. garlic, season with a bit of salt and pepper. Roll out the pizza crust onto a greased cookie sheet; bake 10 minutes or until golden brown. In a bowl, combine mayonnaise, parmesan cheese and remaining garlic, spread evenly over baked crust, then sprinkle with mozzarella cheese, top with seasoned tomatoes, bake 10 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining basil and drizzle with Traditional Balsamic vinegar. Serves 10-12.

## **Roasted Carrot Fries**

1 pound fresh carrots cut into ½ inch sticks  
2 tbsp. olive oil of your choice  
½ tsp. sea salt

In a large bowl toss carrot sticks with olive oil and salt, transfer to a greased baking sheet. Bake at 450 degrees for 10-12 minutes or until crisp-tender.

Suggested olive oils are butter, garlic, Tuscan herb, mushroom and sage, basil, or tarragon. Any extra virgin olive oil will work as well....

## **Spanish Gazpacho**

5 pounds tomatoes, peeled and quartered  
3 medium carrots, quartered  
1 large cucumber, peeled and quartered  
1 large green pepper, quartered  
1 medium sweet onion, minced  
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil EVOO, citrus habanero, garlic, lime or chipotle olive oil  
3 tbsp. tradition or fig balsamic  
1-1/2 tsp salt  
½ tsp pepper

In batches, place ingredients in a blender, cover and process until soup reaches desired texture. Pour into a large bowl. Cover and refrigerate for 102 hours before serving.

## **Cold Chicken-Cheese Kabobs**

½ tsp. salt  
½ tsp. chili powder  
1/8 tsp. black pepper  
½ pound boneless skinless chicken breast, cubed  
½ cup red or green apple balsamic  
2 tsp. chipotle olive oil  
1 block (5 oz.) mozzarella cheese, cubed  
18 cherry or grape tomatoes  
8 wooden skewers

Combine the salt, chili powder and peppers; rub into chicken cubes. Place in a bowl, add red apple balsamic. Cover and refrigerate for 3-4 hours. In a skillet cook chicken in chipotle olive oil until juices run clear. Cool slightly. Alternately thread chicken, cheese and tomatoes onto wooden skewers. Serve cold, makes 8 servings.