

Vegetables

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INTRODUCTION

Ours is a meat and potatoes household. If we eat meat, we do not eat potatoes; if we eat potatoes, we do not eat meat. This is a result of habit, not conviction. We seem to have become accustomed to one dish meals. Therefore, most of the vegetable recipes given here are intended to be the meal. If you use them as a side dish, the number of servings per recipe will be twice that indicated.

ASPARAGUS WITH HAM AND GREEN PEPPER SAUCE

SERVES 2

2 lbs asparagus
6 oz creme fraiche
2 oz ham
1 tbs ground green peppercorns

1. Peel the asparagus, and wash in cold water. Tie in small bundles and cook in boiling, salted water until tender but firm.
2. Drain the asparagus, cut off stems, and chill.
3. Very finely mince the ham. Take pains to make the mince as fine as you possibly can. Stir the ham and green pepper into the creme fraiche.
4. In a saucepan, gently heat the creme fraiche. The sauce should be well warmed but not hot.
5. Spoon the sauce over the cooled asparagus and serve with a chilled white wine.

CREME FRAICHE, BASIL AND GOAT CHEESE CAKE

MAKES 2 CUPS

Serve slices of this cake with sliced tomatoes and thinly sliced red onion or serve slabs of it on top of hot pasta or boiled potatoes.

1 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves
1 tbs minced garlic
1 cup creme fraiche
4 oz fresh goat cheese
1 tbs grated Parmesan cheese

1. Place the basil, garlic and 1 tablespoon of creme fraiche in a blender. Process the ingredients to a paste.
2. Add the fresh goat cheese.
3. Add the remaining creme fraiche and Parmesan cheese. Process to a smooth paste.
4. Pour into a two-cup loaf mold.
5. Refrigerate until cold.

JOSIE'S BROCCOLI

SERVES 2

This dish with French bread and a glass of white wine is a fast and satisfying meal.

2 lbs broccoli
2 tbs unsalted butter
2 tbs olive oil
1 tbs minced garlic
1/2 cup creme fraiche
Parmesan cheese, grated

1. Clean and trim the broccoli.
2. Steam the broccoli until barely tender, about 10 minutes.
3. Remove the pot from the heat, and immediately run the broccoli tops under cold water to stop further cooking.
4. Shake of excess water, and cut the broccoli into bite-sized pieces.
5. Melt the butter with the oil and garlic in a heavy skillet.
6. Add the broccoli to the skillet. Cook, turning broccoli to coat, until it is tender.
7. Add the creme fraiche. Stir well to coat the broccoli. Top with grated Parmesan cheese, and serve.

CABBAGE WITH CREME FRAICHE AND SUMMER SAVORY

SERVES 2

1 head white cabbage
1 cup creme fraiche
1 tbs chopped fresh summer savory
salt

1. Core, clean, and finely shred the cabbage.
2. Cook the cabbage in rapidly boiling, salted water for 10 minutes or until tender-crisp. Drain and set aside.
3. Mix the savory with the creme fraiche. Place in a heavy skillet, and heat to bubbling.
4. Add the drained cabbage and mix well. Heat until the cabbage is heated through. Serve immediately.

CUCUMBERS A LA CREME

SERVES 4

4 medium cucumbers
1 cup creme fraiche
1 tbs paprika
salt
1/2 cup walnuts, finely chopped

1. Peel and very thinly slice the cucumbers.
2. Lightly salt.
3. Toss the cucumbers with the creme fraiche and mix in the walnuts and paprika.
4. Serve in bowls and sprinkle with a little paprika. Serve with French bread.

SWISS CHARD WITH TOMATOES AND CREME FRAICHE

SERVES 2

This dish is my long time friend.

8 large leaves of chard
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbs olive oil
1 28-oz can whole plum tomatoes
1 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
1/2 cup creme fraiche

1. Wash and coarsely chop the chard. Be sure that some water still clings to the leaves.
2. Saute the garlic in the olive oil for 2 minutes.
3. Add the chard and cover the pan. Turn down the heat to medium.
4. After about 5 minutes, the chard should be wilted.
5. Add the can of tomatoes, breaking up the tomatoes with your hands. Add the pepper and continue to saute. Turn the chard with a spatula so that it is well coated with the tomato sauce. Continue to cook until the chard is tender.
6. When the chard is tender, turn off the heat and add the creme fraiche. Mix lightly so that there are some lumps of creme fraiche remaining.
7. Serve in bowls with crusty French bread.

EGGPLANT ROULADE

SERVES 2

1 large globe eggplant
flour
1 egg, beaten
bread crumbs
3 to 4 tbs olive oil

Filling

4 oz fresh goat cheese

1 tbs minced garlic
1 tbs fresh oregano
1 tbs olive oil

Sauce

1 cup creme fraiche
1 lemon

1. Slice the eggplant vertically as thinly as possible.
2. Lightly dust with flour; dip in egg and bread crumbs.
3. Saute slices in olive oil until just starting to become tender. Transfer cooked slices to a platter.
4. Mash together the cheese, garlic, oregano and 1 tablespoon of olive oil.
5. Place 1 to 2 tablespoons of the cheese mixture on each slice of sauted eggplant and roll up the eggplant, jelly-roll style, around the cheese.
6. Place the rolls closely in a heavy skillet and bake at 350 degrees F for 15 minutes or until the eggplant is cooked.
7. For the sauce, squeeze lemon juice into the creme fraiche and stir well. The sauce should be thin and taste distinctly of lemon.
8. Pour the sauce over the eggplant roulades and serve.

FRESH PEAS AND FAVA BEANS WITH CREME FRAICHE

SERVES 2

The combination of two legumes makes a complete protein and a main-course meal. A glass of chilled white wine makes this a perfect summer meal.

1 lb fresh, shelled peas or
1 lb sugar peas with edible pods
1 lb fresh fava beans, shelled
2 tbs butter
2 tbs olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup creme fraiche
3 tbs fresh mint, chopped
1/2 tsp cracked black pepper
1/4 tsp salt
1 tbs grated Parmesan cheese
2 oz fresh goat cheese

1. Shell the fresh fava beans. Prepare the peas; if using edible-podded peas, cut into 1 inch pieces. Steam the peas and beans together for 10 minutes, until tender crisp.
2. Saute the garlic in the olive oil and butter.
3. Add the beans and peas. Saute until tender, turning to coat with butter and oil.
4. Add the mint, pepper and salt. Turn to mix well.
5. Add the creme fraiche and saute for 2 minutes. Turn all the while to coat the beans and peas.
6. Off the heat, sprinkle with Parmesan and crumble goat cheese over all.

ROASTED SWEET PEPPERS STUFFED WITH CHEVRE

SERVES 2

2 roasted red sweet peppers
3 oz fresh goat cheese
1 tbs olive oil
1/2 tsp cracked black pepper

Sauce

4 tbs creme fraiche
1 tbs minced garlic

1. Roast and peel the peppers (or use canned, whole roasted sweet peppers).
2. Mash the goat cheese with the olive oil and pepper.
3. Stuff the goat cheese mixture into the cavity of the peppers.
4. Place the stuffed peppers in an ovenproof dish, and bake in a 350 degree F oven for about 20 minutes.
5. For the sauce, add the garlic to the creme fraiche and heat to bubbling, stirring all the while.
6. Serve one stuffed pepper to each person. Top with 2 tablespoons of sauce.

SAUTED SWEET PEPPERS

SERVES 2

2 green bell peppers
2 red sweet peppers
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 slices bacon
2 tomatoes
1/4 tsp salt
1 tbs fresh oregano
4 tbs creme fraiche

1. Cut the bacon into 1 inch pieces. Render for 3 minutes in a heavy skillet.
2. Cut the peppers and tomatoes into 1 inch pieces.
3. Add the peppers, tomatoes, garlic and salt to the skillet.
4. Cover the pan; reduce heat to low and simmer until the peppers are tender crisp, about 10 minutes.
5. Add the oregano. Cook for 2 minutes longer.
6. Remove the cover and add the creme fraiche. Turn up heat to bring to a bubble for 2 minutes; remove from heat and serve in bowls with French bread.

POTATOES LORRAINE

SERVES 2

2 slices bacon, cut into 1 inch pieces
1 onion, sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 medium baking potatoes, peeled and sliced
1 tbs dried dill

1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
1/4 cup creme fraiche
1/2 cup milk
3 tbs bread crumbs
1 cup milk (optional)

1. Render the bacon. Add the onions, garlic, and potatoes. Cook for 10 minutes on top of the stove.
2. Mix together the creme fraiche, 1/2 cup milk, dill, salt and pepper. Pour over the potatoes. Sprinkle the top with bread crumbs.
3. Cover and bake at 325 degree for 1/2 hour; uncover and bake for 20 minutes longer or until brown.
4. Optional: pour 1 cup milk over the dish when it comes from the oven. This gives the dish a lovely light sauce.

POTATOES WITH TOMATOES AND CREME FRAICHE

SERVES 2

6 medium, red-skinned potatoes
3 slices bacon
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 medium, yellow onion, chopped
3/4 28-oz can whole plum tomatoes
1 tbs dried dill
1 tsp black pepper
1 pinch red pepper flakes
1/2 cup creme fraiche
4 oz fresh goat cheese

1. Cut the potatoes in half without peeling. Steam until barely tender. Cool.
2. Cut the bacon into 1 inch long pieces. Saute in a heavy skillet to render.
3. Add the chopped onion and minced garlic to the bacon.
4. Slice the potatoes thickly and place in skillet on top of the bacon-onion mixture.
5. Sprinkle with the dill and peppers.
6. Using your hand, break up the tomatoes and add to the skillet. Pour the juice from the can into the skillet.
7. Cover the skillet, and saute over low heat until the potatoes are done.
8. Add the creme fraiche to the potatoes and mix into the sauce.
9. Serve in bowls. Crumble fresh goat cheese over each bowl.

FRESH TOMATOES WITH CREME FRAICHE

SERVES 2

This recipe is for summertime when vine-ripe tomatoes are abundant. If you do not have vine-ripe tomatoes, do not make this recipe.

6 to 8 vine-ripe tomatoes
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 to 2 tbs olive oil
black pepper, finely ground

1 tbs fresh oregano, lightly chopped
1 cup creme fraiche
1 tbs capers (optional)

1. Slice the tomatoes and saute with the garlic in olive oil until the tomatoes start to soften. Generously pepper the tomatoes.
2. Mix the oregano with the creme fraiche. Pour over the tomatoes and heat to a bubble for 2 minutes.
3. Optional: distribute the capers over the top of the tomatoes.
4. Serve in bowls with crusty French bread.

ZUCCHINI WITH CREME FRAICHE AND OREGANO

SERVES 2

6 small zucchini
1 tsp olive oil
1/2 tsp salt
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup creme fraiche
3 tbs fresh oregano
1/4 tsp pepper
1 tbs Parmesan cheese, grated
3 oz fresh goat cheese

1. Slice the zucchini into one inch pieces.
2. Coat the bottom of a large, heavy skillet with olive oil.
3. Arrange the zucchini in the bottom of the oiled skillet. Sprinkle the zucchini with salt and pepper. Add the minced garlic.
4. Cover the skillet tightly. If you do not have a cover for the skillet, cover the pan closely with foil.
5. Turn heat on low and allow the zucchini to steam in its own moisture until just tender. This will take about 10 minutes.
6. Turn off the heat. Stir in the oregano and the creme fraiche.
7. Turn heat on and bring to a simmer with the cover on.
8. Off the heat, sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese and fresh goat cheese.
9. Serve with a chilled white wine.

SHREDDED ZUCCHINI WITH CREME FRAICHE PESTO

SERVES 2

This is a quick and easy summer dish that, believe it or not, is reduced calorically. By using creme fraiche instead of olive oil in the pesto, you reduce the calories in the pesto by two-thirds!

6 zucchini
1 tbs garlic
2 tbs olive oil
1 tsp salt
*1 cup creme fraiche pesto**
1 oz fresh goat cheese

*Creme Fraiche Pesto is in the Auxiliary Recipes.

1. Shred the zucchini and saute with the garlic, olive oil and salt.
2. When the zucchini is tender, remove from heat and allow to cool slightly.
3. Pour the pesto over the zucchini and toss until the zucchini is well coated.
4. Crumble fresh goat cheese on top.

ZUCCHINI WITH CREME FRAICHE AND TARRAGON

SERVES 4

This recipe is from Laetizia Pasquini.

2 lbs zucchini, blanched
4 tbs butter
2 tbs minced shallots
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp white pepper
1 tsp fresh, minced tarragon
1 cup creme fraiche
2 tbs minced parsley
1 tsp fresh tarragon, to garnish

1. Cut the blanched zucchini into 1/2 inch rounds. Dry well on paper towels.
2. Over moderate heat, melt 3 tablespoons butter. When the butter starts to foam, saute the zucchini for 2 to 3 minutes, tossing it until it is warm but not brown.
4. Season to taste with salt and pepper; sprinkle on the shallots and tarragon.
5. Pour on the creme fraiche.
6. Simmer for about 10 minutes. Baste frequently with the cream until the zucchini is tender and the cream reduced enough to enrobe the pieces.
7. Add the remaining tablespoon of butter, basting until it is absorbed.
8. Arrange on a hot dish; sprinkle with parsley and tarragon.