



TAILORED TASTE TIDBITS

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Eggs

Simple, delicious, protein-packed – words used to describe the egg. I would add “quick to cook” and appropriate for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack. Can you tell I love eggs? I do. However while testing natural dyes for making Easter eggs with my adopted school’s Chef’s Club early this Spring, I was becoming overwhelmed with the hard-boiled variety.



In an attempt to avoid the chemicals in commercial dye kits I began my testing with foods that typically stain – cherries, beets, blueberries, turmeric. Quickly I discovered that all the natural dyes take something that Chef’s Club has in limited quantities – time!

First I tried frozen blueberries, simmering the eggs in water and the blueberries for roughly 20 minutes (15 min after the concoction came to a boil). This produced charcoal grey eggs – interesting but definitely NOT the pastel-hued eggs we associate with Easter. Canned cherries produced drab beige results. Beet juice became ‘scummy’ during the process and despite my skimming, the eggs were a mottled light brown and the color easily rubbed off as I rinsed the eggs. Sigh.

With failure on the dye front, I moved on to teaching the basics – how to hard-boil an egg – a skill everyone needs especially when young and beginning to support oneself. After purchasing my first home in my mid-20s, I often said that a dozen eggs was a dozen meals. And it was for a long time!

To this day, in a pinch an egg salad sandwich makes a great dinner!

Bloody Mary (my version)

As I was thinking about eggs, my mind wandered to breakfast and given that this column usually has something to do with cocktails, I decided to share my variation on the classic brunch beverage, the Bloody Mary.

In place of the traditional vodka, I like to use Aquavit which is a Scandinavian caraway-flavored liqueur. Its name is derived from the Latin ‘aqua vitae’ meaning Water of Life.

- 1 ½ ounces Aquavit
- 2 dashes of Worcestershire sauce
- 4 dashes of Tabasco
- ¼ ounce lemon juice
- ½ tablespoon (or more) horseradish
- 1-2 pinches of celery salt
- 1-2 pinches of black pepper
- 4 ounces of tomato juice

Mix all ingredients in a cocktail shaker and gently shake or stir. Pour over a tall glass of ice.



Garnish with whatever you enjoy – celery sticks, carrots, cucumbers, lemons, limes, skewered tomatoes or olives, pickled okra or green beans... you get the idea – be creative.

Asparagus Mimosa

serves 4 as a side dish or starter

Named for the eggs' resemblance to the mimosa flower (not the cocktail!) this classic epitomizes Spring making a lovely first course or side dish for brunch (with a Bloody Mary perhaps).

- 1 pound asparagus
- 2 tablespoons champagne vinegar*
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 2 hard-boiled eggs

Snap the woody ends off the asparagus and discard. Have a large bowl of ice water at the ready.

Steam asparagus until tender but not mushy – test with a fork. Cook time will vary depending on the thickness of the asparagus spears.

Immediately plunge asparagus into ice water to stop cooking and set the green color.

Meanwhile, whisk vinegar, Dijon and olive oil until it is emulsified. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Dry the asparagus thoroughly and then toss with some of the vinaigrette. Place on a platter or individual plates.

Cut the eggs in half. Press through a medium weave sieve into a bowl. Sprinkle the egg across the asparagus.

Enjoy!

**I've seen recipes for this dish using lemon juice, cider vinegar, tarragon vinegar, white wine vinegar and even red wine vinegar for the acidic part of this dressing.*

Feel free to experiment.



Tomodachi Event

In early Spring I was invited along with about 15 other local business women to attend a luncheon for emerging women leaders (primarily college sophomores) from Japan. This was part of Tomodachi, a cooperative program between the US and Japanese governments to encourage entrepreneurial skill-building for young women in the regional devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011.

We were seated at tables with five young Japanese women and through our chatting and questions offered by the organizers, we



shared our successes, failures, fears and tools for overcoming obstacles with these amazing young women. Each American woman talked about starting down one path (career-wise) and discovering another that became their passion and ultimately their business. This shifting of intention was eye-opening to the Japanese women who said this 'was not possible' in their culture. We encouraged them to make it possible.

At the conclusion of the event, we swapped emails and took photos. I've been in touch with the women from my table via email and hope that our paths cross again in the future.



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