

SOUPS ON!



By Bonnie Swank

I don't think I am alone when I say there is nothing more comforting on a chilly day than a big bowl of hot soup. Chilled soups are fine in the spring and summer but when the days are short and the temperatures drop I need my soup **hot!** Most of us have a favorite recipe or at least a base to start from, mine is Italian sausage, mirepoix (a mixture of celery, carrots and onions) white kidney bean, tomatoes, herbs and whatever I have in my pantry and fridge that will add extra goodness to my bubbling pot. The trick is to look around at what is available this time of year and take advantage of the flavors. Don't pout because you miss the warm weather and all the flavors that went with it, instead grab a bunch of kale, some parsnips, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, and onions and let your imagination go wild. It's mushroom season, toss the can of Campbell's Cream of Mushroom soup out the window and make your own. French onion soup, mmmm... need I say more? How many of you will order it in a restaurant but have never made it? It's easy and once you've made it you can hang out your own personal "Bistro" sign and invite your friends over.

In November we were fortunate enough to attend a lunch at Bernardus Lodge where Chef Cal Stamenov, Pastry Chef Ben Spungin celebrated the flavors of the season and created some amazing dishes. The soup served was Parsnip-Apple and it was delicious, luckily they shared the recipe with all who attended. Parsnips and chestnuts were two things I had never cooked with before but I was excited to serve it for Thanksgiving and it was a big hit. There are some really tantalizing flavors this time of year and all you have to do is take advantage of them, so get out your soup pot and start creating.



BERNARDUS LODGE

RECIPE FROM CAL STAMENOV
CHEF, BERNARDUS LODGE

Parsnip-Apple Soup *Serves 6*

- 3 cups cubed parsnips
- 1 large onion – diced
- ½ cup bacon – diced
- 2 sour apples – peeled and cubes into about 2 cups
- 2 raw chestnuts – peeled and chopped
- 5 sprigs thyme
- 5 cups water or chicken stock
- 1 cup sauvignon blanc
- 1 ½ cups heavy cream
- 3 tablespoons cold butter – diced

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine parsnips, onion, chestnuts, bacon, apple and thyme. Sauté the mixture until onions are translucent and the ingredients have softened. Add water and sauvignon blanc. Simmer for 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and puree in batched in a blender. Alternate adding the cream and butter to each batch. Adjust season with salt and pepper.