

Cookin' KC Style

By: Chris Perrin

Kansas City has a rich culinary legacy that has produced fine chefs, great restaurants, and exceptional food, both barbecue and otherwise. An important part of this history is embodied in chef and cookbook author, Richard W. McPeake. McPeake's culinary career includes fifty restaurant openings, twenty-nine concepts, and head chef duties in two Kansas City icons: Plaza III and the Bristol. Chef McPeake was kind enough to share several of his recipes from his vast experience and his current project: the revamping of the menu at KC Masterpiece Restaurant.

Rib Rub

This is the standard rib rub used at KC Masterpiece. While it has satisfied many a hungry rib eater, cooks are welcome to experiment with this mix to suit their own personal tastes.

Ingredients

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup kosher salt
- ¼ cup chili powder
- ¼ cup paprika
- black pepper
- cayenne pepper
- onion powder
- garlic powder
- cumin
- ancho chili powder

1. Mix the brown sugar, salt, chili powder, and paprika in a bowl.
2. Add the black pepper, cayenne, onion powder, garlic powder, cumin, and ancho chili powder as desired. McPeake suggests using a 3:1 ratio of black pepper and cayenne. Other ingredients should be added to taste.
3. Cover both sides of ribs with the rub mixture, working to cover the meat side of the ribs with twice as much rub as the bone side.

Yield: Approximately 3 cups of rub

Potato Casserole

This cornflake-topped potato side dish is also served on the new KC Masterpiece menu, and has become an instant classic.

Ingredients

- 2 ½ pounds of new potatoes, cubed
- 2 cups sour cream
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup cream of chicken soup
- salt and white pepper to taste
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 1 cup cornflakes

1. Mix potatoes, sour cream, cheese, soup, salt and pepper in a mixing bowl.
2. In a separate bowl, mix the butter and the cornflakes.
3. Add the potato mixture to a butter lined baking dish and top with cornflakes and butter.
4. Bake at 350 degrees until the cornflakes are golden brown and the potato mixture is bubbly.

Yield: 8-10 servings

Creamed Spinach

The following recipe was developed during McPeake's time at Plaza III. While the head chef there, McPeake served this recipe to none other than Julia Child herself, who commented it was the best Creamed Spinach she had ever tasted. This recipe is now taught to students who take the Professional Culinary Arts Program at the Kansas City Culinary Institute.

Ingredients

For the Thin Cream Sauce:

- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup heavy cream
- dash salt

- dash white pepper
 - pinch nutmeg
1. Mix the flour and butter together to form a roux. Cook over medium-high heat for about 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Do not let the roux brown.
 2. Add the milk, whisking it into the roux. Bring to a boil.
 3. Lower the heat to a simmer and add the heavy cream.
 4. Simmer 15 minutes and remove from heat.
 5. Keep warm for immediate use or cool and refrigerate.
- dash nutmeg
 - ¼ cup of chicken stock (veggie stock may be substituted to make this dish vegetarian)
 - 1 cup Thin Cream Sauce
1. Sauté the shallots in melted butter over medium heat and cook.
 2. Add spinach sauce until it begins to wilt.
 3. Add the salt, pepper, nutmeg, stock, and cream.
 4. Cook and blend together well for Julia Child-level Creamed Spinach.

Yield: 4 servings

Yield: 3 cups

For the Creamed Spinach:

- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon shallots, minced
- 1 ½ pounds fresh spinach, washed
- salt and pepper to taste

KC Masterpiece is located at 10985 Metcalf Avenue, in Overland Park. McPeake's cookbooks include *Backyard BBQ: The Art of Smokology*; *Backyard Grilling: Grilling Like a Professional!* (with Jim Cattetey and Joan Cattetey); and *Ribstars Backyard Smoking & BBQ Cookbook*. **B**



GRILLED PEACHES WITH MASCARPONE

McPeake is an award-winning barbecue competitor and grill master in addition to writing three cookbooks on the subject. This tasty dessert came from his book, *Backyard Grilling: Grilling Like a Professional*, which he wrote with Jim and Joan Cattetey, of Smoke N' Fire. These cookbooks can be found in local area bookshops.

Ingredients

- 3 fresh peaches, pitted, and halved
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- ½ cup mascarpone cheese
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- food release spray

1. Spray grill with food release spray, preferably butter flavored.
2. Preheat grill to a low heat.
3. Grill the peaches, turning several times until they are soft, but not mushy.
4. While grilling, mix the cheese, sugar, and cinnamon.
5. Arrange peaches on a serving platter. Put the cheese mixture in the holes where the pits are .
6. If desired, garnish with mint and chopped pistachios.

