DRESSING Whisk shallot, vinegar, and mustard in small bowl. Gradually whisk in both oils. Season dressing with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover; chill. Bring to room temperature and rewhisk before using.

SALAD Cook green beans in large pot of boiling salted water just until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer beans to colander; rinse with cold water. Cook wax beans and haricots verts separately in same pot of boiling salted water, 3 to 4 minutes for wax beans and 2 to 3 minutes for haricots verts. Transfer to colander; rinse with cold water. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Wrap green beans, wax beans, and haricots verts separately in paper towels. Enclose in resealable plastic bag and chill.

Combine all beans and frisée in large bowl. Toss with dressing. Transfer salad to serving platter; sprinkle with walnuts, herbs, and pepper. Top with cheese.

ORANGE POLENTA CAKE *with* VANILLA-SCENTED PLUMS *and* BLACKBERRIES *and* BUTTERMILK ICE CREAM

PREP 25 minutes **TOTAL** 3 hours 30 minutes (includes cooling time)

8 SERVINGS This simple cake can be sliced and served or toasted before serving. For the best texture, use a medium-fine polenta.

- 1¼ cups all purpose flour
- ¾ cup medium-fine polenta or organic cornmeal (such as Bob's Red Mill)
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (packed) finely grated orange peel
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup whole-milk plain yogurt
- Vanilla-Scented Plums and Blackberries (see recipe)
- Buttermilk Ice Cream (see recipe)

♥ FOR COMPLETE **NUTRITIONAL INFO** FOR ALL OF THE RECIPES IN THIS ISSUE, GO TO *bonappetit.com/recipes*

Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350°F. Butter 9x5x3-inch metal loaf pan. Dust pan with flour; tap out excess. Whisk 1¼ cups flour, polenta, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl. Using electric mixer, beat sugar, butter, and orange peel in large bowl until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Add flour mixture in 3 additions alternately with yogurt in 2 additions, beating just until blended after each addition. Spread batter evenly in pan.

Bake cake until golden and tester inserted into center comes out clean, 50 to 55 minutes. Transfer to rack; cool in pan 15 minutes. Run knife around cake edges to loosen. Invert cake onto rack, then invert again on rack (top side up). Cool completely. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Wrap in plastic and store at room temperature.

Cut cake crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices; serve with Vanilla-Scented Plums and Blackberries and Buttermilk Ice Cream.

VANILLA-SCENTED PLUMS *and* BLACKBERRIES

PREP 10 minutes **TOTAL** 1 hour 10 minutes

MAKES ABOUT 5 CUPS The compote would also be great with angel food cake or sorbet.

- 4 large firm but ripe plums (preferably Santa Rosa plums), halved, pitted, cut into ⅓-inch-thick wedges
- 1½ cups fresh blackberries
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- ½ vanilla bean, split lengthwise

Combine fruits and sugar in medium bowl. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; add bean. Toss to coat. Let stand at room temperature until juices form, tossing occasionally, about 1 hour. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 hours ahead. Cover and chill.

BUTTERMILK ICE CREAM

PREP 15 minutes **TOTAL** 10 hours 15 minutes (includes freezing time)

MAKES ABOUT 5 CUPS Raw sugar adds a caramely note (and a tan color) to this tangy ice cream.

- 6 large egg yolks
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ⅔ cup raw sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup chilled buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

special equipment

Ice cream maker

INGREDIENT INFO Raw sugar, also called turbinado or demerara sugar, is available at supermarkets and natural foods stores.

Chill medium-size metal bowl in freezer until cold, about 1 hour.

Whisk yolks in another medium metal bowl. Combine cream, sugar, and salt in large saucepan. Bring to simmer over medium heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Gradually whisk half of hot cream into egg yolks, then return mixture to saucepan. Stir constantly over medium-low heat until custard thickens and coats back of spoon when finger is drawn across, 2 to 3 minutes (do not boil). Remove from heat.

Pour cold buttermilk into reserved chilled bowl. Strain custard into buttermilk; whisk. Whisk in vanilla. Chill mixture uncovered until cold, stirring occasionally, about 2 hours.

Process custard in ice cream maker according to manufacturer's instructions. Transfer ice cream to freezer container. Cover and freeze until firm, at least 6 hours or overnight. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Keep frozen.

WHAT TO DRINK

SARDINES With the briny sardines, pour a crisp white wine with good hit of acidity. Romney likes the refreshing **MERCY 2008 SAUVIGNON BLANC ($16)**, which is made south of Big Sur in Buellton, California.

KEBABS A red wine with a little heft can stand up to the lamb. Romney recommends the **LUCIA 2008 "GARYS' VINEYARD" PINOT NOIR ($50)**, made by one of her favorite California winemakers, Gary Pisoni.

CAKE For a complete Nepenthe experience, serve **LAPSANG SOUCHONG TEA** with dessert. The dark, smoky, black tea (which Romney's grandma bought in San Francisco's Chinatown) was often served at the restaurant.

ROMNEY STEELE *is a writer and food stylist and the author of* My Nepenthe: Bohemian Tales of Food, Family, and Big Sur. *She lives in Oakland, California.*