

CHILLED ZUCCHINI SOUP

SERVES 6

Active time: 20 min Start to finish: 40 min

This creamy chilled soup will make you hope for an abundance of zucchini in your garden this year. Thin-sliced zucchini blossoms, available at produce markets and specialty foods shops, add a beautiful hint of color while lending texture to the soup's smoothness.

- ¼ lb shallots, thinly sliced crosswise (1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ lb zucchini (3 to 4 medium), peeled and halved lengthwise, then cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices
- 2 (2-by 1½-inch) strips fresh lemon zest (see Tips, page 138)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1¾ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth (14 fl oz)
- 1¾ cups water
- 1 cup loosely packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill
- ½ cup well-shaken buttermilk or plain yogurt

Garnish: thinly sliced or torn zucchini blossoms

- ▶ Cook shallots in oil in a 4-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes.
- ▶ Add zucchini, zest, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until zucchini is softened, about 5 minutes. Add broth and water and simmer until zucchini is tender, about 3 minutes.
- ▶ Purée zucchini mixture, including zest, along with parsley and dill in a blender (in 2 batches if necessary) until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids). Transfer to a metal bowl, then set bowl into a larger bowl of ice and cold water (to quick-chill). Cool, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes.
- ▶ Stir in buttermilk and season with salt.

Cooks' note:

Soup (with buttermilk or yogurt) can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered. (If making soup ahead, cooling in ice bath is not necessary.) Stir well before serving.

LONDON BROIL WITH SOY CITRUS MAYONNAISE

SERVES 6

Active time: 25 min

Start to finish: 5¼ hr (includes marinating)

London broil comes in different weights and thicknesses; it may be necessary to use two pieces to get the proper amount.

One of the great things about this recipe is that the steak's marinade is also used in the soy citrus mayonnaise, so you get double the flavor.

- ¾ cup fine-quality fermented soy sauce (see Shopping List, page 137)
- ½ cup dry red wine
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 bunch scallions, cut into 3-inch lengths
- 5 garlic cloves, smashed and peeled
- ½ teaspoon white pepper
- Pinch of cayenne
- 2½ to 3 lb top-round London broil (1 to 1½ inches thick)
- 1 cup mayonnaise

Special equipment: an instant-read thermometer

Accompaniment: toasted or grilled country bread

- ▶ Combine soy sauce, red wine, juices, 2 tablespoons oil, scallions, garlic, white pepper, and cayenne in a 1-quart heavy-duty sealable plastic bag. Add steak and seal bag, pressing out air. Turn bag to coat steak, then marinate, chilled, turning bag occasionally, at least 4 hours.
- ▶ Transfer steak to a plate and pour 2 tablespoons marinade through a fine-mesh sieve into a 1-quart heavy saucepan, discarding remainder or reserving for another use (see cooks' note, below). Bring steak to room temperature, about 30 minutes.
- ▶ Heat remaining tablespoon oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then cook steak, uncovered, until underside is browned, about 5 minutes. Turn steak over, then reduce heat to moderately low and cover skillet. Continue cooking until thermometer inserted horizontally 2 inches into center of steak registers 120°F, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and let stand at least 15 minutes (internal temperature of

steak will rise to 130–135°F for medium-rare).

▶ While steak cooks and stands, bring marinade in saucepan to a boil, then pour into a bowl and cool completely. Whisk in mayonnaise until combined well and chill, covered, until ready to serve.

▶ Holding knife at a 45-degree angle, cut steak across the grain into very thin slices and transfer to a platter, then drizzle with any juices accumulated on cutting board. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled, with mayonnaise.

Cooks' notes:

- Steak can be marinated up to 1 day.
- Soy citrus mayonnaise can be chilled up to 5 days.
- If reserving remaining marinade for another use, strain and cool completely, uncovered, then freeze in sealed bag. Thaw, then boil 1 minute before using.

SUMMER TOMATOES

SERVES 6

Active time: 10 min Start to finish: 10 min

Whether you use heirloom, beefsteak, or cherry, this simple dish is all about the tomatoes. Be sure to use the ripest ones you can find for the best results.

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons malt vinegar
- ¾ teaspoon packed light brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt (preferably flaky sea salt or fleur de sel)
- ½ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 lb ripe tomatoes, cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices
- 1 scallion, thinly sliced diagonally

▶ Whisk together oil, vinegar, brown sugar, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Arrange one third of tomatoes in 1 layer on a large plate, then drizzle with some dressing and sprinkle with some scallion. Make 2 more layers of tomatoes, drizzling each with dressing and sprinkling with scallion.

Cooks' note:

Tomatoes can be sliced and dressed, without scallion, 6 hours ahead and chilled, covered with plastic wrap. Sprinkle scallion over tomatoes just before serving.

WINE ADVICE is on page 46.

For the LEMON SUN CAKES WITH BERRIES AND CREAM recipe, see page 132.