

European Dinner Parties

Germany

Rosemarie's German menu

- Bavarian Cheese Ball
- Chicken Isar
- Asparagus, Cauliflower and Carrot Medley
- Mixed Salad (Bunter Kopfsalat)
- Bavarian Plum Cake (Bavarian Pflaumendatschi)

Ingredients and cooking tips

Appetizer: Bavarian Cheese Ball

Ingredients:

8 oz. light cream cheese, softened
8 oz. finely shredded cheddar cheese
2 green onions, finely chopped
1 jar (2 oz.) diced pimiento, drained
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
½ cup finely chopped walnuts

In bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Beat in cheddar cheese, onions, pimiento and Worcestershire sauce. Form ball, roll in chopped walnuts, refrigerate and cover. Serve with crackers.

Entrée: Chicken Isar - serves 6

Ingredients:

6 chicken breast halves, skinless and boneless
1 ½ pounds of fresh mushrooms, sliced
2 onions, sliced
2 celery stalks, sliced
8 oz. Swiss or mozzarella cheese slices
1 stick butter
½ c. flour
2 c. chicken or vegetable broth
1 ½ c. semi-dry Rhine wine or Italian Pinot Grigio
½ c. yoghurt or sour cream
Pepper, tarragon and celery salt

Sautee mushrooms until soft, remove from pan. Make sauce as follows: Melt butter and stir in flour. Let cook for at least 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Beat in vegetable or chicken broth. Heat slowly, stirring or blending with wire whisk. Allow to gently boil for ½ minute. Add wine and yogurt (or sour cream), but do not bring to a complete boil. Season with pepper, celery salt and tarragon.

To assemble:

Place dry chicken pieces on thin coating of sauce in baking pan(s). Sprinkle with mushrooms, onions and celery pieces. Cover completely with wine sauce. Place cheese slices on top, indicating portions. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes.
Serve with rice.

Vegetable: Asparagus, Cauliflower and Carrot Medley

Ingredients:

Vegetables
1 tablespoon butter
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
Salt, lemon juice, paprika, pepper

Clean asparagus and cut into two inch pieces. Separate cauliflower into smaller florets. Slice carrots. Start cooking carrot slices in a small amount of water, then add florets and asparagus pieces. When vegetables are done, but still crisp, drain remaining liquid, gently toss medley with the rest of the ingredients.

Salad: Mixed Salad (Bunter Kopfsalat)

Prepare individual salad plates by lining them with leaves of Boston lettuce. Decorate them with slices of red beets, cucumbers, radishes, tomatoes and colorful peppers. Sprinkle with gorgonzola cheese, raisins and walnuts.

Dessert: Plum Torte (Pflaumenkuchen; Bavarian Pflaumendatschi)

This easy cake is also delicious with all kinds of berries. You can also add berries to the plums. This recipe yields 10 servings, and can easily be doubled.

Ingredients:

½ cup butter or ¼ cup butter and ¼ cup canola oil
½ cup sugar (or less)
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla or rum extract
1 cup flour
14 Italian prune plums, halved or quartered (or 2+ cups berries)
Optional: a little sugar with cinnamon to sprinkle on top

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease an 8 to 10 inch square or round pan.

Beat together the butter, sugar, baking powder and salt.

Add the eggs until completely combined. Stir in vanilla or rum flavor.

Add the flour and gently mix until smooth. Spread batter into pan.

Spread berries or plums on top. Place plums close together with skins up.

If using sugar mixture, sprinkle over top.

Bake the cake for 35 to 40 minutes, until toothpick comes out clean. Top of cake should be a light golden brown. Serve warm, preferably with whipped cream!

Wine and Food pairing suggestions for this meal by Jack Korpi, wine specialist at Berman's Fine Wines.

Appetizer

Wines that are light and bright to offset the creamy cheese

2011 Joseph Drouhin Bourgogne - Chardonnay \$12.99

2010 Sybille Kuntz Dry Riesling - Mosel \$14.99

Entree

2010 Mount Eden Edna Valley Chardonnay - Wolff Vineyard \$21.99

Lightly oaked with a clean, dry finish

2010 Auvigne Macon Solutre \$19.99 net - no discount

Classic Burgundian Chardonnay that brings out the flavor of the food

2011 Leitz Dragonstone Riesling - Rheingau \$17.99

From one of the best winemakers in Germany. Beautiful, medium sweet Riesling with taut acidity to ensure a clean finish and great food compatibility.

2012 Karl Erbes Urziger Wurzgarten Riesling Spatlese \$17.99

From the famed Urziger Wurzgarten vineyard. Medium sweet

Dessert

2010 Domaine de la Pigeade Muscat Beaume de Venise (375 ml) \$19.99

Classic dessert wine.

2009 Domaine Cauhape Symphonie de Novembre - Jurancon \$36.99 (750 ml)

Moderately sweet and incredibly elegant. Lighter than typical dessert wine.

Tips for your friends with dietary restrictions by Shari Solomon, certified nutritionist and owner of Cocoa Plum Nutrition in West Concord and Arlington.

Regarding Rosemarie's German meal, a way to **reduce salt intake** is to take advantage of all the low-sodium products on the shelves - low-salt crackers, cheddar cheese, chicken broth, Worcestershire sauce, and unsalted butter. When a guest and others have prepared the meal then I recommend skipping the cheese ball and gorgonzola (cheeses usually are high in sodium).

If you are the chef, a way to **reduce the fat intake** is to choose low- or no-fat options for the dairy products such as: low- or no-fat cheeses. For the plum cake I propose using no-fat yogurt rather than the sour cream and the ½ butter/½ canola combination as suggested by Rosemarie. For the roux that gets made for the chicken Isar try Smart Balance® HeartRight® buttery spread. It has less saturated fat plus phytosterols that help reduce cholesterol levels in the blood.

If you are the guest, to **reduce the fat intake** I recommend skipping the cheese ball and enjoy a small serving of the cake or even perhaps a plum by itself.

If you are **reducing your carbohydrate intake**, as a chef, I would choose a whole grain rice. They come in many pretty colors these days besides brown such as red, violet and black. Otherwise as a guest I would reduce the number of crackers used to enjoy the cheese ball, omit the raisins, and beets from the salad, and have a reasonable serving size of the rice somewhere around a deck of cards. And, of course, either a small bite or two of the cake or a fresh plum by itself.