



As we all know February can be mid winter or early spring but, whichever, Valentine's Day is always at heart. So I'm going to suggest a light and easy valentine meal which leaves you free to enjoy the company of your loved one and not locked in the kitchen!

Firstly to create the mood :
'Rose Petal' - a refreshing, light cocktail:

Pour 1 - 2 cm of rose syrup into a champagne flute and then fill with a chilled demi-sec sparkling wine.
Enjoy!



For Your Valentine

by Lynda Gee

Avocado with Dressed Crab (serves 2)

- 1 large or 2 small ripe, but still firm avocados
- 1 small tin of crab meat (miettes de crabe)
- 1 dessert spoon mayonnaise
- 1 dessert spoon double cream
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 small fresh lemon

Firstly drain the crab meat well and then, in a bowl, mix this with the mayonnaise, black pepper and a squeeze of lemon juice. Leave to chill in the fridge.

Split the avocados in half, length ways and remove the stones. Using a dessert spoon loosen the flesh from the skin but leave in place.

Fill each half with a generous helping of the filling and top with a twist of lemon.

Serve quickly to stop the avocados becoming discoloured.

Chicken and Pineapple 'Cordon Bleus' (serves 2)

- 2 chicken breast fillets of 150 - 180 grams each
- 1 slice of boiled or roast ham (jambon de Paris)
- 3 tinned pineapple rings
- 3 tablespoons of the pineapple juice
- 25 grams unsalted butter
- freshly ground black pepper

Preheat your oven to 200°C.

With a sharp knife, either open the chicken fillets butterfly fashion or, cut a deep pocket into each one. Cut two pieces from the ham, about the same shape and size as the fillets, and cut one of the pineapple rings in half.

Place a small piece of butter inside each fillet, then the part slice of ham followed by the half pineapple ring with a grinding of black pepper and close over.

Put the two filets side by side in an oven-proof dish, small enough to hold them close together and closed over their filling. Spread or dot the top of each one with the remaining butter, place the other 2 pineapple rings on top, spoon over the juice, cover with foil and bake in the preheated oven for 20 -25 minutes.

These are delicious served with sweet corn and broccoli, any vegetable of your own choice, rice or pasta.

Sweetheart Fondue (serves 2)

- 200 grams of cooking chocolate - try a mixture of plain for intensity, milk for subtlety and white for frivolity!
- Approx 20 cl. double cream
- 1 small chopped banana
- 1 or 2 peeled and segmented clementines, strawberries if available, marshmallows

Melt the chocolate in a fondue pan (or in a bowl bain marie style) add a teaspoon of hot water to prevent the chocolate becoming too thick or sticky, add the cream over the heat, stirring all the time until fully blended. For the alcohol-lovers amongst us, add a splash of your preferred tittle - brandy, rum or orange liqueur all complement the taste!

Keep the chocolate mix warm over the fondue burner or a 'night light' warmer and using fondue or dessert forks, dip in your choice of fruit and/or marshmallow - and be romantic, serve each other!



Lynda is better known as 'Ginger's Kitchen' and provides a full at-home catering service.

(See advert on P.21)

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