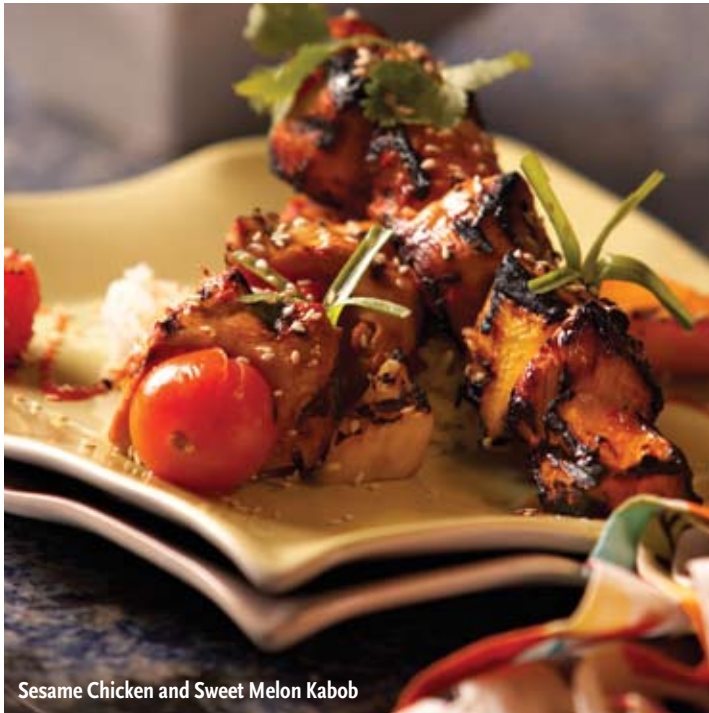


THE Secret's OUT

Restaurant dishes sometimes look more complicated than they really are. But Pechanga's Chefs have shared three great recipes even an amateur cook can prepare at home—plus tips for figuring out a recipe when the chef won't part with it ✨ BY STEPHANIE CONNER



Sesame Chicken and Sweet Melon Kabob



Lemon Cream Emulsion Under Delicious Drunken Summer Berries

It's the best dish you've ever eaten, and you're from out of town. The only way to have it again is to make it yourself. So, you follow your subtle foodie instincts and casually request the recipe. You'd even buy the restaurant's recipe book if they have one, you say. The waiter laughs you out of the establishment. No way are they giving up their secrets. But never fear — there's a trick.

Break down the meal piece by piece so you can start experimenting, advises Pechanga Resort & Casino Assistant Executive Chef Kurt Hauser. Here are a few steps you can take:

1. **Start with the biggies.** Note the easily identifiable ingredients first — meats, pastas, vegetables. Also, write down how they're prepared. Is the meat shredded? Are the veggies chopped or julienne?

2. **Distinguish spices.** Can you tell the difference between jalapeño, chipotle and poblano peppers? Can you pick out the garlic, ginger,

cilantro or oregano? Don't fret over exact proportions yet — you can do that when you experiment in the kitchen.

3. **Tackle texture.** Taste isn't just about one sense, Hauser says. It's about all of your senses working together, and honing in on textures can help. Is there a purée? Is the pasta oily?

4. **Talk about your feelings.** Food can be an emotional experience, according to Hauser. "Some flavors really make people happy," he says. "You'll naturally gravitate toward the things you feel comfortable with." If you know which foods generate an emotional response, you can pick them out of a recipe.

5. **Location, location, location.** "Use your better judgment," Hauser says, "and determine where foods could have come from." If particular vegetables or spices are indigenous to the area, there's a stronger likelihood that they're in the dish.

6. **Keep at it.** "Taste a lot of different products, prepared many different ways," Hauser



Yum Nuer (Thai Beef Salad)

suggests. The more diverse your experiences, the better you'll be at breaking down recipes from those stubborn chefs who just won't give 'em up.

Fortunately, Pechanga Resort & Casino chefs love to have you try their recipes at home. At right are three easy-to-prepare dishes to impress your guests and keep them asking for more. *

7 Great Fakeers

You've started cooking when you realize—oh no!—you've forgotten an ingredient. Don't rush back to the store just yet, because one of these simple substitutions just might do the trick.

RECIPE CALLS FOR:

Allspice
Sour cream
Dry bread crumbs
Buttermilk (1 cup)
Corn syrup, light (1 cup)
Rice wine
Sherry vinegar

YOU CAN SUBSTITUTE:

2 parts ground cinnamon, 1 part ground cloves
Plain yogurt
Corn flakes, cracker crumbs, matzo meal
1 cup minus 1 Tbsp. milk, plus 1 Tbsp. lemon juice or white vinegar
1 cup sugar plus ¼ cup water
Dry sherry
Balsamic vinegar

Source: *How to Break an Egg*
(The Taunton Press, 2005)

Three You Can Make!

SESAME CHICKEN AND
SWEET MELON KABOB
From Dennis Lofland

Ingredients:

4 chicken breasts
1-2 cantaloupes
1-2 pineapples
1 watermelon
24 cherry tomatoes
8 kabob skewers soaked in water
sesame seeds as needed

Marinade:

1 cup soy sauce
½ cup sesame oil
3 Tbsp. minced ginger
3 Tbsp. minced garlic
½ cup rice vinegar
1 Tbsp. sweet chili paste
2 Tbsp. sugar
½ cup sesame seeds

Directions:

Combine all ingredients for the marinade in a blender or a stainless steel bowl and mix together. Cut the chicken breasts into 2-inch pieces and marinate overnight in the refrigerator. Cut the cantaloupe, pineapple and watermelon into pieces that are similar in size to the cherry tomatoes. Assemble the kabobs in a pattern of your choice. Preheat the grill and scrape it clean. Place the kabobs on the grill and use the marinade as a basting liquid to keep the kabobs moist. Be sure to cook the chicken all the way through. Place two kabobs on a plate crossing each other and sprinkle sesame seeds over the top.

Serving: Serve alone or with fried or steamed rice. Remove cooked leftovers from the skewer and store in the refrigerator to use as a salad.

LEMON CREAM EMULSION UNDER DELICIOUS DRUNKEN SUMMER BERRIES

From Jean Marie Verhoeven,
Executive Pastry Chef

Ingredients:

4 oz. fresh whole eggs
4 oz. fresh egg yolks
4 oz. sugar
4 oz. freshly squeezed
lemon juice
4 lemon zest strips

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4.5 oz. European-style unsalted butter
2 pints strawberries
¼ cup Sugar In The Raw (Turbinado)
750 ml Champagne
Fresh mint and cookies for garnish

Directions:

Mix the eggs, yolks and sugar together. Add the lemon juice and zest, and cook over a bain-marie. Strain, then cool to 35°C/95°F, and add room-temperature butter. Let the mixture mature in the refrigerator for 12 hours. Quarter the strawberries into a large bowl with sugar and a splash of the Champagne.

Presentation:

On a plate, spread some of the lemon cream like a thin bed. Toss your favorite summer berries with Turbinado sugar and a splash of chilled Champagne and place on top of the emulsion immediately. Garnish with fresh mint and your favorite fancy cookie. Serve the rest of the bubbly in Champagne saucers and enjoy!

YUM NUER (THAI BEEF SALAD)

From Dan Saechang, Global Sous Chef

Ingredients:

10 oz. ribeye or top sirloin
3 Tbsp. lime juice
3 Tbsp. fish sauce
½ tsp. sugar
Fresh Thai chiles or chili powder
(your preference, to taste)
2 oz. red onion
2 oz. green onion
4 slices tomato
4 slices cucumber
5 oz. Romaine or iceberg lettuce
1 tsp. cilantro

Directions:

Grill the meat to desired doneness. Cut into thin slices against the grain. In a bowl, mix the lime juice, fish sauce, sugar, chiles, red and green onion, tomato, cucumber and beef. Toss well and lay it on a bed of lettuce and garnish with cilantro to serve.