

Go Greek!

Written by

Tuesday, 26 June 2007 15:00

Greek Tigers

Roasted Red Pepper Hummus

Lamb Souvlaki

Lemony Orzo

Date Nut Balls



Last Saturday night my husband Vince and I had a small dinner party at our house with four of our dearest friends. An adventuresome group, Mark, Audra, Bill and Jill are always willing to taste-test my new concoctions. The theme for our evening was Greek. I had never sampled licorice-flavored ouzo before so I purchased a bottle for the evening and discovered a delicious recipe for the fun cocktail Greek Tigers. We started with meal with three Greek-inspired hors d'oeuvres. A favorite was the Roasted Red Pepper Hummus. Our entree was Lamb Souvlaki that Vince cooked on the grill while I put together a Greek salad and prepared the Lemony Orzo. We drank a delicious pinot noir with the meal and feasted on Date Nut Balls and coffee for dessert. I highly recommend this meal for a special evening with good friends. Enjoy!

Greek Tigers

1/2 cup ouzo

1-1/2 cups freshly squeezed orange juice

Squeeze of fresh lime juice

Put all ingredients with ice cubes in a martini shaker, shake and strain into double shot glasses. Serves 6 to 8.

Roasted Red Pepper Hummus

2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, rinsed and drained

3 garlic cloves

1 (6-ounce) jar roasted red bell peppers, drained

1/2 cup tahini

1/3 cup water

2 tablespoons olive oil

1-1/2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1/3 cup fresh lime juice

Pita chips

Process all ingredients in a food processor until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Serve with pita chips. Serves 6 to 8.

Lamb Souvlaki

1 (4-5 pound) boneless leg of lamb

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

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1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 tablespoons red wine
1 large garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Cut lamb into 1-1/2-inch cubes. Combine remaining ingredients in a small bowl. Place lamb pieces in a glass bowl. Pour marinade over the lamb and toss to coat well. Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. Remove meat from marinade. Discard marinade. Thread lamb cubes onto metal skewers. Grill for approximately 20 minutes, turning often, until meat reaches desired degree of doneness. Serves 6 to 8.

Lemony Orzo

2 (14-ounce) cans chicken broth
7 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 (16-ounce) box orzo
Italian parsley, minced
Lemon zest
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper

In a medium saucepan, bring chicken broth and lemon juice to a boil. Stir in orzo. Cook according to package directions until orzo is tender. Stir in minced parsley and lemon zest. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Date Nut Balls

1 stick butter
3/4 cup sugar
1 (8-ounce) package chopped dates
2-1/2 cups crispy rice cereal
1 cup chopped pecans
Powdered sugar

Combine butter, sugar and dates in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil; cook, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in cereal and pecans. Let mixture cool to the touch. Shape into 1-inch balls and roll each in powdered sugar. Do not refrigerate. Makes 40 treats.