

FIGGIYAKI

Rumaki is a Polynesian-style dish reported to have been invented by Trader Vic (aka Victor Bergeron). It is made by inserting a water chestnut slice inside a chicken liver, wrapping it in bacon, broiling it until the bacon is crisp, and serving in a soy-ginger sauce. Cookbooks and the internet are rife with recipes for it.

The dish described here is similar, an off-spring I concocted in about 2001, for those with a sweet tooth seeking a change from its ancestor¹. Every time I have made this it has been preferred over its forebear.

20 sun dried figs
20 almonds, blanched
10 slides low salt bacon, sliced in half
¾ cup low-salt soy sauce
¼ cup medium dry sherry (or sake)
½ tsp garlic purée
2 tsp fresh ginger, peeled and puréed
½ cup "brown sugar"
1 tbsp cornstarch

Marinate the sun dried figs in the refrigerator in the mixture of soy sauce, sherry (or sake), garlic, and ginger for 12 hours, or overnight, to reconstitute and flavor figs. Press an almond into the center of each fig, roll in "brown sugar", wrap each in a piece of bacon, and secure with a toothpick.

Place in an oven dish, add marinade, cover, and marinate another 2 to 3 hours in the refrigerator, turning occasionally. Preheat oven to 400°F. Drain marinade from figs and reserve. Roast the figs uncovered until bacon browns, 30 to 45 minutes. Remove from oven and drain figs on paper towels. Add cornstarch and remaining "brown sugar" to the reserved marinade, 1 tbsp per cup of liquid, and blend to remove lumps. Thicken in a hot glaze just before serving.

¹Besides being very tasty, they provide wonderful assistance in eliminating the symptoms of chronic anal retention.

Serves 10 (assumes 2 each)

PRUNIYAKI

The above recipe also goes well if prunes are substituted for the figs.

CHICKEN LIVER PÂTÉ CANAPÉS

Some people like chicken liver pâté, some don't. The authors of cook books on my shelf apparently don't either, for none of them had a satisfactory recipe, as far as what I was looking for was concerned. So, I whipped up the following one day while preparing for a party, rather than searching further. I like it.

1 oz dry onion soup mix
1½ oz Madeira wine
2 tsp brandy
1 (4¼ -oz) can chicken liver pâté
1 oz fat-free cream cheese
¼ tsp ground rosemary
party rye bread slices, toasted, or your favorite cracker²

Put onion soup mix and Madeira in a mixing bowl and stir to begin the reconstitution process. Then stir all ingredients together until well mixed. Refrigerate for 2 hours. Serve on a platter in a decorative cup, with the party rye arranged around, or, if guests are at hand, slathered on the rye and put on a serving platter.

²*Almond Asiago Crackers*, page 60.