

# JUDICIAL *Palate*

By Susan E. Poppiti, Esquire

## Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!

We all know what happens when the meteorologists predict a snow day – there is a mad rush to the grocery stores. However, if you cook regularly, you probably have many ingredients on hand. The below snow day menu requires only a basketful of additional ingredients: eggs, Gruyère, Pullman loaf of bread, whole grain Dijon mustard, baked ham, Vidalia onions, beef stock, chicken stock, and arugula. You should double check, but you probably have the other items in your refrigerator, spice rack, or liquor cabinet. 🍷

### Breakfast

#### Gruyère Scrambled Eggs

No recipe necessary for breakfast. Simply scramble some eggs and sprinkle with Gruyère. Serve with a slice of toasted Pullman loaf, butter, and jam.

### Lunch

#### Modified Croque Madame

- 4 tablespoons whole grain Dijon mustard
- 4 slices Pullman bread, toasted
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 8 ounces Gruyère, shredded
- 8 thin slices baked ham
- 4 eggs
- Sea salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- Freshly grated nutmeg

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spread the mustard over each slice of bread. Melt two tablespoons of butter in a large nonstick pan over medium heat. Place two slices of bread, mustard side up, in the pan and brown the bottom for about two minutes. Transfer the slices to a baking sheet, browned side down. Repeat with the other two slices of bread.

Top each slice of bread with two slices of ham and then cover with Gruyère. Crack four eggs into the pan. While the eggs are frying, place the bread slices under the broiler until the cheese is golden brown. Top each with a fried egg along with salt, pepper, and nutmeg to taste. Serve immediately. Serves four.

### Dinner

#### Vincent's French Onion Soup

- 8 ounces plus 8 teaspoons salted butter (preferably Kerrygold)
- 2 tablespoons plus 8 teaspoons olive oil
- 8 Vidalia (sweet) onions, sliced
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 3 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon whole grain Dijon mustard
- 2 quarts plus two cups beef stock
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1/3 cup Cognac
- Sea salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 4 thick slices Pullman loaf, cut in half and then trimmed to fit into each soup bowl
- 8 ounces Gruyère, shredded
- 4 ounces grated Parmesan cheese

Heat eight ounces of butter and two tablespoons olive oil in a large stock pot. Add the onions and cook over high heat, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes. Add the sugar. Reduce the heat to medium and sprinkle in the flour. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are golden brown, about 40 minutes.

Gradually stir in the mustard and pour in the stock and Cognac. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer uncovered over medium heat for one hour. Skim as necessary.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spread one side of each piece of bread with one teaspoon of butter and one teaspoon of olive oil. Toast

the buttered and oiled side on a baking sheet until crusty and golden brown, about 12 minutes.

Combine the Gruyère and Parmesan in a bowl. Preheat the broiler. Ladle the soup into eight oven proof soup bowls, leaving room for the toast. Place a slice of toast in each bowl. Top each bowl generously with the cheeses. Broil until the cheese is melted and bubbling. Serve immediately alongside a salad of arugula tossed with balsamic vinegar, olive oil, sea salt, and freshly ground pepper. Serves eight.

The menu is a bit heavy on the bread and cheese, but what could be better comfort food for a chilly snow day?

**Susan E. Poppiti** is a mathematics teacher at Padua Academy High School and managing member and cooking instructor for La Cucina di Poppiti, LLC and can be reached at [spoppiti@hotmail.com](mailto:spoppiti@hotmail.com). Other recipes and cooking tips are available on Susan's food blog at [www.cucinadipoppiti.com](http://www.cucinadipoppiti.com).