

Dear Friends,  
With all of us spending much more time at home than we normally would, I thought it would be nice to share a few of my favorite dishes to help occupy your mind, feed your belly and bring a touch of comfort to these stressful times we live in. All are suitable for a casual meal with family and friends or an elegant affair - over your favorite video conferencing app of course! The most important thing is to take the time to enjoy the process and share the results with someone you love. Happy cooking!

MATT GARELICK  
*Executive Chef*

PARK HYATT®

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## THE LIVING ROOM – BREAKFAST FAVORITES

### AVOCADO TOAST

Whoever invented the avocado toast (Australia?) deserves the Nobel Prize. This is the ultimate simple, healthy, satisfying dish and I have yet to meet someone that doesn't love it.

At the Living Room, we enhance the avocado in every way possible, pairing it with a variety of fresh herbs, roasted and pickled vegetables to create a toast that is hardly humble.

Our seven-grain bread comes from a bakery called Pain D'Avignon and is worth seeking out. We actually grill the slices, as opposed to toasting, to add another layer of smoky flavor to the finished dish. Toasting will still work as well though in a pinch, just make sure not to skip a drizzle of olive oil and salt on the bread itself, a small but important step. If you can't find this particular bread, any whole grain loaf with a dense crumb and good crust will work.

### FOR THE AVOCADO MASH

- 2 ripe avocados
- 4 cloves roasted garlic or garlic confit (peeled garlic cloves simmered in olive oil until tender then cooled in the fat)
- 3-4 leaves fresh basil, chiffonade
- 2-3 leaves fresh mint, chiffonade
- Juice of half a Lemon, or to taste
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil or the garlic confit oil
- Salt

### FOR THE CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

- 1 bunch parsley, leaves only, minced
- 1 bunch cilantro, leaves only, minced
- 1 Table Spoon red onion, finely chopped
- Pinch Chili Flakes

- 1 Table Spoon Red Wine Vinegar
- Juice of 1 Lemon
- Juice of 1 Lime
- Salt
- ½ cup Olive Oil

### TO COMPLETE

Grill Sliced Seven Grain Bread seasoned with olive oil and salt

### TOP WITH

Sliced Plum tomato roasted in a 200° oven until softened but not overly dry, or Oil Packed Sundried Tomato, cut in half  
Sweety Drop Peppers or another pickled pepper  
Olive Oil

Maldon Sea Salt

Espelette or Aleppo Pepper

Poached or Hard Boiled Egg (optional)

Smoked Salmon (optional)

Poached Lobster, Thick Cut Bacon, Crab, Burrata Cheese



*Avocado Toast*



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### COCONUT CHIA PUDDING

Chia seeds are high in fiber and rich in omega-3 fatty acids. They can be ground into a smoothie or shake or, my preferred method, soaked in a flavorful liquid, which causes the seeds to gelatinize and swell to a luscious creamy texture.

This chia pudding recipe is sweet without being so much so it leaves you in a sugar coma after breakfast. It works well with a wide variety of toppings you might have on hand or on its own as either breakfast or dessert. The hardest part is waiting for the chia seeds to absorb enough liquid to transform themselves into the finished custard.

### RECIPE

This recipe easily scales up to larger batches and holds well in the fridge for up to a week.

- 2 cans, organic coconut milk, well shaken
- ½ cup chia seeds
- 2 TBS organic agave nectar, or to taste
- ¼ cup shredded coconut

Whisk all the ingredients together in a bowl and allow to set in the refrigerator 4 hours or overnight.

### TOPPING SUGGESTIONS

- Pomegranate seeds
- Tart cherries
- Mango
- Cashews
- Toasted coconut
- Aged fig balsamic vinegar
- Cocoa Nibs



*Coconut Chia Pudding*



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## SLOW COOKED COMFORT FOOD

### BRAISED SHORT RIBS

When I have time on my hands, as most of us do now, there are few things I enjoy more than dishes that take a couple extra hours to yield deeply flavorful results. This to me is the best kind of comfort food. What comes first to mind is a classic braise – the epitome of slow food. This technique turns tough cuts of meat into unctuous tender morsels through low temperature cooking. The great thing is that this basic technique can be applied to a variety of meats - veal, lamb, pork, as well as poultry, fish and even vegetables (thick cauliflower steaks or large wedges of maitake mushrooms for example) – to great results. The most important thing here is to take care at each step – seasoning the meat and allowing the flavors to develop, searing the meat to a rich brown crust, sweating the vegetables until they begin to yield their natural sweetness, then simmering the meat slowly – with these kinds of dishes, you can't rush to achieve the best result.

#### 1. SEASON THE MEAT

Season the meat aggressively and leave to sit for an hour. This lets the salt work its way into the meat. Short rib will lose about half its weight in cooking, so when deciding how much to buy do something like this - 4-6 oz. cooked meat per person = 8-12 oz. raw.



#### 2. SEAR IN A HOT PAN



Sear in a hot pan until well browned on all sides. Transfer to a roasting pan that will fit the meat snugly but with enough room to allow the liquid to circulate around and submerge the meat two thirds of the way up.

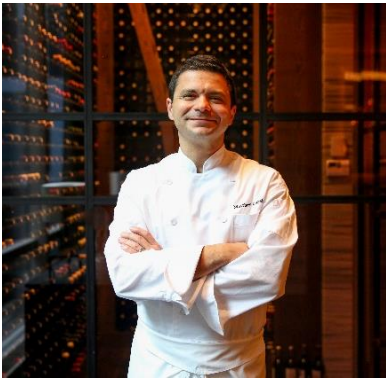
#### 3. IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MIREPOIX

Basic mirepoix adds depth of flavor and sweetness to the dish. Quantities vary on the amount of meat. My ratio for mirepoix is to use a quarter to a third of the total weight of the meat (does not need to be exact). Besides this, I add 2 heaping tablespoons tomato paste, 2 TBS flour, 1/3 cup port and 2/3 cup red wine. Here I added cinnamon, star anise and clove as well a few prunes but that is optional.



*Mirepoix Preparation*





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## SLOW COOKED COMFORT FOOD (CONT.)

### 4. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER



After searing the meat, add the cut vegetables to the same pan, adding more oil as needed. Lower heat to medium and sweat until it looks shiny and softened a bit on the edges. Stir in spices and tomato paste and cook another minute. Here I also add 2 TBS of flour, which will help thicken the sauce, but is optional. Add wine and port and bring to a boil. Add 2 cups of chicken stock (homemade is best but a good quality purchased product works as well), bring to a boil again, and pour over the meat. If it seems there is not enough liquid, add more stock or water to the pan, bring to a boil and pour into the pan with the meat. Cover with foil and place in a 325° oven. Cook until you can easily insert the tip of a small sharp knife into the thickest part of meat. These short ribs took about 3 hours but when you make this at home, cook based on texture, not time.



Cool the meat in the cooking liquid overnight. This will help further develop the flavor. The next day, remove fat that has hardened on the surface of the jus with a spoon or, much easier, your hands. Remove the meat to a plate or cutting board and get rid of any spices or bay leaves if you used them. Mash the cooked vegetables into the sauce. This will also help thicken the liquid. Slice the meat and return to the sauce. Reheat in a microwave on medium heat or in a 325 oven, covered. Alternately, freeze for future use. If the sauce still seems thin once hot, transfer to a small pot and bring to a boil. Stir together 2 teaspoons of cornstarch with 2 table spoons of cold water and add to the jus to thicken. Serve at once very hot.



*Braised Short Ribs*



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## DESSERT

### PLUM CAKE

This recipe is not an original. It is perhaps one of, if not the most, popular recipes from the New York Times catalog. My Mother, like many others, found it there many years ago and passed it down to me. It is one of my favorites and always reminds me of her when I make it.

The cake is beautiful in its simplicity: a cup each of sugar and flour, a stick of butter...the fruit isn't even necessary honestly, but brings the dessert to the next level. Italian prune plums are available for a fleeting few weeks in the early Fall, which make this a sort of special occasion recipe to look forward to each year.

If prune plums are not available, feel free to substitute other ripe fruits such as black, red or baby sugar plums, blue or black berries, pears and apples (peeled and sliced in 1/4" wedges) or dried fruits like prunes or cherries. The plums though are really worth waiting for.

The cake freezes well so feel free to make double and put one away for a future gathering. It also works quite well as muffins.

### RECIPE

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs

- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 9 Italian prune plums, washed, split and pitted
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Heat oven to 350°. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl and set aside for topping. Cream together sugar and butter. Add all other ingredients except for plums, lemon juice and topping mixture. Beat together well. Grease a 9-inch cake pan and line the bottom of it with a piece of parchment paper. Grease the paper as well (this one sticks, I warn you!). Spoon the batter into the greased pan. Place plums, skin side up, all over the batter. Leave them just resting on top, they will sink down while baking. Sprinkle the top of the cake with lemon juice and then with the sugar/cinnamon mixture. Bake for 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Cool in the pan 3 hours. To remove from the pan, run a knife around the edge, invert onto a dinner plate covered with parchment and gently shake out the cake. Peel off the bottom sheet of paper then use another dinner plate to invert back to right side up.



*Plum Cake*