

Sweet and Savory
Sweet Potato/Kale and Chicken
Won Ton Hors D'oeuvres

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Albany County 4-H: Little Horse Power
Food and Nutrition



My inspiration for this dish came from thinking about Thanksgiving dinner and how sweet potato, kale and poultry go well together. I thought that a bite-sized hor d'oeuvre which capitalized on those flavors would be amazing. In addition, since everything tastes better wrapped in a wonton wrapper, I decided to use them as the base for my dish.

I wanted to make a complex dish with layers of flavors, so I selected spices like coriander, cumin, lemon grass curry, and ginger which, in concert with the cinnamon and allspice for the sweet potato, would produce a kind of sweet heat reminiscent of East Asian dishes. I contrasted these flavors with a smoky gruyere which added depth and contrast to the flavors. I also added a hint of acidity and heat with a red wine reduction with jalapeno peppers.



The end result is a healthy, complex blend of sweet roots, bitter greens, hot peppers and fragrant spices which provide a unique taste experience.



Ingredients

Chicken

8 boneless chicken thighs with the fat and skin removed
1-2 tsp coriander
1/2 tsp celery seed
1 tsp lemon grass curry
1-2 tsp cumin
Salt to taste (seasoned salt)
2 TBS extra virgin olive oil
2 or more sprigs of fresh thyme (1 tsp dried)

Filling

2 large sweet potatoes (or equivalent), peeled and grated
1 large colander of kale, chopped, stems discarded
1/2 medium sized Vidalia or sweet onion
1/2 tsp allspice
1 tsp cinnamon
2/3 cup red wine to deglaze chicken pan, reduced
1 TBS fresh, grated ginger
2 jalapenos, seeded and chopped
1/8 to 1/4 cup sugar (to taste)
1 tsp lemon juice
Salt to taste
1 TBS olive oil

Additional Ingredients

Won ton wrappers
Smoky Gruyere Cheese
Oil Spray

Ingredients



Herbs and spices



Kale, onion, jalapeno, ginger, sweet potato, smoky gruyere, chicken thighs, won ton wrappers, red wine

Ingredients



Extra Virgin Olive Oil



Chopped onion and freshly grated ginger

Liberaly season the chicken thighs on both sides. Use less seasoning if you dislike strong tastes.



Coat the pan with 2 TBS of extra virgin olive oil. Set the temperature to medium.



Once the oil is hot, place the chicken thighs in the pan and cook it on a medium heat until the outside is brown and the inside is fully cooked. Anticipate 15 to 17 minutes per side depending on the thickness of the meat



When the chicken is nearly done, add the fresh thyme and turn the chicken a few times until the thyme looks wilted.



As soon as the chicken is removed from the pan, deglaze the pan with 2/3 cup of red wine to remove the chicken drippings, broth and oil from the bottom of the pan



Reduce the heat to low and add the chopped jalapeno. Simmer on low until the wine reduces by half and becomes thick and concentrated.



Peel and grate the sweet potatoes.



Add 1 TBS olive oil to the pan and heat and coat pan. Add shredded sweet potato to the pan and cook until it changes colors and begins to look soft. Turn it in the pan so that it cooks evenly.



Add the ginger, cinnamon and allspice, and stir until the sweet potato is evenly coated.

Add the chopped onion to the sweet potato and simmer until the onion begins to look a little clear and glassy



Once the onions appear to be soft and tender, add the chopped kale to the pan and fold it into the sweet potato. The kale will change color as it wilts and reduces in volume .



Add the wine/pepper reduction to the sweet potato/kale blend. Stir to blend and allow tastes to combine. Add up to 1/4 cup of sugar or other sweetener to taste and add lemon juice to brighten flavor with a hint of acid.

While you are waiting for the sweet potato/kale to cook down, cut the chicken thigh into 1/4 to 1/2 inch chunks. Slice the cheese into small squares as well.



Directions

Spray a mini-muffin baking pan with oil spray or wipe cups and surface with oil. Gently press the wonton wrappers into the muffin cups. Now assemble the hors d'oeuvres. Place a pinch of sweet potato/kale into the bottom of the cup. Top with chicken. Cover that with more sweet potato/kale. Place gruyere on top. Bake at 365 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes or until the edges of the wrappers are lightly browned.

