

Pumpkin Bisque Shooters



I love pumpkin and I've always been a fan of pumpkin bisque. I like mine to be savory. Save the sweet for the pie! Since I have a more than passing infatuation with rum, I simply looked to combine two of my favorite flavors. I tried this warm, with bourbon and with dark rum. Not great in any combination. But cold bisque and gold rum were the perfect match. The bitter sweet flavor of the apple brandy foam is perfect with the savory, slightly spicy pumpkin bisque.

I have included the recipe for my pumpkin bisque below, but you can use your own or even your favorite prepared brand.

For 2 Shooters:

- 2 oz. Cold Pumpkin Bisque – see below
- 1/2 oz. Gold rum such as Cruzan or Mount Gay
- 1 dash Simple syrup
- 1 Dash Angostura Bitters
- Apple Brandy Foam – see below

1. Combine pumpkin bisque, rum simple syrup and bitters in a mixing glass without ice and stir to combine.
2. Divide between 2 tall shooters
3. Gently float the Apple Brandy Foam on the shooters
4. Serve immediately

Apple Brandy Foam

- 3 egg whites (4 1/2 oz pasteurized egg whites)
- 3 oz. Applejack Brandy
- 2 oz. Fresh Orange juice – double strained
- 2 Dashes Bar Keep Apple Bitters

1. Add all ingredients to an iSi Whipper
2. Seal the whipper and shake to further break up the egg whites
3. Double charge the Whipper with N20, shaking after each charge
4. Refrigerate for 2 hours before use. Will keep refrigerated for a few days.

Pumpkin Bisque



- 1 tsp Cayenne
- 2 Cups Diced Onion
- 2 cloves Chopped Garlic
- 1 1/2 Tbls. Butter
- 1 – 15 oz. Can Pumpkin Puree
- 4 Cups Chicken Stock
- 1/4 tsp. Ground Allspice
- 1/2 tsp Fresh ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp. Salt to Taste
- 1/4 Cup Dry Sherry

- 1 Cup Heavy Cream

1. Saute the onions in the butter until translucent – about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook 30 sec.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients except the cream and simmer for 30 min
3. Place the mixture in a blender and puree until smooth.
4. Return the puree to the pot, add the cream and continue to cook until heated through.
5. Serve immediately or cool for the above shooters.

Cheers!

Bloody Mary Oyster Shooters

Oyster shooters are simply awesome. They are also unusual enough to impress your guests. While there are those who don't care for them, most people like oysters. Plus, you'll find a number of your friends haven't tried them – raw anyway. So, plunge in!

While fresh shucked oysters are the best, the necessity of shucking is frequently the barrier that prevents the busy host from serving them. Enter the fresh, pasteurized variety, (and exit the oyster aficionado). These are probably better for cooking, but work quite well in shooters. The containers come in a variety of sizes, as will the oysters. You may want to cut particularly large oysters in half, and double up the small ones.



To build multiple shots, I suggest that you line up the glasses and make them assembly line fashion. Start with an oyster in each glass followed by the next ingredient, in the order listed.

- 1 oyster
- 2 tsp. Zing Zang (or other Bloody Mary mix)
- 1/8 tsp. Horseradish
- 1/8 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 4 drops hot sauce
- 1/4 oz. Lemon juice
- 1/4 oz. Chilled Cinco Vodka

1. Chill vodka in the refrigerator for several hours or “freeze” in the freezer for an hour. See note below.
2. Line up shot glasses and place an oyster in each
3. Add the remaining ingredients, in the order above, to each glass
4. Serve immediately

Note: Vodka will not actually freeze, so the bottle won't break if you leave it in the freezer. Frozen vodka has a silky mouth feel.

Cheers!

Keeping it Simple

I like simple. Simple is good. Especially on a week night when I'm ready to hang out with my wife, who is also my best friend! We enjoy our cocktail hour with a few hors d'oeuvres. We have a variety of nibbles, (and cocktails), that we set out for ourselves, but the best are the simple selections of cheese, olives, nuts and a bit of dry sausage.



It doesn't have to be foie gras every night, or even hot hors d'oeuvres. Find something simple that you like and keep some on hand. Of course it goes without saying that they must go with cocktails!

Cheers!

It's Halloween!

This is a wonderful time of year, and Halloween is one of the best excuses for partying ever invented! So in that spirit,

we offer a couple of ideas for spooky entertainment.

First for the drinks (have to keep our priorities straight). Halloween specialty drinks tend to be, shall we say, “yuck.” Some really look cool, but the flavors are not so much. We prefer to take a standard cocktail, rename it and put it in a costume. For instance, a chocolate martini in a glass rimmed with melting chocolate and a chocolate spider web. Or a “Dark and Spooky” with a black sugar rim.



From
<http://www.cosmopolitan.com/food/cocktails/halloween-drinks>

For an eerie green drink try equal parts Midori, vodka, simple syrup and lemon juice, (aka Midori sour.)

You can also add a little dry ice for that smoking fog effect – just be very careful. Dry ice will burn you and can break glassware. The safest way is to drop a small amount into a punch bowl. By “small,” I mean a chip or two. Also, don’t use dry ice in any drink with eggs, milk or cream. The dry ice won’t smoke, it will foam.

While a smoking drink is fun, nothing beats a drink on fire! Choose any Tiki drink or sour. Name it something ghoulish like “Mr. Hyde.” Serve it neat in a large round wine glass,

filling it less than half way. For the flame, float an inverted lemon or lime hull with a little piece of toast soaked in 151 proof rum. Light the rum and serve the drink – with a straw.



Severed Arm

In the past we have prepared various Halloween themed foods: mozzarella “eyeballs”, “severed arms” and pot sticker “brains.” This year we served roasted “fingers” and meatloaf “coffins.”



Meatball logs with almond slivers for “nails”

For the severed fingers, we used a meatball recipe, rolled them into finger sized logs and inserted sliced almonds for the “nails.”



Severed fingers with their “skin,” ready for the oven.

We then used prosciutto for the “skin.”



After roasting in the oven at 375 for 15 minutes, we put them on bamboo skewers and served them with marinara.

The meatloaf “coffins” are simply individual meatloaves shaved into a coffin shape:



Sugar Free Candied Jalapenos



This can only be sugar free if you use WheyLow. WheyLow is the only sugar substitute I know of that will make a syrup. It is not calorie or carbohydrate free. It does have 1/10 the calories and 1/4 the carbs of sugar. WheyLow is also expensive and hard to find,

so, unless you're planning to eat a lot of it, just use sugar! Serve this over a block of cream cheese with some crackers. Your guests will love it!

- 1 lb. sliced stemmed and seeded jalapenos – see note below
 - 1 medium sweet onion small diced
 - 2 cloves garlic minced
 - 2 tbs. white vinegar
 - 2 tbs. water
 - 1 1/2 Cups sugar or WheyLow
 - 1/2 Tbs. mustard seeds
 - 1 tsp minced fresh ginger
 - 1/4 tsp. turmeric
 - pinch of salt and a grind of black pepper
1. In a nonreactive pot over medium heat cook the jalapenos, onion, garlic, vinegar and water until onions and jalapenos start to soften – about 10 min.
 2. Pour off about 1/2 of the water and add the sugar/WheyLow, mustard seeds, ginger, tumeric, salt and pepper. Stir until the sugar is dissolved.
 3. Reduce the heat to med low and simmer, uncovered stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened. It

will continue to thicken as it cools.

4. Allow to cool to room temperature.
5. To serve, spoon over a block of cream cheese and serve with crackers or chips.
6. Keeps refrigerated for 2-3 days.

Note: Seeding the jalapenos makes the dish look better and removes most of the heat. This will be mild – medium heat as written. To add heat, either use 1 or 2 serranos with the jalapenos or finely chop a habanero and add it at the end of cooking.

Fish Tacos

This is our version of the iconic street food.



These are great with whatever fish you have on hand. We usually use tilapia or mahi mahi. The tacos can be made with flour or corn tortillas or with lettuce wraps.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Shredded white cabbage
- 3+ Tbls Gary's Everyday Cajun Mix or your favorite brand

- 2 tsp Malt Vinegar
- 1 Tbl Cider Vinegar
- 2 + Tbls Bottled Chipotle sauce such as Fontera
- 2 tsp Adobo sauce from canned chipotles in adobo – optional
- 15 oz jar prepared Tartar sauce such as Zattaran's
- 1 Tbl butter
- 1 Tbl canola oil
- 4 tilapia fillets
- 4 strips cooked turkey bacon
- ½ cup shredded Mexican Style or Monterey Jack cheese
- Tortillas or lettuce for wraps

Cole Slaw

In a mixing bowl combine cabbage, vinegars and 1 Tbl of the Cajun mix. Salt and pepper to taste and add additional Cajun mix if desired. Set aside.

Chipotle Tartar Sauce

- 2 + Tbls Bottled Chipotle sauce such as Fontera
- 2 tsp Adobo sauce from canned chipotles in adobo – optional
- 15 oz jar prepared Tartar sauce such as Zattaran's

In a small bowl, combine tartar sauce with chipotle sauce and optional adobo sauce. Be careful here. The heat factor in the chipotle sauce varies so adjust to taste. Set aside.

1. Season fish fillets with salt, pepper and Cajun Mix.
2. In a heavy skillet over med high heat, melt butter and oil. Sauté filets until cooked through. Cut filets lengthwise in 4 pieces each.
3. Spread about 1 Tbl of chipotle tartar on a warm tortilla. Top with 2 pieces of fish.
4. Break bacon in half then again in half lengthwise. Put 2 pieces of bacon on the fish. Add 1 Tbl cheese and 1-2

Tbl slaw.

5. Will make 8 tacos.

Serve with Chipotle Tartar sauce on the side.

Tuna Wontons

These look and taste great. The tuna will slice more easily if it is partially frozen. If you cannot find the Ginger Teriyaki Marinade, a quick recipe follows.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Sashimi grade Tuna sliced into 2- $3/4 \times 3/4$ in. rectangles
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Ginger Teriyaki Marinade
- 2 egg roll wrappers
- Wasabi paste and pickled ginger for garnish

1. Marinade tuna in ginger teriyaki marinade for 1 hr.
2. Lay egg roll wrappers on a clean cutting board.
3. Pat the tuna pieces dry with a paper towel and place each tuna piece at the top left hand corner of a wrapper.
4. With a sharp knife, cut the wrapper even with the right end of the tuna. The wrapper will now be the same width as the tuna.
5. Carefully roll the tuna in the wrapper for one complete turn. Cut the extra wrapper off so that there is a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. overlap. Wet the edge of the wrapper so that it will stick.
6. Heat a nonstick skillet over med high heat.
7. Cook tuna briefly on each side to just cook the wrapper.
8. Slice wontons $\frac{1}{4}$ in thick and arrange on plate.
9. Garnish with wasabi paste and pickled ginger.

Ginger Teriyaki Marinade

- 8 oz. Teriyaki
 - 1/3 cup chopped fresh ginger
1. Add all ingredients to whipper and follow instructions for nitrogen cavitation or let the teriyaki and ginger sit overnight
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Chicken Satay

These make great appetizers or small plates bites. Serve with Crab Rangoon and chicken wings for a cocktail party.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup lemongrass, topped and tough bottom removed
- 1 cup sugar (this is a marinade so you need to use sugar and not substitute)
- ½ cup fresh ginger peeled and chopped
- 4 Thai chilies, stems removed
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 Tbl. turmeric
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup dark rum
- 1 oz. tequila
- 2 Tbls. fish sauce
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 12 boneless chicken thighs
- 1/2 cup chunky peanut butter
- 2 Tbls. soy sauce
- 3 Tbls. water
- bamboo skewers
- Kosher salt, to taste

- Vegetable oil, as needed

Directions:

1. Remove a few outer layers of the lemongrass, thinly slice, and set aside.
 2. In a food processor, combine the lemongrass, sugar, ginger, Thai chile, garlic, turmeric, lime, rum, tequila, and fish sauce. Process until the mixture is as smooth as possible. Scrape down the sides of the processor periodically to ensure an even puree. Remove the mixture from the processor and transfer to a bowl. Whisk in the coconut milk.
 3. Cut the chicken thighs into strips about 1/2-inch wide. Place the chicken in a freezer bag with the marinade and refrigerate for at least 24 hours or up to 48 hours.
 4. Soak bamboo skewers in cold water for 1 hour before threading.
 5. Make a peanut sauce by whisking the peanut butter, soy sauce and water together in a small bowl. Set aside.
 6. Begin threading the chicken and allow for approximately 1 thigh per skewer. If the chicken thighs are big, 1/2 a thigh per skewer will suffice.
 7. Heat a cast iron griddle or grill on medium-high flame. Season the chicken with sea salt on all sides and grill.
 8. Serve with peanut sauce
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Quail Poppers

Quail legs are actually pretty easy to find in the frozen food section. This is a fairly simple recipe and they make an unusual appetizer for your next cocktail party. Note: make the Green Goddess Dressing at least 2 hours before serving.

Time 4 hrs: 3 hrs for brining, 1 hr prep

and cooking

- Quail legs – figure 4 – 8 per person depending on what else your serving
 - 2 Tbls sugar
 - 2 Tbls. salt
 - 1 quart water
 - Regular thickness bacon – 1/2 piece per leg
 - Jalapenos – stemmed, seeded and sliced lengthwise in 1/4 pieces
 - Green Goddess Dressing – see below
1. Dissolve the sugar and salt in the water and pour over the quail legs in a one gallon baggie. Refrigerate for 3 hours or over night.
 2. Preheat the oven to 350
 3. Remove the leg sections from the brine. Cut away the backbone if present so that you have leg/thigh sections. You can use these leg/thigh sections as is or you can remove the thigh bone and fold the thigh meat over the leg. It may seem like an extra step, but removing the thigh bone makes it easier to wrap it with bacon. If you want, use sharp kitchen scissors to remove the thigh bone.
 4. Lay a piece of jalapeno on each leg section and wrap with 1/2 piece of bacon. Place the wrapped legs on a foil lined baking sheet fitted with a rack
 5. Roast the legs for 30 – 40 minutes until the bacon is crisp and the legs are cooked through.
 6. Serve with the Green Goddess Dressing

Green Goddess Dressing

This is our version of the classic. You should adjust the herbs to align with your own taste preferences. Note that tarragon is the classic herb for this dressing. It will keep

in the refrigerator for 3 – 5 days.

- 1 – 2 oz. can anchovy fillets well drained
- 2 Tbls. Chopped shallot
- 1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley leaves coarsely chopped
- 3 Tbls. chopped fresh chives
- 3 Tbls. chopped mixed fresh herbs such as tarragon (classic), basil, thyme and/or oregano
- 3 Tbls. white wine vinegar
- 1 Tbls. lemon juice
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup sour cream
- Fresh ground black pepper to taste

1. Combine first 7 ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth
2. With the blender running, stream in the olive oil
3. In a mixing bowl, combine the contents of the blender with the sour cream and black pepper.
4. Allow to rest in the refrigerator for a couple of hours before serving.

Smoked Gouda-Chorizo Jalapeno Poppers

You can make up the filling and freeze it for later use.

Makes 24 jalapeno poppers

Ingredients:

- 2 links Mexican chorizo, casings removed
- 1/2 pound smoked gouda, shredded
- 1/4 cup finely chopped red onions

- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup cream cheese
- 3 tablespoons sour cream
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 12 large jalapeno peppers, stemmed, seeded and halved length wise

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Brown chorizo in a skillet over medium-high heat, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain and place into a large mixing bowl.
3. Add the cheese, red onion, egg, cream cheese, sour cream, hot sauce, and salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Press filling into jalapeno halves and assemble on a parchment lined baking sheet.
5. Bake until golden and bubbly, about 20 minutes.