

SIX YEARS OF

Mystery Dinners

LITERARY FEASTS FROM

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America
India
France
Italy
Spain

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STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY

641.5
Mystery

STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY
 Stonington, CT 06378

Stonington Free Library



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Stonington Free Library

20 High Street

PO Box 232

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www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org

Many thanks to Nan Jennigan Danforth for the cover design

<i>6/10</i>	DATE DUE		
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The *Mystery Dinner* began in 2009 with a \$10,000 hole in the Library budget and a request from Joyce Pandolfi, then the board chair, to Ruth Saunders, then development chair, to find a way to fill it.

Drawing on events in which we had each previously been involved, we suggested a "Mystery Dinner" to the Library board. Guests would have cocktails at the Library and dinner at a nearby house, and would only learn who their dinner hosts were at the cocktail party. Most of the Board quickly volunteered to act as dinner hosts, and their enthusiasm was typical of everyone else involved.

Making the idea work fell to a small committee of Chris Turrentine, Saren Langmann, Margaret Victoria, and Maris Frey, together with Joyce and Ruth. Thanks to the dinner hosts and the hors d'oeuvre chefs, almost all proceeds went directly to the Library. The late Mike Leahy, then a Library board member, connected the committee with the *West-erly Sun and The Day*, and the more than 120 tickets available sold out. Given the Library setting, the first party had a theme of "Great American Authors."

Events in Stonington typically draw on the talents and generosity of many in our community, and this was no exception. Others joined board members in hosting dinners. Jennifer Parsons provided a recipe for Jambalaya that was shared with all dinner hosts. Nan Jernigan crafted an invitation, Barbara Ginsberg brought her talents to planning hors d'oeuvres with Chris, and Denny Caruso worked magic on a tiny budget, framing blown-up photos of American writers to decorate the bookshelves.

In the thrifty spirit that characterizes these parties, we have reused these frames in decorating for every party since. Liz Wood and the Stonington Garden Club arranged flowers, Kathryn Burchenal helped in several ways, Patty Kitchings redid the outside planters, and Pam Ognisty took photos on the night. During the party itself drinks--particularly the signature cocktail, the "Mark Twain Twist," so named by Saren--were expertly served by Francis Pandolfi, John Turrentine and Jonathan White, while Kit Johnson provided the music. The Library was packed for the cocktail hour, and fifteen host homes opened their doors to dinner guests for the evening.

The feedback for that first party, run on a wing and a prayer, was so positive that it is now in its sixth year. The Library Mystery Dinner has become a tradition in Stonington because it not only raises much-needed funds for the Library, but at the same time introduces residents to new friends and neighbors and creates a wonderful sense of community.

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"I CELEBRATE MYSELF" — WALT WHITMAN



"FOOD IS OUR COMMON GROUND, A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE.—JAMES BEARD"

THE TRUSTEES OF
THE STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY
INVITE YOU TO

GREAT AMERICAN AUTHORS

Cocktails & Mystery Dinner Party

Saturday, April 25, 2009, at 6pm

Cocktails at the Library 6-7
Dinner to follow at one of our
elegant mystery homes

Find out at cocktails who your host will be!

\$75 per person

Cocktails and Dinner

RSVP BY APRIL 18TH
LIBRARY DINNER EVENT
PO BOX 232, STONINGTON, CT 06378
PLEASE ENCLOSE YOUR CHECK

Limited Seating, Reservations Required

BON APPETIT

"DON'T DRINK TO GET DRUNK. DRINK TO ENJOY LIFE." — JACK KEROUAC



Chicken and Sausage Jambalaya

SERVES 8

Prep time 30 minutes. Cook time 1 hour

- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 lb chicken, cubed
- 1 1/2 lb andouille or kielbasa, sliced
- 4 cups onions, chopped
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 1 T garlic, minced
- 4 cups long grain rice
- 5 cups chicken stock
- 3t salt
- 1 pinch cayenne, or to taste
- 1 cup scallions, chopped
- 1 cup parsley, chopped

Saute sausage in oil and remove. Season chicken with salt and pepper, sauté in oil until brown and remove. Saute onions, celery, green peppers and garlic until tender, taking care not to let them brown. Add sausage and chicken back to pot and simmer with vegetables for 5 minutes.

Add stock, bring to a boil and season with salt and cayenne pepper. Add rice and bring back to the boil. Cover and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook for 10 minutes and stir. Taste and adjust seasonings. Cook for another 20-25 minutes.

Finish with scallions and parsley.

Shrimp may be added if you wish.

Great American Authors Mystery Dinner Event a Resounding Success

On April 25, 2009, nearly 150 people gathered at the library for a party themed around great American authors. Planned by Ruth Saunders and her talented committee, the evening began at the Library, where cocktails and hors d'oeuvres were served from 6-7pm while attendees enjoyed live music by Kit Johnson and friends. Wonderfully decorated under the direction of Denny Caruso of DRC Interiors, with flowers by Liz Wood, Alice Groton and Margot Marston of the Stonington Garden Club, the main sitting area was transformed with artfully placed arrangements, votive candles, framed quotations and photographs of great American authors. Each drink glass was tagged with a famous quote, which became conversation starters throughout the room.

At the Library, guests were greeted with a note revealing the identity of their mystery dinner hosts. Great thanks are due to our dinner hosts for their generosity; Kathryn and David Burchenal, Barbara and Chris Dixon, Dorothy and Declan Doogan, Wendy and David Eck, Carole and David Enfield, Beth and Charles Harding, Deb Kotchen and Mike Leahy, Saren Langmann, Diana and Archie Leslie, Derick Nicholas, Anna Maria and Wright Palmer, Joyce and Francis Pandolfi, Ruth Saunders and Jonathan White, and co-hosts Patty Kitchings and Betty Richards.

This wonderful event was much more than a successful fundraiser. It was also a remarkably effective "friend-raiser," as most guests spent the evening spending time with old friends and getting acquainted with new friends, all under the umbrella of a shared support for our beautiful Library. We would like to thank all the many friends without whose help and participation the event would not have happened.



Welcoming attendees are Ruth Saunders (Committee Chair), Maris Frey, Margaret Victoria, & Joyce Pandolfi (President, Library Board of Trustees)

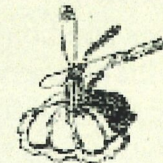
Enjoying cocktails and conversation, attendees filled the center reading area.

Providing background music are Kit Johnson (keyboard), Bill Mills (guitar) & James Hunter (bass).

"IF YOU'RE AFRAID OF BUTTER, USE CREAM" — JULIA CHILD



THE TRUSTEES OF
THE STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY
INVITE YOU TO



What's Cooking?

Cocktail & Mystery Dinner Party



Saturday, May 8, 2010 at 6pm



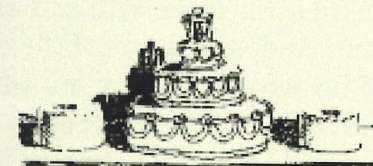
Cocktails at the Library 6-7
Dinner to follow at one of our
elegant mystery homes

Find out at cocktails who your host will be!

\$75 per person
Cocktails and Dinner

RSVP STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY
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TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE, PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK BY MAY 1ST
For further information call 860-535-0658

Space
is
Limited



Please
reply by
May 1st

"MY FAVORITE ANIMAL IS STEAK" —FRAN LEBOWITZ

"I COOK WITH WINE, SOMETIMES I EVEN ADD IT TO THE FOOD" —W.C. FIELDS

"TELL ME WHAT YOU EAT, AND I WILL TELL YOU WHAT YOU ARE" —BRILLIAT-SAVARIN

Coq Au Vin

Serves 6

Good olive oil

8 ounces good bacon or pancetta, diced

2 (3-4 lb) chickens, each cut into 8 serving pieces

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 yellow onions, sliced

2t chopped garlic (2 cloves)

1/4 cup Cognac or good brandy

1 (750ml) bottle good dry red wine such as Burgundy

2 cups chicken stock

1 bunch fresh thyme sprigs

4T unsalted butter, at room temperature, divided

3T all-purpose flour

1 lb frozen small whole onions

1 lb porcini or cremini mushrooms, stems removed and thickly sliced

Preheat oven to 275° F.

Heat 1T olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook for 8-10 minutes, until lightly browned. Remove the bacon to a plate with a slotted spoon.

Meanwhile, pat the chicken dry with paper towels. Liberally sprinkle the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper. After the bacon is removed, add a few of the chicken pieces in a single layer and brown for about 5 minutes, turning to brown evenly. Remove the chicken pieces to a plate with the bacon and continue to add the chicken in batches until all the chicken is browned. Set aside.

Add the onions, 1T salt, and 2t pepper to the pot and cook over medium heat for 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onions are lightly browned. Add the garlic and cook for 1 more minute. Add the Cognac, *stand back!*, and carefully ignite with a match to burn off the alcohol.

Put the bacon, chicken, and any juices that collect on the plate into the pot. Add the wine, chicken stock, and thyme sprigs and bring to a boil. Cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid and place in the oven for 30-40 minutes, until the chicken is just no longer pink. Remove from the oven and place on top of the stove.

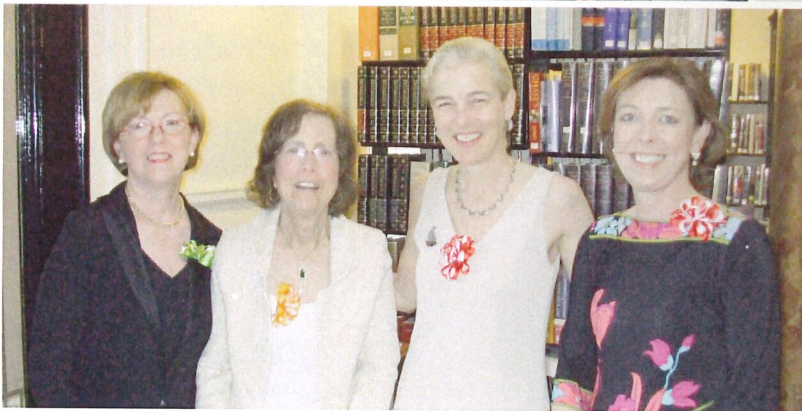
Mash 2T of the butter and the flour together in a small bowl and stir the paste into the stew. Add the frozen onions. In a medium saute pan, melt the remaining 2T butter and cook the mushrooms over medium-low heat for 5-10 minutes, until browned. Add to the stew. Bring the stew to a simmer and cook for another 10 minutes. Season to taste. Serve hot.

The Library's Second Annual Mystery Dinner a Resounding Success!

We are delighted to announce that this year's event raised over \$10,000.00 for the library, which is much needed due to the funding challenges facing the library in today's economy. Many thanks go out to the wonderful committee. Chaired by Ruth Saunders, the committee members include, Denny Caruso, Barbara Ginsberg, Chris Turrentine, Margot Marston (floral arrangements), Susan Clapp, Nan Danforth, Anne Fix, Maris Frey, Beth Harding, Janet Hatton, Saren Langmann, Amy Nicholas, Joyce Pandolfi, Clare Sheridan, Laurie Smith, Sue Verhoeff, and Margaret Victoria. We are also grateful to our twenty hosts and hostesses for their generous hospitality. Once again, this was a fun event that brought us together with the common goal of supporting the Library.

*Top photo from left to right:
David Clapp and Frances Pandolfi*

*Bottom photo from left to right:
Joyce Pandolfi, Saren Langmann,
Janet Hatton & Ruth Saunders*



THE TRUSTEES OF
THE STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY
INVITE YOU TO EMBARK ON

A Passage to India

COCKTAILS FOLLOWED BY
MYSTERY-DINNER PARTIES

Saturday, April 2, 2011 at 6 pm
Cocktails at the Library 6-7

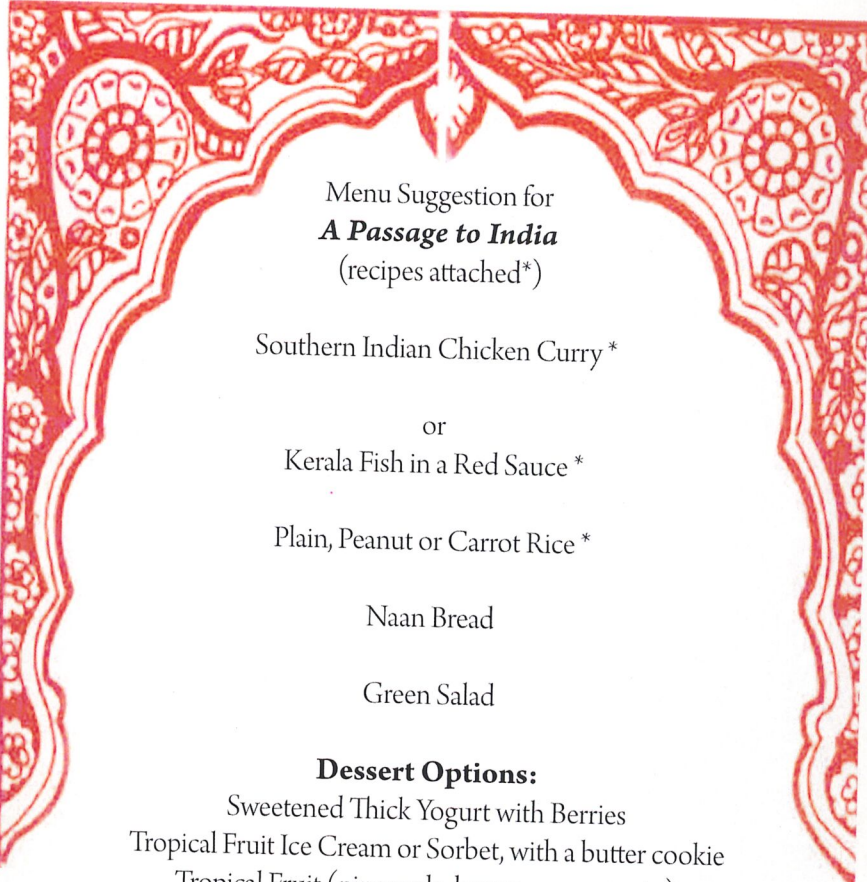
*Dinner to follow at one of
our mystery homes*

*Find out at cocktails who your
host will be!*

\$75 per person
Cocktails and Dinner

TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE, PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK BY MARCH 22
TO STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY, PO BOX 232, STONINGTON, CT 06378
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL 860-535-0658

Space is limited. *Please reply by March 22.*



Menu Suggestion for
A Passage to India
(recipes attached*)

Southern Indian Chicken Curry *

or

Kerala Fish in a Red Sauce *

Plain, Peanut or Carrot Rice *

Naan Bread

Green Salad

Dessert Options:

Sweetened Thick Yogurt with Berries
Tropical Fruit Ice Cream or Sorbet, with a butter cookie
Tropical Fruit (pineapple, banana, mango, etc.)
Almond or Sponge Cake
or Dessert of your choice

Suggested Wine:

Shiraz, Rose, or Pinot Noir... Beer also goes well
(if you offer a white wine, try Riesling, Gewurztraminer or Pinot Grigio)

Both of the entrée recipes are mild, tomato-based dishes, take about an hour to make, and can be made mostly in advance. As suggested above, they are best served with rice and warm Naan bread, which is available from most grocery stores (or Raj).

Kerala Fish in a Red Sauce

Serves 4

2T vegetable oil
1 1/2 cups thinly sliced red onions
1 1/2t minced garlic
1 1/2t minced ginger
10-12 fresh curry leaves

Ground masala:

3t ground coriander
1/4t Kashmiri chili powder (or cayenne)
1/4t tumeric

1/4t fenugreek seeds, finely ground (in coffee grinder or mini food processor)

1 1/2 cups canned diced tomatoes with juice

1 1/2t salt

1/2 cup water

1 1/4 lbs (approx) skinned cod or haddock cut in 2inch pieces

1T coconut oil (optional)

Chopped coriander to garnish (optional)

In a wide pan (large enough to hold the fish in a single layer), heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onions and saute until the edges begin to brown. Add the garlic, ginger, and curry leaves and fry for 1 minute. Stir in the ground masala and fenugreek and fry briefly. Add the tomatoes and salt and continue cooking until the mixture forms a paste and the tomatoes have broken down (about 10-15 minutes).

When ready to serve, return sauce to the pan, add 1/2 cup of water and bring to a boil. Place the fish pieces in the pan in a single layer and spoon the sauce over them. Return to a boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for about 8-10 minutes or until the fish is flaky in the thickest part. Drizzle with the coconut oil (if using) and carefully transfer to a serving dish (or individual plates). Top with herbs.

Serve over rice.

Southern Indian Chicken Curry

Serves 4

3T ghee or vegetable oil
3 cardamom pods
1t fennel seeds
1 2inch piece of cinnamon stick or bark
1t cumin seeds
2 medium onions, diced
1t garlic
1t ginger
1t ground tumeric
4 chicken legs, on the bone but skinned
2/3 cup coconut milk
1 1/2T garam masala
1 1/3 cups canned, diced tomatoes with juice
1T tamarind concentrate
Salt to taste (about 1 1/2t)
Chopped coriander or parsley to garnish

Heat the oil in a large frying pan, then add the cardemon, cinnamon, fennel, and cumin seeds. Fry for about 2 minutes until fragrant. Add the diced onions and cook until wilted.

Reduce heat and add garlic and ginger and saute for 2-3 minutes. Watch that it doesn't burn. Add tumeric, chicken, garam masala, tomatoes, and coconut milk and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat, stir thoroughly, and cover. Simmer until the chicken is cook through and the sauce has thickened, about 20-25 minutes. Add tamarind paste and salt. Taste and adjust as needed. (cinnamon stick and cardamom pods can be removed before serving).

Garnish with herbs just prior to serving. Serve over rice.

Peanut Rice

Serves 4

2 1/4 cups water
1/2t ground turmeric
1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup roasted peanuts
1/2t salt
1/2 cup frozen peas

Bring water to boil in a medium saucepan. Add rice, salt, and turmeric. Cover, reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat.

Stir in peanuts and peas.

Carrot Rice

Serves 4

3T vegetable oil
2 cups grated carrots
1T ghee or butter
2 cups water
3-4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
salt to taste
1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained
1 cup frozen peas
1/4t turmeric
1/2 cup roasted cashews

Heat oil and ghee/butter in saucepan. Add garlic and saute until light brown. Add rice and stir well. Cook for about 5 minutes or until brown, stirring frequently. Stir in turmeric and carrots and saute over medium heat for about 5 minutes.

Add water and salt and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook covered for 15-20 minutes until rice is almost tender. Stir in peas and cook until rice is tender, stirring occasionally.

Sprinkle with cashews and serve hot.

Easy Almond Cake

Serves 10-12

1-2T melted butter
6oz unsalted butter, softened
1 cup caster sugar
4 large eggs
1-2/3 cups ground almonds
1/2 cup plain flour, sifted
1/4 t almond flavoring
1-2 T sifted icing sugar, to decorate

Preheat oven to 350 ° F.

Brush a 9 inch cake tin with the melted butter and line with parchment paper. Brush paper with butter and lightly coat with flour.

In a large bowl or food processor, beat the butter until smooth, then gradually beat in sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time, then gradually beat in the almonds. When it is all well mixed, fold in the flour and add the almond flavoring. Transfer the mixture to the cake tin and tap the tin on the work surface to ensure even distribution.

Place tin on a baking sheet and place in preheated oven for about 35 minutes until the cake is firm to the touch in the middle. Remove and cool on a wire rack.

Once the cake is cooled remove from tin and dust with powdered sugar if desired.

MYSTERY DINNER A DELICIOUS SUCCESS

Flickering candles and brilliant pink and orange textiles greeted guests as they arrived for the third annual Stonington Free Library Mystery Dinner, "A Passage to India."

Once inside, guests were greeted by hostesses wearing traditional saris and were given "the envelope" containing the identity of their mystery host for one of eighteen dinner parties taking place that evening. The library interior was transformed-- a splendid pink archway; displays of tropical fruit and flowers, candles, and draped saris in glowing shades of yellow and orange.

Delicious hors d'oeuvres were accompanied by a refreshing "Bombay Breeze." Dinner featured authentic Indian dishes with wonderfully complex combinations of spices and flavorings. Hosts took inspiration from the evening's theme and created beautiful table settings. All the elements combined to create a wonderful, convivial evening in support of the library.

"Thank you" to Co-chairs Janet Hatton and Ruth Saunders and their Dinner Committee: Ann Buffum; Susie Clapp; Nan Jernigan Danforth; Anne Fix; Maris Frey; Barbara Ginsberg; Saren Langmann; Joyce Pandolfi; Clare Sheridan; Christine Turrentine; Margaret Victoria; and Alejandra Welch.



"Thank you," also, to the eighteen hosts who made the evening such a memorable and successful occasion: Pam and Jim Alexander; Lisa and Scott Bates; Ann and Charlie Buffum; Kathryn and David Burchenal; Lynn and Jeff Callahan; Barbara and Christopher Dixon; Sandy and Howard Fromsen; Janet Hatton and Mollie Burton; Alice Houston; Lucia and Rodney Johnstone; Ann and Spike Lobdell; Emily Lynch and Sibby Lynch and Michael Schefers; Joyce and Francis Pandolfi; Jane and Tony Pellegrini; Cheryl and Dave Purvis; Ruth Saunders and Jonathan White; Martha Snyder; and Sally and Donald Vail.



THE TRUSTEES OF THE STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY INVITE YOU TO

DINNER on the ORIENT EXPRESS



Cocktails at the Library 6-7
Dinner to follow at one of our mystery homes
Find out at cocktails who your host will be!

For further information call
860-535-0658

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY



Suggested Menu
(recipes attached*)

Chicken with Morels *

Asparagus or Haricots Verts (thin green beans)

Rice Pilaf or Potatoes

French Bread
(the sauce needs something to soak it up!)

Green Salad (if desired)

Dessert Options:

Tarte au Citron *

or

Petit Pots au Chocolat *

(Fresh berries can be added to either or served
with cream)

Chicken with Morels

Serves 6

- 1 oz dried morels, soaked in 2 cups of hot water for 30 minutes *
- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (cut into smaller serving pieces)
- 1t salt
- 1t freshly ground black pepper
- All purpose flour
- 1/4 cup clarified butter **
- 1/3 cup chopped shallots (about 2 large)
- 1T minced garlic (about 3 cloves)
- 1 cup Madeira wine ***
- 8 oz crème fraiche ****
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2T freshly squeezed lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 375 ° F.

Drain and rinse the morels carefully, dry them and set aside.

Sprinkle the chicken breasts with salt and pepper, then dredge them in flour and shake off the excess. Heat half of the butter in a large sauté pan and cook the chicken in batches over medium low heat until browned on both sides about 8 minutes. Remove to an ovenproof casserole.

Add the rest of the butter along with the shallots, morels and garlic. Sauté over medium heat for a few minutes stirring constantly. Pour in the Maderia and reduce the liquid by half over high heat, about 4 minutes. Add the crème fraiche, cream, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Pour the sauce over the chicken and bake for 12 minutes until the chicken is heated through. To make ahead, store in the refrigerator and then reheat in the oven until hot. It can also be reheated on the stove top. There is a fair amount of sauce to this.

* Dried morel mushrooms cost about \$12.99 per 1/2 oz packet. I used 1/2 oz thinly sliced. Good results are also had using about 1 1/2 cups of sliced cremini or baby bella mushrooms.

**Regular butter works fine in this recipe

***Madeira wine can be found at Cask and Keg, Mystic

****Crème fraiche should be used and really makes this sauce splendid. It is found at most food stores.

Chocolate Pots (petite pots au chocolat)

Serves 6

1/2 pint (300 ml) heavy cream
1/2 split vanilla bean pod
7 oz (200 g) dark chocolate (like Lindt 70%), broken into pieces
1 large egg
Pinch salt
2 T Cointreau or orange liquor

Heat cream and vanilla pod gently. When almost boiling remove from heat and lift out pod.

Pour the cream over the chunked chocolate in a mixing bowl and stir until the chocolate melts. Add egg, salt and Cointreau and mix thoroughly.

Pour into 6 small pots and chill for at least an hour before serving.

Can be made the day before.

Tarte au Citron Lemon Tart.

3 large eggs
3 large egg yolks
1/2 cup of sugar
Zest of 1 lemon
3/4 cup lemon juice (about 4 lemons)
3/4 cup heavy cream
1 par-baked 9 inch flaky tart crust
(our recipe or your favorite!)

Preheat oven to 350°F with one rack in the center.

Whisk eggs and yolks together in a medium bowl. Add the sugar with one hand while whisking with the other. Still whisking, pour in the lemon zest and juice, then cream. Pour this lemon custard into your par-baked tart shell. It should come to 1/8 inch from the top edge of the tart.

Leftover custard can be baked in a small ramekin.

Place the tart on the center rack (I put a baking sheet underneath my pan) taking care not to spill. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until firm to the touch and doesn't wiggle when you shake the pan.

Remove the tart from the oven, cool on a wire rack. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Can be made a day ahead

Flaky Tart Crust (Pate Sucee)

1 ¼ cups unbleached all purpose flour
½ t sugar
½ t salt
5T chilled unsalted butter cut in pieces
2T solid vegetable shortening
3T ice water

9 inch tart pan (fluted sides with removable bottom)

Put the flour, sugar and salt in a food processor with a metal blade and pulse to mix. Add the butter and shortening all at once and pulse 5 to 10 times until the mixture forms little balls and no chunks of butter remain. Do not over process.

Dump the crumbs into a big bowl and sprinkle a tablespoon of water over the crumbs. Repeat with one more tablespoon of water. Use your hands or a wooden spoon to bring the dough together. Add more water if you have to, a little at a time. The dough should be just past crumbly and just barely coming together. You don't want it to be so wet that it sticks together and turns white. Turn the dough onto plastic wrap and form into a disk. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before rolling it out.

Preheat oven to 400°F and position a rack in the middle.

Roll the dough out to about 3/8 inch thick and fit into the tart pan. Prick holes in the tart dough with a fork. Line with parchment paper or aluminum foil and weigh it with pie weights or dried beans. Place on the center rack and back for 10 minutes. Remove from oven, remove paper and weights and return the tart shell to the oven for another 5 minutes. Remove and cool on a rack.

The Stonington Free Library Mystery Dinner, April 28, 2012

Dinner on The Orient Express



All Aboard *Dazzling Sets* *The Star-Strudded Cast Begins To Arrive . . .*



And Arrive . . . *And Arrive . . .* *Lives Thrown Together by Fate*

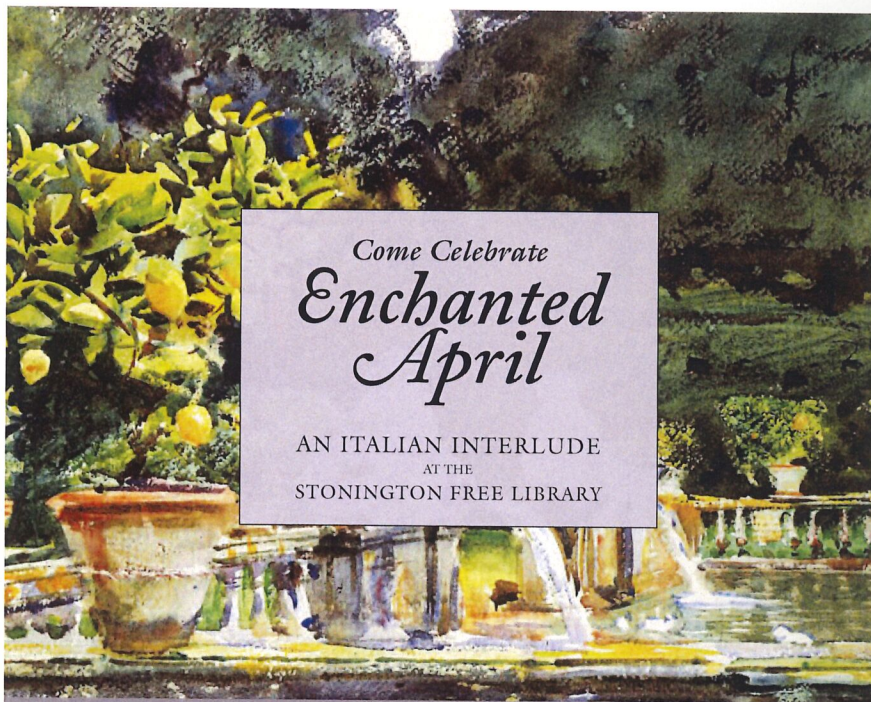


The Plot Set Amidst The Elegance of The Finest Intercontinental Service *One Hundred Strangers Hurting toward An Unknown . . .* *. . . Destination—One of 17, with Special Thanks to The Hosts:*

*Pam and Jim Alexander
Mollie Burton and Henri Gourd
Lynn and Jeff Callahan
Lois and Richard Cole
Anne Fitz and Kevin Bowdler
Sandy and Howard Fromson
Alice and John Groton
Beth and Charles Harding
Eileen and Peter Jachym
Deb Kotchen and Michael Leahy
Emily and Sibby Lynch, Michael Schefers
Anne Maria and Wright Palmer
Jane and Anthony Pellegrini
Bev and Geoff Phillips
Julia and Mike Roberts
Sally and Donald Vail
Vivie von Walstrom and Rick Farmer*



We Salute The Producers



Come Celebrate
**Enchanted
April**
AN ITALIAN INTERLUDE
AT THE
STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY

Saturday, April 27

Cocktails at the Library 6-7

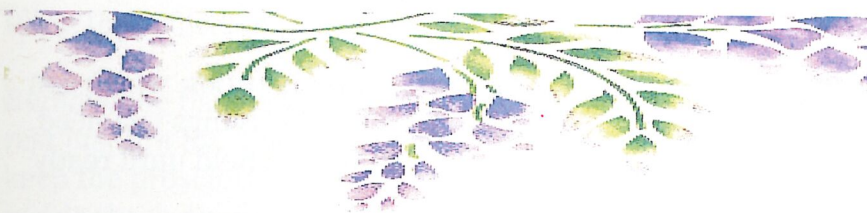
*Dinner to follow at one of our mystery homes
Find out at cocktails who your host will be!*

**\$80 per person
Cocktails and Dinner**

TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE, PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK BY APRIL 16
TO STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY, PO BOX 232, STONINGTON, CT 06378
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL 860-535-0658

SPACE IS LIMITED

PLEASE REPLY BY APRIL 16th!



Enchanted April

AN ITALIAN INTERLUDE

Suggested Dinner Menu for 27 April 2013

Primi

A light pasta or spring type soup (if you wish)

Secondi

Arista (Roast Pork Loin) or Monkfish wraps
or similar

Contorni/Salad

Vegetable (asparagus, peas, fennel, broccoli rabe etc)
Salad (arugala, radicchio, romaine etc)

Dessert

Vin Santo and Biscotti

Almond Cake or Crostata di Marmellata
Fresh Fruit Salad/Gelato-Sorbetto
Gorgonzola and Walnuts with bread/crackers

Please contact us with any questions or concerns, Buon Appetito!

Monkfish Wraps

This recipe is more of an indication of quantities, which can be adjusted depending on the number of servings you need. The fish can be wrapped ahead of time and held until ready to bake.

For about 4 servings:

1 1/4 pounds monkfish fillets (halibut can also be used to good effect)
3-4 sprigs fresh rosemary, leaves stripped and chopped
Zest of one unwaxed lemon
6 oz prosciutto thinly sliced (domestic prosciutto works best here)
2T olive oil
1 head of radicchio, leaves separated
Splash of extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice to serve

Preheat oven to 425° F.

Pat the rosemary and lemon zest onto the fish; the dampness of the fish should allow it to stick. Wrap the prosciutto around the fish; just drape it over and tuck the ends under. The aim is to cover at least the top and ends.*

Drizzle a small amount of olive oil in a shallow roasting tin and place the fish on it. Roast for 15 minutes until the fish is just cooked.

Place the radicchio leaves on a serving platter.

Remove the fish from the tin and place on a board to let it rest just briefly. Carve the fish into chunky slices, trying to keep the prosciutto in place as best you can. Place the fish inside the radicchio cups, drizzle with lemon juice and olive oil, if desired, and serve.

* You can also prepare this by slicing the fish into serving size pieces and wrap them each individually with prosciutto, if you prefer.

Arista Italian Pork Roast

Serves 6

1 boneless pork loin, about 3 pounds
1 yellow onion, minced
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs, crisped in 2T extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup (2oz) grated parmigiano reggiano
7T extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup red wine
1/2 cup torn basil leaves
1/2 cup flat leaf parsley, minced
2T fresh thyme or 1t dried
3T minced fresh rosemary or 1 1/2t dried
3T fennel seeds
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 lemon zested
1/2t ground pepper

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Just before cooking, combine in a medium bowl the onions, breadcrumbs, parmigiano, 5T olive oil, red wine, basil, parsley, thyme, rosemary, fennel seeds, garlic, lemon zest, salt and pepper.

Slice a pocket in the pork loin and stuff half the mixture in it. Tie with kitchen twine in 4 or 5 places.

In a heavy 8 quart Dutch oven, heat the remaining 2T olive oil and sear the pork over medium high heat until browned; about 4 minutes per side.

Top with remaining stuffing mixture and roast in the oven uncovered for about 1 hour. The internal temperature should be 150°F and the top crispy brown.

Allow to rest for 15 minutes before carving

Radicchio Salad with Oranges and Olives

Serves 6 to 8

3 oranges
2T Sherry wine vinegar
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 cups (loosely packed) mâche or other mixed greens
1 large head of frisee, halved, torn into pieces (about 6 cups loosely packed)
1 large head of radicchio, halved, torn into pieces (about 5 cups loosely packed)
1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced (about 2 cups)
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted, halved
4 ounces feta cheese, crumbled

Cut, peel, and white pith from oranges. Working over a small bowl, and using a small, sharp knife, cut between membranes to release segments. Squeeze membranes to release juice. Combine 1/4 cup orange juice and vinegar in a small bowl (reserve remaining juice for another use). Whisk in olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Toss mâche, frisee, and radicchio in a large bowl. Add orange segments, sliced red onions, and Kalamata olives. Drizzle orange dressing over salad and toss well to coat. Sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese and serve.

Crostata di Marmelata

Makes one 9 inch tart

For the pasta frolla (pastry)

2 cups all purpose flour

1/2 cup sugar

Salt

14 T (1 3/4 sticks) cold unsalted butter, cut into pieces

1 large egg

1t vanilla extract

1 12-13 oz jar Marmalade (orange, apricot are good)

Heat oven to 350 ° F.

Put the flour, sugar, pinch of salt and butter in a food processor. Pulse 6-7 times, then process for about 10 seconds. The mixture should be the texture of cornmeal. Add the egg and vanilla, pulse a few times, and then process until the dough forms a ball. You may need to alternate between processing and pulsing, but keep going.

Dump the dough out on a lightly floured counter and knead in any stray bits. Divide into 2 pieces, one slightly larger than the other. Roll the larger piece into a 10-11 inch circle and fit it into a 9 inch tart pan with a removable bottom.

Roll the second piece of pastry into a 10 inch circle and cut into 10 strips. If you have a problem rolling the pastry wrap it in plastic wrap to roll or place in refrigerator for about 20 minutes.

Spoon the marmalade into the tart shell and spread it evenly. Make a simple lattice top, arranging 5 strips running top to bottom across the filling and the other 5 strips running side to side. Pinch off all the pieces hanging over the edge. Brush the pastry with an egg wash (egg mixed with a small amount of water).

Bake 40-45 minutes (place the tart pan on a baking sheet to keep it from leaking onto the oven floor). The crostata should be a deep golden brown and the fruit should be bubbling. Let the crostata sit for an hour before serving.

The Librarian

Newspaper of the Stonington Free Library

Summer 2013 Issue

5TH ANNUAL MYSTERY DINNER SETS RECORDS, JUDGED "BELLISSIMA!"

By Lisa Cole, Vice President, Board of Trustees

Stepping across the Library's entrance threshold, guests at this year's "Mystery Dinner" left behind the bracing freshness of a New England spring and entered the "Enchanted April" of Italy's Amalfi Coast.

Photos By John Turventine



Wisteria sprang miraculously from the archway in the main hall and olive trees flourished just beyond. Neapolitan songs were heard in the background. Brilliant white draperies set off large floral arrangements in the intense, vibrant colors of the South.



Baristas dispensed refreshing drinks from underneath large white shade umbrellas.



While elegantly dressed hostesses circulated with trays of delicious Italian hors d'oeuvres.



The warm and colorful atmosphere was the perfect backdrop to the beginning of an evening of delicious food, fine wine, and good conversation, all in support of the Stonington Free Library. Bellissima!



Also bellissima, according to co-chairs Anne Fix and Chris Turventine, were the numbers: number of guests set a record; number of hosts did, too, as did the proceeds. All in all, un brillante successo, with thanks to everyone and special thanks to the hosts:

Lisa and Scott Bates
 Shirley Beal
 Mollie Burton
 Lynn and Jeff Callahan
 Lois and Richard Cole
 Dudley and Michael Del Balso
 Barbara and Chris Dixon
 Sandy and Howard Fromson
 Helen Garten and Michael Wiseman
 Barbara and Marc Ginsberg
 Alice and John Groton
 Ann and Spike Lobdell
 Virginia and Bob Montgomery
 Meg Raffis and Stillman Brown
 Sally and Don Vail
 Vivia Von Walstrom and Richard Farmer
 Liz and Bob Wood
 Sally and Clem Wood

THE STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY PRESENTS

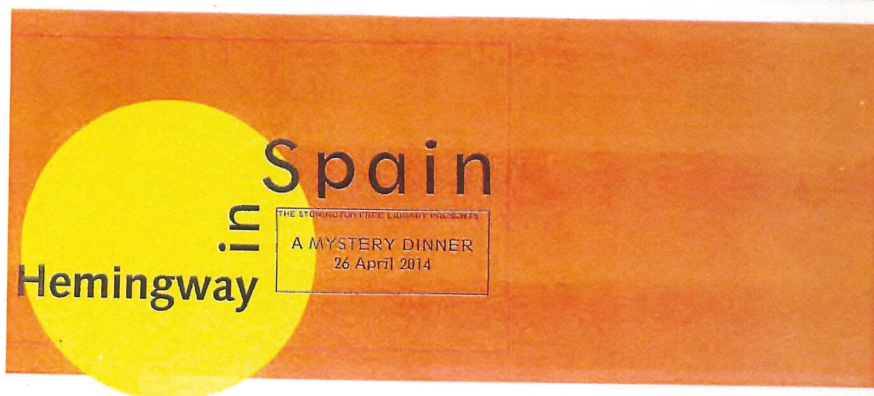
A MYSTERY DINNER

26 April 2014

at 6:00

Spain
 in
 Hemingway

Space is limited
 Please reserve by
 April 16th



Starter

Pea Soup with Serrano Ham or light spring soup (if you wish)

Entrée

Paella, Braised Basque Chicken, Chillindron Stew

(or similar)

Sides

(depending on the main)

Spring vegetables, rice, salad

Dessert

Crema Catalan, Clementine Cake

(or similar, often fresh fruit is the preferred option)

We have found a large selection of imported Spanish hams and cheeses at BJ's and the Big Y! Cask and Keg offer a variety of Spanish Wines and Sherries.

Please let us know if you have any questions, Salud!

Pea Soup with Serrano Ham

Serves 4

2T extra virgin olive oil
 1 banana shallot, diced
 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
 4 cups chicken broth or stock
 2 lbs frozen peas (baby peas or petit pois are best)
 1 small sprig of mint, leaves only
 Sea salt
 Freshly ground pepper
 4 thin slices of baguette
 2 thin slices of Serrano ham, cut in half horizontally
 Extra virgin olive oil for drizzling (optional)

Heat olive oil in heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Sauté the shallot until translucent. Add garlic and sauté gently until soft and golden. Pour in the chicken broth, bring to a boil, and add peas. Bring back to a simmer; simmer for 4 minutes.

While the soup is bubbling, heat a griddle pan or broiler. Lightly brush both sides of baguette slices with olive oil and grill or broil just until crisp and golden, turning once. Lay ham slices on griddle or broiler pan and cook until crisp, turning as necessary. Drain crisp ham on paper towels to blot.

Take the soup off the heat and stir in the mint leaves. Use a hand blender to blitz the mixture to a smooth puree. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Ladle the soup into warm bowls, and top with a drizzle of olive oil, if desired. Top bread slices with crisp ham and serve on top of soup.

Braised Basque Chicken with Tomatoes and Paprika

Serves 4-6

4 oz Spanish chorizo, sliced 1/4 inch thick
3 lbs chicken thighs and breasts on the bone with skin
2T olive oil
Salt and pepper
2 red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and cut into 1/2 inch strips
2 small red onions or 1 large Spanish onion
6 garlic cloves thinly sliced
2 sprigs fresh thyme
3/4 cup dry Manzanilla sherry
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
2t sweet paprika
3/4t crushed red pepper flakes
Handful fresh basil, thinly sliced, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Heat olive oil in a large ovenproof pan over medium heat and add the chorizo. Cook, stirring occasionally, until chorizo starts to brown. Remove chorizo with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

Season the chicken thighs and breasts with salt and pepper on both sides. Add the chicken pieces to the skillet and brown on both sides, about 10 minutes total. Remove the pieces and set aside.

Remove all but 2T of fat in the skillet. Add the bell peppers, onions, garlic, and thyme. Season with salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are soft, about 5 minutes. Add the sherry, tomatoes, paprika, and red pepper flakes. Stir well to dislodge any browned bits and simmer for 1 minute.

Nestle the thighs in the skillet (you'll add the breasts later) and add the cooked chorizo. Cover the skillet and place in the oven. Cook for 20 minutes, and then flip the thighs, and add the breast pieces. Cover and return to oven until the chicken pieces are completely cooked, 20-25 minutes. To further crisp the skin during the last 5 minutes, uncover the skillet and increase the over to 400°F. Add salt and pepper to taste and garnish with basil. Serve.

Valencia-Style Paella

Serves 10

8 chicken thighs, skinned and boned, cut into 2 inch pieces (approximately 3 lbs with skin/bones; 1 3/4 lbs skinless, boneless)
8 oz Spanish chorizo, sliced 1/4 inch thick and cut into half moons
1 lb shrimp (20 count), shelled and deveined
18 cherrystone or other small clams, scrubbed
5 1/2 cups chicken stock or broth
1/2 cup dry white wine
3 red bell peppers, chopped (or 2 if very large)
1t saffron
3 large tomatoes, peeled or chopped, or 6 canned
6T olive oil
2 cups rice, Bomba or Calasparra preferred, or Arborio
2t smoked sweet paprika
3 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
4 yellow onions, chopped
2 cups frozen baby peas (optional)
2 bay leaves
2-3 roasted piquillo peppers, cut in thin strips
2t salt
Lemon wedges and chopped parsley for garnish

Heat oven to 325° F.

Combine chicken stock, wine, saffron, and smoked paprika in a saucepan and bring to a simmer.

Pat chicken pieces dry and season well with salt and pepper. Pour 2T olive oil into a 17 inch paella pan over medium heat until translucent (about 5 minutes).

Add the bell peppers, chorizo and garlic and cook for a few more minutes, stirring.

Add rice and stir to coat with the oil, and saute until rice starts to look a bit translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add tomatoes and stir.

Add 6 cups of boiling broth mixture, reserving remainder.

Stir the rice around until evenly distributed, and add salt.

Put the chicken pieces back in the pan, partially submerged.

Bring to a boil over high heat and cook uncovered for about 10 minutes. Do not stir!

Push shrimp and clams partway into the rice mixture, making sure that the edges of the clams that will open are facing up. Put the pan into the pre-heated oven and bake, uncovered, for 15-25 minutes. When done, shrimp should be pink and firm, clams should be open (discard any that don't open), and broth should be absorbed. Add reserved stock if mixture seems too dry.

Remove from oven, sprinkle with green peas if desired, and cover lightly with foil to rest on stovetop for 10 minutes. To serve, garnish with thin strips of piquillo pepper, chopped parsley, and lemon wedges.

Spanish Chilindron Stew

Serves 8

1/4 cup olive oil
3 lbs lamb, chicken, pheasant or venison in serving pieces
2 large onions sliced in half moons
10 cloves chopped garlic
1/2 cup diced chorizo
2 cups red or white wine
1 cup crushed tomatoes
1 15 oz jar or 5 roasted sweet red peppers, chopped
2T sweet paprika
1T hot paprika
1T chopped fresh rosemary
4 bay leaves
Stock, if needed.
(beef or chicken depending on choice of meat)
1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
Salt and pepper

Salt the meat and set aside for 10-20 minutes at room temperature. Use this time to chop the vegetables.

Pat the meat dry and heat olive oil in a heavy pot with a lid over medium high heat. Without overcrowding, brown the meat on all sides in batches. Set the meat aside when browned.

Add the onions and stir to bring up some browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle the onions with a little salt and cook until they begin to brown.

Add the garlic and chorizo. Cook until fragrant, then add the meat back to the pot and mix well.

Pour in the wine and turn up the heat to high, stirring until the wine is reduced by half.

Turn the heat down to medium and add the tomatoes, roasted red peppers and all the spices except for the parsley. Stir well.

The level of liquid should be 2/3 up the sides of the meat. If it is low, add stock.

Cover and cook at a bare simmer until done, or place in oven, covered, at 325° F.

If using chicken, test for doneness in about an hour.

Depending upon size of serving pieces, lamb can take 2 to 3 hours.

Before serving, salt and pepper to taste, add the parsley and stir well.

Serve with mashed potatoes, rice, polenta, or bread.

Clementine Cake

Serves 8-10

13 oz clementines (approximately 3 medium or 5 large) or equal weight of tangerines or oranges

6 large eggs

1 1/4 cups granulated sugar

2 1/4 cups almond flour

1t baking powder

Put the clementines in a pan of cold water, bring to a boil, and cook for 2 hours. If water gets low, add more. Drain, cool and cut each Clementine in half and remove the seeds. Place cut clementines in the bowl of a food processor and process for a few seconds until fairly smooth but with visible bits of skin.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter and line an 8 inch springform pan with parchment paper. In a mixer, beat the eggs. Gradually add sugar, almond flour and baking powder, mixing well. Add the clementine mixture and mix again.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for about an hour or when a skewer comes out clean. After it has baked 40 minutes, cover it with foil to prevent over browning. Remove from oven and let cool on rack. Remove from pan when cake is cold. May be glazed with a mixture of powdered sugar and lemon juice, or just dusted with powdered sugar before serving.

Crema Catalana

Serves 6-8 depending on dish size

6 egg yolks

3/4 cup sugar plus 1/4 cup

4 cups milk

Grated zest of one lemon

1 2inch long piece of a cinnamon stick

3T cornstarch

In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks with 3/4 cup of the sugar. Combine 3 cups of milk in a pan with the lemon zest and cinnamon stick. Bring it to a boil, then remove from the heat. Strain the milk and whisk it into the beaten egg yolks.

Stir the remaining 1 cup of milk and cornstarch together in a small bowl until smooth. Stir it into the custard mixture.

Pour the custard into a clean saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until it just begins to bubble. Remove from the heat and divide among 6 shallow pudding dishes or ramekins. (4oz ones yield 8 servings). The pudding can be made up to 24 hours in advance and refrigerated. But bring them back to room temperature before continuing.

Shortly before serving, sprinkle the tops of the custards with the remaining 1/4 cup sugar. Carmelize the tops with a kitchen blowtorch.

Stonington Free Library Mystery Dinner 2014

On Saturday, April 26, the Café Misterioso opened its doors to a sell out crowd. The Library had become a charming Spanish café! The sixth Mystery Dinner, "Hemingway in Spain" was off to a roaring start.

Guests, many in Spanish attire, entered through the front door hung with a Spanish flag and flanked by miniature orange trees. They were met with Spanish guitar music and chilled rebojitos. They picked up an envelope which told them where they were dining and directions to get there. Then they proceeded into the café where dashing bartenders served Spanish beer, white wine and sparkling water. Glamorous señoritas circulated with tapas style hors d'oeuvres.

At 7:00 pm the guests left the café and went on to Spanish inspired dinners at 17 very generous host homes: Frances Ashley with Denis Palmer and Gerry Klender, Lisa and Scott Bates, Lynn and Jeff Callahan, Kathy and Tig Conger, Dorothy and Dec Doogan, Helen Garten and Michael Wiseman, Geraldine Griffin with Josh and Alejandra Welch, Allegra and Brian Griffiths, Alice and John Groton, Ann and Spike Lobdell, Kate and Tim Love, Susan and Harry Martin, Caroline and Scott Muller, Joyce and Francis Pandolfi, Jane and Tony Pellegrini, Cheryl and Dave Purvis, Kim and Mark Spano. All this magic happened through the hard work of a very talented, enthusiastic committee chaired by Chris Turrentine and Anne Fix, with Sibby Lynch providing the creative genius behind the miraculous transformation.

As with all things magical, the Café Misterioso and the little corner of Spain disappeared and our wonderful library was back in business on Monday morning.



Janet Hatton welcomes guests to "Café Misterioso"



David Black at his most Spanish



Dinner was as elegant as it looks



If you're going to have a theme like "Hemingway in Spain" you'd better have a pretty big bar



Patrons crowd into Café Misterioso, enjoying Spanish beer and wine and tapas style hors d'oeuvres



The two señoritas in charge of making the magic happen: Chris Turrentine & Anne Fix



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