

What's Cookin': Blue crab special

Olivier, Michael and I just returned from a holiday in Florida— haven't been there in years, and we had a great time!

I've got a couple of travelling stories for you, but since many of you will be taking off soon or have already taken off for the same destination, I wanted to tell you about one of our favorite restaurant finds in the hopes that maybe you'll enjoy it too.

It was a tiny little place, a kind of run-down house actually. It's called Peace River Seafood. You'll find it on Hwy 17 just outside Punta Gorda, about 1 km east of I-75. This place is a restaurant, retailer and wholesaler of seafood. Very casual— wear your shorts and sandals!

We were driving along Hwy 17, on our way to Naples and we were starving— thought we might stop in Port Charlotte for some lunch, when we drove by this place. The reason it caught my eye was that it had a big sign out front advertising "All you can eat blue crabs \$20", plus the parking area/driveway/lawn was jammed with cars. So, we did a quick U-turn and pulled in.

It was a beautiful warm day, so we sat on the patio at a picnic table and pro-

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



ceeded to order the blue crab special. We laughed and laughed as we ploughed our way through a couple of buckets of these little guys, drank a couple of beers and had a wonderful time.

All around us people were ordering catfish, shrimps, oysters, you name it and every plate I saw looked great. It was one of the best meals of our holiday and I'd go back in a flash. If you are in the neighborhood, give it a try!

As for the recipe for today, Gerry and I will have you ready for Easter in three weeks. This week, you've got a great little vegetable dish— easy to make and can be mostly prepared in advance.

Then, over the next two weeks, we'll show you the potatoes and lamb. Then you'll be ready to go for the big meal.

Have fun and keep cooking!

Email questions and comments to Lori and Gerry at whatscooking@theifp.ca

Asparagus, Snow Peas and Green Beans

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 bunch asparagus
- 2 handfuls green beans
- 1 handful snow peas
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 shallot, minced fine
- 2 cloves garlic, minced fine
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil.
2. Snap woody ends from asparagus, then cut in half on the bias.
3. Trim ends of green beans and cut in half if particularly long.
4. Trim ends of snow peas.
5. Salt boiling water. Add asparagus for approximately 1-2 minutes, until just starting to become tender. Remove from water



and immediately plunge into a bowl of ice water. Let remain in ice water until asparagus is completely cold, then remove and place on paper towels to dry.

6. Repeat procedure with green beans. This blanching procedure can be done up to 1 day in advance.

7. Just before serving time, melt butter and olive oil in a large fry pan. Add shallot and garlic, cook for 1 minute. Add asparagus, green beans and snow peas. Cook until vegetables are warm. Season with salt and pepper. Serve.

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