

Sun, surf and seafood are the best ingredients to a good holiday

Gerry is writing today

We recently returned from a short vacation to Florida to our favourite little piece of paradise at Passe-a-grille on St. Pete's Beach. It is immediately relaxing and comforting to return to your favourite holiday spot for a few days of R&R. We also go for the 5S's— sun, sand, seafood, sunsets, swimming.

Seafood is certainly on the important "things to see and do on holidays" list. And this is certainly the place to enjoy it. There are so many choices of restaurants and so much variety of fresh seafood to savour. I ate seafood every night.

Here's a listing of what I enjoyed— fresh grouper three times: in a grouper sandwich twice and bronzed, a term meaning less spicy grilled than blackened. I also delighted in the clam chowder available.

A more unusual lunch item that I loved was the seafood reuben. It was made with grilled mahi mahi, coleslaw and 1000 island dressing on grilled rye— what a great menu item. Reubens are generally made with corned beef, swiss cheese and sauerkraut. You must try it!

I also had crab cakes, chilled peel and eat shrimp, coconut shrimp (one of my favourites) and lobster tails (often thought of as just a delivery item to get all the drawn butter scooped up!). Yum Yum!

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



Restaurants in Florida seem to have a very Asian, Thai, Vietnamese and Caribbean flavour. There are also a ton of Italian restaurants, serving a vast variety of fresh local seafood and traditional pastas.

I also purchased and read several cooking magazines while there, that we can't get at home. I am now inspired to prepare some new seafood dishes— using some ideas that we either ate or read about. How does bacon wrapped shrimp with basil garlic stuffing sound? Or crab cakes with pistachio avocado butter? This early warm spring weather takes our thoughts away from the stews, casseroles and crock pots to our deck and the barbecue.

Now, when Lori reads and types this article, she'll be salivating and waiting for an invite over for some coastal seafood sampling— or she may not even wait for an invite! We'll let you know!

Have fun and keep cooking!

(Lori and Gerry can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

Lemon Poppyseed Loaf

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup butter (or margarine for less calories)
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp grated lemon rind
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1 tbsp poppy seeds
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/3 cup yogurt or light sour cream

Glaze

- 1/4 cup icing sugar
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

Method

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a 2-litre loaf pan with non-stick coating.

In a large bowl or food processor, beat together sugar, butter, egg, lemon rind and juice, mixing well. Add milk, mixing well.

Combine flour, poppy seeds, baking powder and baking soda; add to bowl alternately with yogurt, mixing just until incorporated. Do not over-mix. Pour into pan and bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until tester inserted into center comes out dry.

Glaze: prick holes in top of loaf with fork. Combine icing sugar with lemon juice; pour over loaf.

Cook's Note: This loaf works well and is just as delicious without the poppy seeds, as you will see in today's photo.



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