



Herb-Marinated Lamb Skewers with Harvest Ratatouille and Parmesan Polenta Squares and Amici Cellars Spring Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon

Recipe Courtesy Chef John Adamson

To celebrate the release of the 2009 Amici Cellars Spring Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon, Chef John Adamson developed this wonderful recipe featuring grilled lamb skewers. The fresh notes of the herbs and the complex flavors of grilled lamb and peppers are wonderful complements to the wine's dark red fruits and silky tannins. Accompanied by Chef Adamson's Harvest Ratatouille and Parmesan Polenta Squares, it's a perfect meal to enjoy during the harvest season.

Recipe serves 4

For the Lamb:

1½ lb Lamb top sirloin, trimmed of all fat, thinly sliced to ¼" thick
2 T Marjoram, fresh, roughly chopped
2 T Thyme, fresh, roughly chopped
2 T Mint, fresh, roughly chopped
2 T Parsley, fresh, roughly chopped
2 T Olive Oil, extra virgin
to taste Salt and Pepper
16 ea Padrón Peppers, or other small sweet pepper
8 ea 6" Bamboo Skewers, soaked overnight

Method

Lay the thinly sliced lamb onto a baking sheet or large plate. Season with the chopped herbs, (reserving some for garnish) olive oil, salt and pepper. Starting with a pepper, skewer the marinated lamb, and alternate until three peppers and two strips of lamb have been placed on each skewer.

Build a fire with charcoal or preheat a gas fired grill to medium. If building a charcoal fire, allow the fire to cool quite a bit; grilling the skewers over a medium fire is important to not burn the skewers. Grill the skewers 4 minutes per side, or until well caramelized and the meat is medium rare.

For the Harvest Ratatouille:

Extra Virgin Olive Oil (as needed)
3 ea Garlic, clove, minced
2 tsp Thyme, fresh, chopped
8 ea Button mushrooms, small, chopped
1 ea Red bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed, small dice
2 ea Green zucchini, seeds removed, small dice
1 ea Red onion, small, small dice
1 c Japanese eggplant, seeds removed, small dice
2 T Parmesan cheese, grated



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2 T Basil, fresh, roughly chopped
½ c Tomato purée, jarred or canned
to taste Salt and Pepper

Method

Heat a large sauté pan over high heat until it is very hot and has smoke emanating from the edge of the pan. Add about a tablespoon of olive oil to the pan. Add the garlic and cook until it just begins to brown. Immediately add the thyme, followed by half of the mushrooms, lightly season with salt and pepper, and cook, resisting the urge to move them, until browned on one side. Toss gently and then remove from the pan and place on parchment lined sheet tray. Repeat with the remaining mushrooms. Continue this process, allowing the pan to recover to the smoking point before starting with the red bell pepper, zucchini, red onion, and eggplant, cooking each separately, in small batches and removing to the sheet tray.

When finished, place the sautéed vegetables in a bowl, and add the Parmesan cheese, chopped basil, and the tomato purée. Gently mix and keep warm.

(NOTE: This ratatouille is a versatile dish that is wonderful on a crostini, in risottos, and with eggs.)

For the Polenta Squares:

1 T Butter, unsalted
2 ea Garlic, clove, minced
3 c Milk, whole
¾ c Polenta, yellow
¼ c Semolina
3 oz Fontina cheese, grated
½ c Parmesan cheese, finely grated
3 T Butter, unsalted, softened
1/3 c Parmesan cheese, finely grated
to taste Salt and Pepper

Method

Add one tablespoon of butter to a heavy-bottomed two-quart saucepot over medium heat. When butter is melted, add garlic and cook until it begins to brown. Add milk and bring to a boil. In a slow and deliberate stream, whisk in the polenta stirring constantly. When polenta begins to thicken, change out the whisk for a wooden spoon. Continue to cook until polenta is tender and peels away from the side of the pan. Remove from heat. Add fontina and Parmesan cheeses to the pan and incorporate. Season with salt and pepper to taste and pour into a rectangular (6"x3") pan, and cool in the refrigerator until completely set.

Preheat the oven on the broiler setting. Cut the polenta into squares or rounds with biscuit cutters. Spread the softened butter evenly over the top of the polenta and then dip the buttered side into the Parmesan cheese. Place on an oiled tray and brown in the broiler until golden brown. When ready to serve, top the polenta with the warm harvest ratatouille.

Serve the lamb skewers accompanied by the polenta squares topped with harvest ratatouille.

Enjoy alongside a bottle of Amici Cellars Spring Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon.