

Add the leeks and increase the heat to medium high. Cook, stirring frequently, until the leeks are soft (the bacon will continue to crisp), about 6 min. Using a slotted spoon or skimmer, transfer the bacon and leeks to a bowl, leaving the fat in the pan.

Add the mushrooms to the pan and cook quickly, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms are browned, about 6 min. Add the salt, lemon zest, thyme, and the leek and bacon mixture. Add pepper generously to taste (about 10 grinds) and stir.

Add the stock to the pan and bring to a boil, stirring to scrape the bottom of the pan. Cover the pan and reduce the heat to medium low. Braise slowly until the mushrooms are very tender and the liquid is ab-

onion and cook slowly over medium-low heat until the onion is golden brown (it's okay if the edges start to crisp), 15 to 20 min. Add the cabbage and sauté, tossing with tongs, until it has collapsed slightly and is no longer stiff, about 2 min.

Raise the heat to high and add the allspice, nutmeg, and salt. Add pepper generously to taste (about 20 grinds) and stir to coat the cabbage with the spices. Add the wine and bring to a boil. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to medium low, and cook until the cabbage is almost tender and the wine is absorbed, about 40 min. Raise the heat to medium and add the vinegar, stirring to deglaze the pan. Add the brown sugar, stir, and cover again, reducing the heat to medium low. Continue to braise until the liquid is absorbed and the cabbage is very tender, about 30 min. more. If the cabbage is done but there's still liquid in the pan, raise the heat to medium high and cook, uncovered, until the liquid has reduced to a glaze. Toss to coat and transfer to a serving dish.

Add wine, stock or even cream for a satisfyingly rich vegetable braise.



Serve braised leeks and mushrooms piping hot.

sorbed, about 20 min. If the mushrooms are tender but still brothy, raise the heat and boil, uncovered, until the broth has reduced considerably. Taste a mushroom and add more salt and pepper if needed.

Braised Red Cabbage with Red Zinfandel *Very good*

This pleasantly sweet dish yearns to be served with roast pork and potatoes. *Serves four.*

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- ½ large onion (I like red), thinly sliced
- 1½ to 1¾ lb. red cabbage, thinly sliced (6 to 7 cups)
- 1 tsp. ground allspice
- ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¾ tsp. coarse salt
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 cup red Zinfandel or other good-quality red wine
- ½ cup red-wine vinegar
- ½ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar

In a large pan that's deep enough to accommodate the cabbage when raw, heat the olive oil. Add the

Braised Winter Squash & Potatoes with Mustard & Shallots

These braised squash and potatoes make a delicious side dish for roast chicken. Any kind of butternut or acorn squash is fine, but butternut has a smoother surface, which makes it easier to peel. *Serves four.*

- 2 Tbs. butter
- 1 lb. winter squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks (about 1½ cups)
- 1 lb. small red potatoes, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 4 medium shallots, peeled and halved
- 2 tsp. minced fresh rosemary
- 1 tsp. coarse salt
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 Tbs. coarse-grained mustard, like Pommery
- 1 cup homemade or low-salt canned chicken stock

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter, being careful not to let it burn. Swirl the pan to evenly coat with butter and add the squash, potatoes, and shallots. Toss and stir over medium-high heat until the vegetables have browned around the edges, 8 to 10 min.

Add the rosemary and salt. Add pepper generously to taste (about 10 grinds) and stir well. Add the mustard and stock, stirring to mix in the mustard. Bring the broth to a boil, cover the pan, and reduce the heat to medium low.

After the vegetables have been braising for 10 min., check the liquid: it should be almost all absorbed, and the vegetables should be completely tender. If the vegetables are tender but still brothy, raise the heat to high and boil the liquid, uncovered, until it's reduced to a syrupy glaze. Toss to coat the vegetables and transfer to a serving dish.

Susan Goss is the chef-owner of Zinfandel restaurant in Chicago. ♦