

Stir Things Up at Orinda's 'Art of Mixology' Contest

By Susie Iventosch



Sharon Zezima and Kal Deutsch created this craft cocktail, Dos Posos.

Photos Susie Iventosch



These Pakora (Indian vegetable fritters) are great when dipped in Apple Mint Chutney or Yogurt Raita.

For some craft cocktail fun, put the "Art of Mixology" contest on your calendar! The Orinda Arts Council is partnering with Orinda Theatre Square to host the first annual craft cocktail competition and tasting on Oct. 25.

The event will be held in the plaza at Theatre Square, from 4:30 to 7 p.m., and will feature 20 or so different craft cocktails. Table 24 and Barbacoa will be selling sliders and tacos in the plaza during the event. Proceeds from the fundraiser will benefit the various arts programs that the Orinda Arts Council supports.

The contest is open to local area bartenders, who will be competing in the professional division, but there is an amateur division as well, so those of you who have a special drink you'd like to try out on the crowd can do so. The entry deadline is Sept. 25, so

you'd better hurry!

There will be cash prizes of \$500, \$250 and \$100 for the professional division, which will be judged by a panel of judges, and trophies for the amateur division. The amateurs will be judged by attendees via mobile app, and there will be an Audience Choice for the professional entries, also selected via mobile app by the crowd.

"Craft cocktails are all the rage right now in restaurants and bars, but they are really expensive at \$15 per drink," said Kal Deutsch, vice president of communications for the Orinda Arts Council. "This event will give people an opportunity to taste a wide variety of craft cocktail samples all for \$45!"

Deutsch said attendees will also receive an e-book recipe collection from the event within a week or so of

the competition date.

Deutsch and his wife, Sharon Zezima, created a special cocktail called Dos Posos. It's made with Pimm's No. 1, cucumber slices, hard cider, lemon juice and agave syrup.

"If I weren't on the Arts Council, this is one I'd enter into the contest," he said.

He was kind enough to share their recipe with the rest of us, so we can try it at home. His sister-in-law, Carolyn Zezima, who is a California Culinary Academy graduate and president of NYC Foodscape, a food systems and urban agriculture consulting

business, gave him her recipe for Pakora (Indian vegetable fritters) with Apple Mint Chutney and Yogurt Raita, as the perfect accompaniment to Dos Posos.

We made Dos Posos and Pakora at home for dinner guests, and they complemented each other well. The Pakora were absolutely delicious served with the homemade chutney and yogurt sauce.

Deutsch said the event will have a taxi station for anyone wanting to take a taxi home, and is a very short walking distance to BART.

For more information about purchasing tickets or entering the contest, please visit: <http://OrindaArts.org/Mixology>

For more information about Carolyn Zezima, please visit her blog at: <http://blog.nycfoodscape.com/?p=255>

Also, remember the Moraga Pear & Wine Festival is coming up on Sept. 27! There is a recipe contest as part of the festivities.

Pakora (Indian Vegetable Fritters) with Apple Mint Chutney and Yogurt Raita

(Recipes by Carolyn Zezima)

INGREDIENTS

3 cups chickpea flour
2/3 cup brown rice flour
2 teaspoons cumin seed
1/2 teaspoon mustard seed
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon cayenne
1 teaspoon coriander powder
2 teaspoons turmeric
1 teaspoon white pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
3 cups water (approx.)
1 large onion, chopped
2 scallions, thinly sliced
1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
1 cup frozen or fresh cooked peas
2/3 cup cooked cauliflower (or turnips or white potatoes), cut in 1/2-inch pieces, par boiled
2/3 cup cooked spinach, chopped
Coconut oil for frying

DIRECTIONS

Combine the chickpea flour and brown rice flour in a large mixing bowl.

Toast the cumin seeds and the mustard seeds in a small sauté pan over medium heat until you can start to smell the aroma and the pan just begins to smoke. Grind together in a spice or coffee grinder. Combine in a small bowl with the other spices, salt and baking soda.

Add spices to flour mixture and combine thoroughly.

Add water gradually, until mixture forms a thick paste.

Stir in vegetables until fully combined.

Pour oil in a large, deep skillet until it reaches 2 inches from the top, or in a deep fryer. Heat over medium high heat to about 350 degrees or until a small amount of the mixture sizzles immediately when dropped into the oil. (Susie's note: We sautéed the fritters for about 3 minutes a side, in a large skillet in a little bit of oil, instead of deep frying them, and they turned out great.)

Drop over-heaping tablespoons of the mixture into the oil and fry until golden brown, turning after about 3 or 4 minutes and frying another 2 to 3 minutes each.

Drain excess oil on paper towels.

Serve with Apple Mint Chutney and Yogurt Raita (recipes follow).

Makes about 20-30 fritters.

Apple Mint Chutney

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon butter or oil
1/2 onion, chopped into 1/2-inch pieces
2 apples, peeled and chopped into 3/4-inch pieces
1 inch piece fresh ginger, peeled
1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons white sugar
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cardamom
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
1 scallion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup fresh mint, chopped
1 tablespoon lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Heat butter or oil in medium sauce pan over medium high heat.

Sauté onions for about 5 minutes until soft and translucent.

Stir in chopped apple, sauté for about 2 minutes.

Add cider vinegar and spices, stir well.

Cover, bring to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 35-45 minutes until apples are soft and the liquid is reduced and syrupy.

Keep an eye on the liquid, add water as needed to keep moist.

Remove the ginger piece and stir in mint and lemon juice.

Keep in refrigerator until ready to use. Serve with pakora.

Makes about 1 1/2 cups chutney.

Yogurt Raita

INGREDIENTS

1 cup yogurt (I prefer sheep's milk but any Greek style will work)
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1 tablespoon fresh mint, finely chopped
1 scallion, thinly sliced (optional)
2 teaspoons lemon juice
Salt, to taste
Mint leaf, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Combine ingredients in a small bowl.

Add salt to taste, let sit in refrigerator for one hour or until ready to use.

Garnish with mint leaf and serve with pakora.

Makes about 1 cup raita.

Dos Posos Craft Cocktail

Recipe by Sharon Zezima and Kal Deutsch

INGREDIENTS

750ml Pimms #1 liqueur (available at specialty liquor stores like BevMo)
Cucumber
Hard cider (traditional tart and dry; not flavored)
Fresh lemon juice
Agave syrup
Seltzer

DIRECTIONS

Cut the cucumber into thin slices. Pour the Pimms #1 into a pitcher and add the cucumber slices. Let the pitcher stand for 48 hours to infuse. After 48 hours, remove the cucumbers.

Combine:

2 ounces infused Pimms #1

1 ounce lemon juice

4 ounces hard cider

1 teaspoon of agave (you can adjust to your preference for sweetness)

Splash of seltzer

Combine ingredients and pour over ice. Garnish with a cucumber slice.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net. Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com.

This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



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