



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

Chef Elizabeth Binder, originally from South Africa, is our longtime friend and was recently a *Top Chef* finalist. Lizzie offers the following original recipe for our Wine Club Members, saying:

"If I had to pick my favorite mushroom, chanterelles would be at the top of the list. They have such a distinctive taste; woody and earthy with a hint of fruitiness. Chanterelles grow in the Pacific Northwest during the cooler months. They live among the trees, in the dense and foggy forests of Douglas Firs and Western Hemlocks. They are difficult to cultivate, so most of the fresh chanterelles you see, truly are "wild." This is why you don't usually find them any other time of year. And this is what makes them extra special."

Chanterelles, Creamy Polenta & Crème Fraiche

Serves 4

Ingredients for Creamy Polenta

- 1 qt stock
- 1 cup polenta
- 1/3 cup reggiano / crème fraiche / mascarpone
- 1 tablespoon butter
- ground white pepper & salt to taste

Ingredients for Chanterelles *Note: Any wonderful mushrooms can be substituted for the Chanterelles*

- 2 cups chanterelles
- extra virgin olive oil / butter
- 2 shallots, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 T fresh herbs
- sprinkling salt
- crème fraiche

Method:

To make the creamy polenta, first heat stock in a medium pot and bring to a boil. Once it is boiling, turn heat down to a simmer. Gradually add 1 C polenta to the hot stock while whisking vigorously to avoid any clumping. Cover and let cook on very low for 20-30 mins before adding any "fats". Somehow this allows the polenta to open up better. Stir well every 5 -10 minutes (cook longer if using a coarse polenta). You could even cover the pot and stick in a 350F oven for 45-60 minutes. When the polenta has cooked, then add your choice of cheese, white pepper, and adjust for salt.

To make the Chanterelles, sauté in a med-hot skillet with a mix of oil and butter so they are nicely browned. I start with shallots and add garlic towards the end. Toss in fresh herbs and serve atop the bed of delicious polenta with a dollop of crème fraiche.