

LET THE SIGNATURE FLAVORS AND NORTHWOODS VIBE OF WISCONSIN GUIDE YOUR NEXT CATERED EVENT

By Kathleen Schedin Stoehr; recipes & food photos by Chef Justin Riege

heese. Cranberries. Walnuts. Cherries. Apples. Corn. Fish, and more fish. Wisconsin isn't just Packer territory, it's packed with great eats and a whole lot of inspiration for your next northwoods holiday themed event.

Close your eyes and envision a gathering steeped in the traditions of those who live in the northern part of the U.S. Think gingham tablecloths, old leather, and faded photos of fish caught and enjoyed long ago. Need some help with the menu? Follow along and consider these recipes to authenticate and seal the deal.



TRADITIONALLY PLATED SALAD COMBINES ALL OF THE FLAVORS FOR A LIVELY, JOYFUL PRESENTATION OF COLOR AND TEXTURE

#### Make the meal

With Leading Caterers of America member and Corporate Chef Justin Riege of Zilli Hospitality Group, Waukesha, WI in the kitchen as a guide, we put together a menu that brings to mind more than red plaid flannel shirts and potato salad. Instead, the meal is deeply engrained into the culture and history of a state. For fun, we'll look at the first two courses of this three-part meal two separate ways: served traditionally plated, and also served deconstructed. For this menu, created especially for Catersource magazine, Chef Riege started with a salad showcasing the tart Montmorency cherries of Door County, paired with buttermilk blue cheese.



A DECONSTRUCTED SALAD ALLOWS A PICK-AND-CHOOSE USER EXPERIENCE, OFFERING DIFFERENT FLAVOR COMBINATIONS

### DOOR COUNTY TART CHERRY SALAD

Combine:

Locally grown spring salad greens
Door County tart Montmorency cherries
Buttermilk Blue cheese
Bourbon glazed walnuts

To make the red wine vinaigrette:

- 1 cup red wine
- 1 Tbsp roasted garlic purée
- 1 Tbsp minced shallots
- 1 tsp dijon
- 2 tsp sugar

2 tsp fresh lemon juice

Sprig of thyme

Sea salt & white pepper to taste

2 cups olive oil

Mix all ingredients together except for the olive oil. Add to a blender and process until emulcified.



## The entrée

Next, Riege selected an entrée displaying the flavors of freshwater, with a lightly battered rainbow trout. Fish frys are big business in Wisconsin, a tradition and as classic to the culture as beer and cheese. Frys are different than the (also very popular) fish boils, a culinary tradition in the coastal Upper Great Lakes, in which chunks of unbattered whitefish are dropped into a large kettle of unsalted water over a blazing bonfire, then doused with kerosene, causing a dramatic boil over, carrying off the fish oil that has collected at the top of the kettle water. But fried fish with a light, crispy exterior coupled with potato pancakes

But fried fish with a light, crispy exterior coupled with potato pancakes (certainly not potato fries!) is not just for Friday night anymore.



LIGHTLY BATTERED RAINBOW TROUT CROWNS POTATO PANCAKES AND SLAW, WITH A SCHMEAR OF AIOLI ACROSS THE TOP.

### BATTERED RAINBOW TROUT with cranberry apple slaw, potato pancakes & lemon caper aioli

Says Riege of battering the fish, "The trick to creating a great fish fry is using a batter that only lightly coats the fish, so that you are able to taste the fish — not the fried flour." Making a thinner batter will help achieve those results. He uses 50 percent tempura and 50 percent AP flour along with salt, pepper, dry garlic, and beer from Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART, THE DECONSTRUCTED TROUT DISH OFFERS THE ENTIRE FISH, WITH "SIDES" OF SLAW, PANCAKES, AND AIDLI.

# POTATO PANCAKES

4 pounds peeled and diced russet potatoes (Riege mentions he treats his potatoes with NatureSeal to prevent discoloration)

1/2 white onion

1/2 lb all purpose flour

2 eggs

1 tsp baking soda

1 bunch scallions (green only)

Sea salt and white pepper to taste

Pass the potatoes and onions through a grinder (Riege uses a KitchenAid food grinder); then gently remove excess water with a chinois. Next, mix flour, baking soda, and egg together. Add remaining ingredients, mix, and shape. Cook pancakes on a flat top with oil (Riege usually par cooks and cools them down, then deep fries just prior to service). Note: the meat grinder gives the pancakes a unique texture and look, something different from a normal hash brown appearance.

#### CRANBERRY WALNUT SLAW

1 large head of green cabbage, thinly sliced

1/2 head of red cabbage, thinly sliced

1 large red pepper, julienne

1 English cucumber, julienne

1/4 cup mayonnaise

½ cup apple cider vinegar

1/2 cup honey

2 Tbsp sugar

1 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped

2 green apples, julienne

Salt and pepper to taste

Cranberry garnish

Combine all ingredients and let sit, refrigerated, for three hours prior to serving.

# At last, dessert!

Because Riege does not normally make this selected dessert inhouse, he called upon his go-to pastry makers, Aggie's Cakes (aggiescakes.com), out of Milwaukee, WI. These cream puffs are light but satisfying, incorporating freshly made whipped cream — a tremendous end to a fantastic meal.



A BEAUTIFUL WHITE DESSERT, OFFERED IN HOMAGE TO VIRGIN SNOW ON A NORTHWOODS MORNING. NO USE DECONSTRUCTING THIS TASTY DESSERT ITEM: ONE BITE AND IT WILL EXPLODE IN THE MOUTH.

### CLASSIC CREAM PUFFS

MAKES 30 LARGE SHELLS

Bring to a boil:

1 pound, 2 ounce shortening

9 cups water

Stir in all at once:

1 pound, 10 ounce flour

Cook over medium heat until mixture slightly sticks to the bottom of the pan.

Transfer to a mixer and beat in:

4 cups of eggs

Mix until smooth, scraping the bowl occasionally. Pipe into desired size. Bake at 350 degrees until puffed high and cooked through. The shells should feel light and dry in texture. Fill with freshly made whipped cream and dust with powdered sugar.