

GRILLED BEEF TENDERLOIN CON TRES SALSAS

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2007 EPONYMOUS MACALLISTER VINEYARD RED WINE

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

6 (9 ounce) beef tenderloin steaks
Salt and freshly cracked black pepper
Extra virgin olive oil

Tomato-Cumin Salsa

½ teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and ground
2 cups peeled, seeded and diced tomatoes
(about 5 small or 3 large tomatoes)
3 scallions, white and light green parts only, minced
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 jalapeno chile, seeded and minced
1 tablespoon minced fresh cilantro
¼ teaspoon salt, plus more to taste as needed
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Avocado and Pumpkin Seed Salsa

2 tablespoons peanut or safflower oil
½ cup pumpkin seeds
2 ripe but firm Hass avocados
½ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
¼ teaspoon salt
Pinch of freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro
1 tablespoon minced fresh chives
1 ½ tablespoons roasted, peeled, and minced pasilla chile

Toasted Chile-Tomato Salsa

1 dried New Mexico or guajillo chile, stemmed and seeded
1 dried pasilla or ancho chile, stemmed and seeded
½ cup hot water
½ red onion, cut into large chunks
3 cloves garlic
4 or 5 tomatoes, cored
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt
2 tablespoons butter to finish

METHOD:

To make the tomato-cumin salsa, combine all the ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Taste and add more salt if needed. Cover and refrigerate, then bring to room temperature before serving.

To make the chile-tomato salsa, toast all the chiles in a small skillet over medium-high heat for 1 ½ minutes or until fragrant. Remove from heat, add the hot water, and set aside to soften. Heat a dry (no oil-you want to char the vegetables) medium skillet over high heat and add the onion, garlic and tomatoes. Cook for 8-10 minutes, until tender and a bit charred. Combine the softened chiles and the charred tomato, onion, garlic and enough chile soaking water to loosen the mixture in a food processor or blender and puree until thick and smooth, but not watery. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat and add the pureed sauce. Cook, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes, until slightly thickened. Add salt to taste and strain through a medium mesh sieve. Reheat before serving as directed in the above recipe.

To make the avocado and pumpkin seed salsa sauté the pumpkin seeds for about 3 minutes until they begin to pop. Put onto a plate and let cool. Cut the avocados in half and remove the pits. Cut into 1 inch strips, make ½ inch crosswise cuts then scoop out into a bowl. Whisk together the lime juice, salt, and pepper in a small bowl until the salt is dissolved. Gradually whisk in the olive oil. Pour the vinaigrette over the avocados. Add the cilantro, chives, pumpkin seeds, and chile and mix gently so as not to break up the avocados. You don't want to make guacamole.

To prepare the steaks, sprinkle them with salt and pepper for at least 1 hour prior to cooking. Brush the steaks on both sides with olive oil and grill over a medium-hot fire for 3-5 minutes, rotating them quarter turn to get nice crosshatch marks when the meat moves freely and no longer sticks to the grill. Flip the steaks and cook for another 3-5 minutes, again rotating the steaks to make grill marks.

To finish the chile-tomato salsa, melt the butter in medium sized skillet over medium high heat. Add the salsa and heat, stirring, until the butter is incorporated and the salsa is hot.

To serve, spread a little of the chile-tomato salsa on each serving plate, and place steak in center topped with a healthy spoonful of the tomato cumin salsa and Avocado and Pumpkin Seed Salsa.. Suggested sides include grilled potatoes with rosemary and garlic, and warmed corn tortillas.