

## HEART-FACED STEAK SANDWICHES MOTHERED WITH ONIONS

4 slices day-old sandwich bread  
 2 tablespoons olive oil (optional, for the bread)  
 1 pound top loin, flank, sirloin, or tenderloin steak  
 Salt and pepper, to taste  
 2 tablespoons butter  
 2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
 2 Spanish onions, thinly sliced  
 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce  
 1/2 cup dark brown sugar  
 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce  
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

the onions, salt, and pepper over medium-high heat, stirring often, for 10 minutes or until the onions are lightly browned.

Stir in the tomato sauce, brown sugar, and Worcestershire sauce. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes.

Return the steak to the skillet and turn it several times in the sauce so that it's coated all over. Remove the steak from the pan and transfer it to a cutting board. Cut it on the diagonal into 1/4-inch-thick slices.

Set each of the larger hearts on 2 dinner plates. Taste the sauce, and add more Worcestershire if you like. Add some onions and sauce to each plate, then steak slices, and, finally, more onions. Sprinkle with parsley and top with the smaller hearts. Serve at once.

**SERVES 2**

## SAUTEED MUSHROOMS IN CREAMY PORT SAUCE

2 tablespoons butter  
 3/4 pound fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced  
 Salt and pepper, to taste  
 1 clove garlic, finely chopped  
 1/4 cup port  
 2 tablespoons heavy cream  
 2 tablespoons crumbled blue cheese  
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme

In a skillet, melt the butter. Add the mushrooms, salt, and pepper and cook over medium-high heat, stirring often, for 5 minutes or until the mushrooms release their liquid.

Stir in the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the port and bring the mixture to a boil. Let the mixture bubble steadily until it reduces to 1 tablespoon.

Pour the cream into the pan. Add the blue cheese and thyme and cook for 1 to 2 minutes or until the cheese melts. Taste for seasoning, add salt and pepper if necessary, and serve at once.

**SERVES 2**

## ROASTED HARICOTS VERTS

Salt and pepper, to taste  
 1/2 pound haricots verts  
 Olive oil (for drizzling)

Set the oven at 425 degrees. Bring a saucepan of water to a boil. Add a generous pinch of salt.

Meanwhile, trim only the stem ends of the beans. Drop the beans into the water. When the water returns to a boil, cook the beans for 1 minute. (If you're serving them right from the pot, cook them for 2 minutes and then drain.)

Rinse the beans with very cold water and spread them out on a clean towel to dry.

Transfer the beans to a bowl and add several drops of oil. Toss well. Place the beans on a baking sheet and sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Roast the beans in the hot oven for 20 minutes or until they are slightly caramelized. Serve at once.

**SERVES 2**

## BROWNIE SUNDAES

### BROWNIES

Butter (for greasing the pan)  
 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut up  
 4 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped  
 2 eggs  
 1 cup sugar  
 3/4 cup flour  
 1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
 1/4 teaspoon salt  
 1 cup chocolate chips

Set the oven at 350 degrees. Grease an 8-inch-square baking pan.

In the top of a double boiler set over hot, but not boiling, water, combine the 1/2 cup of butter and chocolate. Stir just until they melt, then remove the

top of the double boiler from the heat. Set it aside until the mixture is cool but still liquid. Wipe the bottom of the pan.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the eggs and sugar for 1 minute. Pour in the chocolate-butter mixture and beat until it is thoroughly combined.

Remove the bowl from the stand. Use a wooden spoon to stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add the chips and pour the batter into the prepared pan.

Bake the brownies for 20 to 25 minutes or until the edges are firm (you'll see little holes around the edge) and the center is just set. The brownies will firm up as they cool, so don't be tempted to leave them in the oven any longer than necessary to set the middle.

Set the pan on a wire rack and let the brownies cool completely. (The brownies can be made a day in advance. Once they cool, cover them tightly with foil.)

### CHOCOLATE SAUCE

1/2 cup heavy cream  
 6 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, broken into pieces  
 1 tablespoon light corn syrup  
 1 pint vanilla ice cream (for serving)

In a heavy-based saucepan, heat the cream just until it is warm. Stir in the chocolate and cook, stirring often, until the chocolate melts. Add the corn syrup and stir again. (The sauce can be made a day in advance up to this point; transfer to a plastic container and refrigerate.)

To serve: In a saucepan, warm the sauce over very low heat, stirring constantly, just until it is hot but not boiling.

Cut 2 4-inch squares of brownie and remove them from the pan. Cut each brownie in half on the diagonal. On a plate, arrange the triangles so that there is a gap between them. Add ice cream and chocolate sauce to both plates. Serve at once.

**SERVES 2**