Summer Squash and Okra Beignets with Curried Yogurt

Five Senses Restaurant – Chef Mitchell Murphree

Yield – 15 beignets

Ingredients –

3 yellow squash (can use zucchini instead or a mixture of each), cooked and slightly mashed
10 small okra, sliced thin
1/4 c minced onion
1/3 c buttermilk
1 small egg
2/3 c self rising cornmeal (yellow or white)
3 T all purpose flour
1 t sugar
1/2 t salt
Pinch of black pepper
Light pinch of cayenne pepper
Oil for frying

Method –

In a medium mixing bowl, place the cooked and mashed squash, sliced okra, minced onion, buttermilk and egg. Mix to combine. In a separate bowl, mix together the cornmeal, flour, sugar, salt and the two peppers. Add the wet bowl to the dry ingredients and stir just until combined.

In a frying vessel (cast iron skillet or pot, fry daddy, stainless steel pot), heat oil (vegetable, peanut) to 325 degrees. Test the oil by dropping a spoonful of batter into hot oil and testing for doneness after about 2-3 minutes, should flip over halfway through. If you are good to go, fry 5 -6 beignets at a time. Remove from oil, carefully, to a rack or paper towel to dry. Maybe sprinkle with salt if desired. Serve with dipping sauce to follow.

Curried Yogurt

Ingredients –

1 c plain yogurt (regular or greek)
2 t curry powder
1t lemon juice
1 T chopped parsley and/or cilantro

Method –

Mix all ingredients in bowl and serve with the beignets.
Creamy Summer Squash Soup with Cumin, Ancho Chile, Cotija Cheese and Tomato Salsa

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Yield – 8 servings

Ingredients –

1 T oil
1 yellow onion, small diced (Save 2 T small diced onions for salsa)
6 yellow summer squash, medium diced
1 t garlic, minced
6 C water, chicken or vegetable broth
1 T ground cumin
1 t ancho chile powder
1 T salt
1 t lime juice
½ c to 1 C heavy cream

Method –

In a stainless steel pot, heat oil to medium heat. Add onions and squash and saute for about 3 minutes, achieving a bit of color. Add garlic, cumin and ancho powder and cook for about 30 more seconds. Add the water, salt and lime juice. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook for about 30 minutes or until squash is very tender. Puree all until smooth, returning to pot and add the heavy cream to the amount desired. Adjust seasonings to taste, garnish with tomato salsa and cotija cheese.

Tomato Salsa

Ingredients –

1 large heirloom tomato
2 T onions, small diced
2 T cilantro, chopped
1 t lime juice
2 t EVOO
salt and pepper

Method –

Mix all ingredients in a bowl, let sit for 15 minutes to season. Use as a garnish for soup with cotija cheese.