



CHEFS

on a Shoestring

Three culinary masters accept
our grocery list challenge

By Maria Ferri
Photography by Jack Foley

**Ingredients for the
Pan Seared Cod and Gnocchi**

2 medium plum tomatoes . . .	\$0.10
1 medium lemon	\$0.50
2 medium navel oranges	\$2.00
4 6-ounce thick cod filets . . .	\$12.00
1 cup Kalamata olives	\$1.00
1 package store-bought saffron gnocchi	\$2.50
2 cups heavy cream	\$1.00
Extra virgin olive oil*	
1 large clove of garlic, minced	\$0.25
Salt and freshly ground black pepper*	

**Ingredients for the Baby Spinach
Salad with Strawberries**

2 pints large strawberries (1 lb. total)	\$4.00
1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar	\$0.25
2-3 tablespoons honey*	
Extra-virgin olive oil*	
Sea salt*	
Freshly ground pepper*	
6 tablespoons red wine vinegar	
1/4 cup fresh orange juice . .	\$0.50
4 teaspoons finely chopped fresh tarragon	\$0.50
1 tablespoon sugar	
1 cup blanched whole almonds, toasted	\$1.00
9 cups baby spinach	\$5.00
5 ounces pecorino romano cheese, shredded or shaved .	\$1.00

**Ingredients for the
Citrus Panna Cotta**

3 cups heavy cream	\$2.00
1 cup whole or low-fat milk . .	\$0.50
1 teaspoon of vanilla extract .	\$0.50
7 tablespoons sugar*	
Finely grated zest of 1/2 lemon	\$0.25
Finely grated zest of 1/2 lime	\$0.25
3 teaspoons unflavored powdered gelatin (may substitute 5 gelatin sheets) . .	\$0.50
2 large navel oranges	\$2.00
1 star anise	\$0.10
1 pint mixed berries	\$2.00

Total Meal Cost: \$39.70



*Pan Seared Cod with Citrus,
Tomato and Olive Sauce with Saffron
Gnocchi with Baby Spinach Salad
and Citrus Panna Cotta*

Pan Seared Cod

1 Cut each tomato into four wedges, cut out the cores, and remove the seeds and pulp. Slice the tomatoes lengthwise into 1/4-inch strips. In a colander, toss them with 1/4 teaspoon salt and let them drain for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, finely grate the zest of the lemon. Put the zest in a medium bowl. Working over the bowl, segment the lemon and the oranges.

2 Gently heat 3 tablespoons of the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the anchovies and mash them into the oil with the back of a spoon until nearly dissolved. Turn the heat to low, add the garlic and cooked until softened but not

browned. Remove from the heat.

3 Add the drained tomato strips, the orange and the lemon segments (with the zest and the juice) and the olives in the pan. Toss very gently to warm through, being careful not to break up the citrus segments. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper. Transfer to a bowl and keep warm.

4 Wipe out the skillet, set it over medium-high heat, and pour the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil. Generously salt the cod filet on both sides. Working in batches, if necessary, sear both sides of the fish, until golden-brown (3-4 minutes depending on the thickness). Flip the filets and cook another 3 minutes. Transfer the cod to dinner plates and serve with the warm citrus sauce.

5 Bring a large pot of water to a boil, then add salt. Place heavy cream in a 12-inch skillet on medium-high heat, cook until cream is reduced to almost half. Reduce heat; add grated cheese and season to taste.



Baby Spinach Salad



Pan Seared Cod with Saffron Gnocchi

6 Cook the gnocchi according to package directions, for about 90 seconds from the time they rise to the surface. Remove the cooked gnocchi with a skimmer, shake off the excess water, and add to the cream sauce. Reheat the cream sauce with the gnocchi for 1-2 minutes. Toss well and serve.

Baby Spinach Salad with Strawberries marinated in Honey and Balsamic Vinegar, Crunchy Toasted Almonds and Pecorino Romano in Orange-Tarragon Vinaigrette

1 Using a paring knife, hull the strawberries and cut them in half lengthwise. In a non-reactive bowl, combine white balsamic vinegar and honey, mix well. Toss to coat the strawberries evenly

and then let the mixture rest for 10-15 minutes at room temperature.

2 In a small nonreactive bowl, whisk together the vinegar, orange juice, tarragon, 1 tablespoon of sugar, 3/4 teaspoon of the salt and several grinds of pepper until the sugar dissolves. Slowly whisk in 6 tablespoons of olive oil until well blended to make a vinaigrette. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

3 In a small bowl, stir together the almonds and 1/4 teaspoon of the salt. In a large bowl, combine the spinach, the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper. Whisk the vinaigrette to recombine, drizzle about one-third of it over the spinach and toss well (reserve the remaining vinaigrette for another use). Taste and adjust the seasonings.

4 Divide the dressed spinach evenly among individual plates, top each serving with an equal amount of the roasted



Citrus Panna Cotta



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strawberries, and sprinkle with the almonds and cheese. Serve immediately.

Citrus Panna Cotta Topped with Scented Orange Sections and Mixed Berries

1 Combine the cream, milk, half of the split vanilla bean, sugar and the citrus zest from the three fruits in a medium saucepan over medium heat; cook for about 10 minutes, until the mixture is thoroughly heated through and fragrant and the sugar has dissolved.

2 Place the gelatin in a heatproof mixing bowl and add about 1 cup of the hot cream-milk mixture, whisking until the gelatin has thoroughly dissolved. Add the remaining cream-milk mixture. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer into a large heatproof measuring cup; discard the solids.

3 Divide the mixture evenly between

4 individual martini or wine glasses. Cover with plastic wrap, making sure the plastic does not touch the surface of the panna cottas. Refrigerate overnight till set.

4 Slice off the top and bottom of both oranges. Place one of the oranges, with a cut side down, on a cutting board, then work your way around the fruit, slicing off all of the peel and pith. Hold the orange over a small saucepan; cut the orange segments out of their membranes, letting them fall into the saucepan. Squeeze the juices from the remaining membrane into the saucepan. Add the star anise and the remaining vanilla bean half (making sure to scrape out the bean and include the scrapings, too). Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, then remove from the heat and stir in the sugar to taste. Discard the star

anise and vanilla bean half, and cool or refrigerate until ready to use. Serve the panna cottas topped with the scented orange sections, and, if desired, ginger-snaps cookies. **SSL**

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