

Dinner in 30 Minutes

Smothered Skirt Steak

4 servings

Smothered, as in smothered with fragrant, sautéed onions. Underneath the onions: skirt steak, the marbled, robust cut of beef best known for fajitas. It's a glorious combination. Serve with mashed sweet potatoes. Adapted from "The New Basics," by Julee Rosso and Sheila Lukins (Workman Publishing, 1989).

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 onions, sliced
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 4 pieces (6 ounces each) skirt steak*
- ½ cup homemade beef stock or low-sodium canned broth
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons tomato paste or ketchup

In a large heavy skillet (preferably cast iron) over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the onion, garlic powder and salt and the pepper to taste. Cook until the onions are wilted and slightly golden, about 15 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove the onions and set aside.

Increase the heat to medium-high. Season the steaks with salt and pepper to taste, and sauté them until browned on the outside and red and juicy on the inside, 2 to 3 minutes per side. (Depending on the skillet size, it may be necessary to brown the steaks in batches.) Transfer the meat to individual plates and keep it warm.

Pour off the fat and return the onions to the skillet. Stir in the remaining ingredients and cook until heated through and just slightly thickened, 2 minutes. Spoon over the steaks and serve immediately.

***NOTE:** Skirt steak is available at many meat counters and can usually be special-ordered by stores that do not carry it on a regular basis.

Per serving: 569 calories, 33 g protein, 6 g carbohydrates, 45 g fat, 120 mg cholesterol, 21 g saturated fat, 421 mg sodium, 1 g dietary fiber
Recipe tested by Marcia Kramer; e-mail questions to food@washpost.com

— Marcia Kramer

SHOPPING CART | SPECIALTIES

These are certainly nice enough to give as gifts, but we say treat yourself — you're worth it.



■ Newly available in the United States, these tiny sweet or savory cookies are baked by **Le Petit Duc** in St.-Remy de Provence, France, and come beautifully packaged in tins. Both are meant to be enjoyed with wine. Among the **sweet assortment** (22-count, eight-ounce tin), we liked the **Coeur du Petit Albert** and **Trefle/Clover** cookies, which are based on 17th- and 18th-century recipes. The **savory buttons** (35-count, 7.3-ounce tin) taste of thyme, fennel, olive and rosemary; \$20 for each tin, call **Quel Objet** at 877-762-4499, or go to www.quelobjet.com.



■ Large tilted **glass pitcher** by Country Originals, \$75, available at Dalton Brody Ltd., 3412 Idaho Ave. NW; 202-244-7197.

TO DO |

WEDNESDAY: Cancer Prevention and Survival Cooking Class — learn how proper diet can help prevent and survive cancer. Sponsored by the Cancer Project. Free. 2:30-4 p.m. Whole Foods Market, 143 E. Maple Ave., Vienna. Call 202-244-5038.

WEDNESDAY: Food tasting and book signing with "A Taste of Maryland History" authors Debbie Nunley and Karen Jane Elliott. Free. 7 p.m. Olsson's Books & Records, 7647 Old Georgetown Rd., Bethesda. 301-652-3336.

THURSDAY: La Cappuccina wine dinner at Tutto Bene Italian Restaurant & Grill. Guest winemaker Sisto Tessari. \$80 includes tax and tip. 7 p.m. 501 N. Randolph St., Arlington. 703-522-1005.

THURSDAY: The Wine Gurus — wine tasting with wines selected by wine professionals as their favorites. Sponsored by the Greater Washington Wine School. \$45. 7-8:30 p.m. Starland Cafe, 5125 MacArthur Blvd. NW. Call 301-657-0220.

THURSDAY: Book signing with "McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant Cookbook" contributor Fernando Giacomini. Free. 3 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 3040 M St. NW.

SATURDAY: Holiday food and beverage tasting with tabletop decorating class at the Ritz-Carlton. \$25. 4:30-6 p.m. 1150 22nd St. NW. Call 202-974-5566.

SUNDAY: Dinner and book signing with "A Baker's Tour" author Nick Malgieri. Sponsored by the American Institute of Wine & Food. \$75 for nonmembers. 6:30-9 p.m. 1789 Restaurant, 1226 36th St. NW. Call 202-333-0421 or see www.aiwf.org/dc/.

— Terri Sapienza

PLEASE NOTE: Send notices to: To Do, food@washpost.com, 14 days before publication.



■ A staple of the English tea table, **Ambrosia Devon Custard** is akin to vanilla pudding but lighter and lower in sugar and fat. It works well in trifles, too; 15-ounce can, \$3.99, available at the Little Teapot, 9401 Montpelier Dr., Laurel; 301-498-8486; or go to shopping@the-little-teapot.com.



■ For caviar service or an upgrade on everyday snack service, a **set of four pearl spreaders** by Two Cranes, five inches long, \$45, also at Dalton Brody.



■ Accessible single servings are the angle to these **specialty teas** from Adagio; 15 foil-wrapped mesh bags per box, \$10, available at the Juice Zone (also by the cup, \$2), 1921 I St. NW, 202-223-9663, at Teasm, 400 Eighth St. NW, 202-638-7740 or go to www.adagio.com.

RARE FIND | OLD COOKBOOKS, SHOP BY PHONE

Here's a refreshingly non-online way to shop for old replacement cookbooks or those that are hard to find: call Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks in New York.

Slotnick, a former editorial assistant who's had her own cozy 350-square-foot shop for about eight years, actually answers the phone and will help find what you're looking for. Time-Life's Foods of the World series? She'll sell the set, or individual volumes. Among the

most sought-after, she says, are early Maida Heatter titles and Marcy Goldberg's "Jewish Cookbook."

But even if you're not on a specific quest, feel free to call and browse her 4,000 titles. Slotnick prides herself on knowing which questions to ask to help you come up with the perfect food-related book. She also carries a collection of late 19th-century and early 20th-century kitchen gadgets such as egg beaters,

pancake turners, teapots and pie birds, most of which are nestled among the bookshelves and worth a visit on their own.

Her hours are usually 1 to 7 p.m. six days a week, including most weekends, but call first; the day off she takes depends on her volunteer work.

Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks, 163 W. 10th St., New York; call 212-989-8962 or e-mail bonnieslotnickbooks@earthlink.net.

WINE OF THE WEEK

SAVE \$2

The Cabernet Sauvignon grape reveals a deep garnet color here and enticing aromas of dark chocolate, spice and sweet spices. Rich, lively flavors of succulent blackberry, currant



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