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SEITAN PICCATA

WITH OLIVES & GREEN BEANS

SERVES 4 / TIME: 40 MIN

1 pound Simple Seitan (page xx)

Olive oil

1/3 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup thinly sliced shallots

4 cloves garlic, chopped

1/3 cup dry white wine

2 cups vegetable broth, purchased or
homemade (page xx)

1/4 teaspoon salt

Several pinches of freshly ground black
pepper

Small pinch of dried thyme

1/4 cup capers with a little brine

1/2 cup pitted kalamata or black olives, cut
in half

3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley

Juice of 1 lemon (2 to 3 tablespoons)

1/2 pound green beans, ends trimmed

Mashed potatoes, to serve

Okay, enough messing around with everything else we call “recipes”; piccata is where it’s at. If you’ve ever wanted to impress someone with something other than your ability to touch your tongue to your nose, then serve them piccata. Never heard of it? It’s capers and white wine and garlic and shallots and lemon and breaded seitan, and despite its fanciness, it’s easy to make. We serve it with olives and crunchy string beans over a big pile of mashed potatoes, and we serve it often. The seitan is the star of the show here, so we suggest using homemade for this.

Preheat a large heavy-bottomed skillet over medium-high heat.

Cut the seitan into long, thin pieces, slicing off any rounded ends so that they will lay flat. Ideally, the slices should be a little over 1/4 inch thick, 3 inches long, and 2 inches across, but who is counting?

Coat the bottom of the skillet with the oil and let it get hot. Dredge half the seitan slices in flour to coat. Add to the pan and cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes on each side. Proceed to coat the other slices and repeat. Place the cooked seitan slices on a tray or plate covered with aluminum foil, to keep warm. Do not rinse out the skillet or turn the heat off, as you’re going to make the sauce in it.

Bring a pot of water to a boil for the green beans, but don’t boil them just yet. You just want to have the water at the ready.

If there is enough oil left in the seitan pan to sauté the shallots and garlic, then do so; if not, add a little oil and sauté them for about 5 minutes, stirring often so as not to burn.

Add the white wine to the sauce and increase the heat to bring to a rolling boil. Add the vegetable broth, salt, pepper, and thyme. Again, bring to a rolling boil and let the sauce reduce by half; this should take about 7 to 10 minutes.

Add the capers and olives to heat through, about 3 minutes. At this point, add the beans to the boiling water and let them cook for 2 minutes, then strain.

Add the parsley and lemon juice to the sauce and turn off the heat.

To serve: Make a pile of mashed potatoes. Place the seitan over the mashed potatoes and place the green beans around the seitan. Use a ladle to douse everything in plenty of sauce. Serve immediately.

