

Lovely Little Plates



“Little Plate” restaurants are all the rage. In our “hip and happening” neighborhood no fewer than a half dozen of these popular eating places have debuted in the last 6 months –all located within a mile of our place. There are more spread throughout the city.

You’ll find them all over the country.

One place I haven’t been to yet (Amada Tapas and Wine) would call their “little plates” tapas. The tradition of tapas in Spain goes back a long way. The term “little plates” being used today extends well beyond Spanish cuisine.

The whole idea is to have lots of things on the menu that are enticingly priced and draw you in to the variety. In most places you’d be tempted to order maybe 3 little plates per person. You’d think based on the price per plate that you are spending less but you’re really not at most locations. On the other hand look at the variety! If you have 4 people at a table, that’s 12 plates of things to pass, nibble, share and just plain enjoy.

Some people still prefer to have an entrée so most restaurants will still have a selection of entrees to choose from. Then, if you add a little plate to your order, it might stand in for the

appetizer.

At two different “little plates” restaurants I ordered a mushroom dish. I thought it was so good at the first place I had to try it again and see if it was the same at both. After I had it the second time I said, “That’s it. I have to figure out how to make this myself!” It was that wonderful.

Things like peppers are popular at Italian little plates restaurants. I’m offering you a recipe for mine here. Mine have a bit of an after-burner kick to them.



Balsamic-Roasted Exotic Mushrooms with a White Truffle Olive Oil Glaze



Colorful Peppers with Zip

Serve these as side dishes or have yourself a “little plates party.” You can either cook them all or ask each couple to bring a dish that qualifies as a little plate item and then you can pass the dishes or set up a buffet.

Enjoy!