



KAREN CROUSE



NAPA VALLEY

Cooking with KAREN CROUSE

Springtime in the Napa Valley is marked by bud break. This is when the grapevines wake up and the first leaves emerge from the dormant buds. It is the beginning of the growing season. It's exciting for anyone who visits or lives in the Napa Valley. The vineyards present a brilliant and picturesque palette as they turn from a dark grey to a speckled and evolving green.

This recipe checks all of my boxes. It's reflective of the season, fresh, visually appealing, and easy to eat. These lettuce cups look and

taste like spring. The pea shoots are my preference as they are readily available in the spring. They have a delicate and slightly sweet flavor that complements the beef and the horseradish cream's velvety texture.

I like to serve the lettuce cups on a dark cutting board. The verdant lettuce leaves make a stunning show against the rustic wood. Since they are best served right away, I usually assemble the cups as my guests are visiting with me in the kitchen.

Open your favorite bottle of Rosé and say "Hello" to Spring.



FOR MORE INFORMATION karencrousenapavalley.com

LETTUCE CUPS with BEEF and HORSERADISH CREAM

10-12 Servings

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Large skillet
- Whisk
- Small bowl

FOR BEEF:

- 12 oz piece beef tenderloin, 1" thick
- 1 head Bibb lettuce
- 1 container of pea shoots or a handful of baby spinach (*finely chopped*)
- Sea salt and Black pepper

FOR HORSERADISH CREAM:

- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 ½ TB prepared horseradish, drained
- 1 TB mayonnaise (I like Duke's)
- 1 Tsp rice vinegar
- ½ tsp Dijon Mustard
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

PREPARATION:

Beef Tenderloin

- Sear the beef in a large skillet over medium-high heat until the internal temperature is 130 – 135 degrees (medium-rare), about 3 to 4 minutes per side. Let the meat cool completely, wrap it in plastic and refrigerate for one hour or up to 24 hours.
- While the beef is still cold, cut it against the grain into ¼ inch slices.

Tip: If you are short on time, substitute a good quality roast beef from your favorite deli instead.

Horseradish Cream (Yields ⅔ cups)

- Whisk all ingredients together in a small bowl until thoroughly blended. (*Can be made two to three days ahead if stored in an airtight container.*)

TO SERVE:

Wash and fully dry the Bibb Lettuce leaves and arrange them on a serving platter or board. Place 1-2 slices of beef in the center of each leaf, folding or bunching to keep the meat centered. Layer with a teaspoon of horseradish cream. Top with a pinch of the pea shoots or spinach. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.