

# THE PLAIN DEALER

Sunday, October 8, 2006

## Q'd in

### SUNDAY AFTERNOON LIBATION

## Martinis and appetizer are 'Sassy' treats for fall

**PDQ** is always on the lookout for great books about entertaining, dreaming of the parties we could throw if we could just get it together! But alas, it's much easier to read a book than it is to actually put together a classy event on your own.

Still, "Sassy Sips and Nibbles" by Emma Roberts (Wimmer Book, \$15.75), CEO of Capers Catering and a party planner of some renown in Massachu-

setts, makes a convincing case for entertaining more often. She's created signature cocktails around various themes and offers simple appetizer ideas to go along with the cocktails.

She writes with verve and, yes, sassiness, and the recipes are easy to follow, even for the novice entertainer. Or the novice reader.

— *Tested by Kim Crow, PDQ editor*

Roberts says she created this for a wedding at which a couple paid homage to the pastime that brought them together, hiking. She named each table after a mountain in New England, and that idea brought the inspiration to the menu.

#### Upscale Trail Mix

Serves 6

¼ cup popcorn kernels  
1 tablespoon cooking oil  
¼ cup pecan halves  
¼ cup hazelnuts  
¼ cup small cashews  
¼ cup dried blueberries or currants  
½ cup pure maple syrup  
½ teaspoon ground ginger  
½ teaspoon cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper  
2 tablespoons butter  
Salt to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.  
Cook popcorn kernels in cooking oil according to package

directions. Transfer popped corn to large bowl and set aside. Place nuts on three baking sheets and cook in oven for 6 to 8 minutes or until toasted. Remove from oven and let cool. Add nuts and diced fruit to popcorn bowl and set aside. In heavy saucepan over medium-high heat, mix together syrup and next four ingredients. Simmer about 5 minutes. Slowly add syrup to popcorn mixture, stirring constantly. Transfer mixture to baking sheet and cool. Salt to taste and toss well before serving.

#### Mount Katahdin Martinis

Serves 1

1½ ounce premium vodka  
2 ounces frozen Maine blueberries, pureed with 1 ounce water  
¼ ounce freshly squeezed lime juice  
Blueberry skewers\*  
Fresh mint to taste

Fill cocktail shaker with ice. Add vodka, blueberry puree and lime juice; shake well and strain into martini glass. Garnish with blueberry skewer and fresh mint. Freezing the berry skewers will help keep the drink cold.

**\*Sassy sip tip:** Thread blueberries onto toothpick until it is filled. These make terrific swizzle sticks. Don't use Maine blueberries, however, as they are too petite.

