A refreshing first course to beat the heat

Too hot for soup? Not for this cool dish. Iced melon and berry soup is best made with ripe, sweet melons. And don’t forget to dress up each bowlful with a swirl of berry purée and some whole berries.

Preparation:
1. Halve melon, discard seeds, and use spoon to scoop flesh out of peel into food processor. Add lime juice and ginger. Purée until smooth, about 30 minutes.
2. Pour purée into bowl, cover and refrigerate until completely cool, about 30 minutes.
3. Put blueberries into food processor. Add orange juice and yogurt and purée until smooth. Transfer to second bowl, cover and refrigerate until completely cool, about 30 minutes.

Ingredients:
- 1 ripe honeydew melon
- 1 Tbsp fresh lime juice
- 2.5 cm piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 3/4 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup low-fat plain yogurt
- 3/4 cup raspberries

Mocha Ricotta Tiramisu

The traditional Italian dessert gets a new sweet twist in this recipe.

Preparation:
1. Break each ladyfinger into 3 pieces, then divide evenly among four 250 mL dessert glasses.
2. Place espresso in glass measuring cup and add boiling water. Add brandy and 1 tsp sugar; stir to dissolve. Pour evenly over ladyfingers. Leave to soak.
3. Beat ricotta with yogurt, icing sugar and vanilla extract until smooth and creamy. Pile on top of soaked ladyfingers.
4. Sprinkle top of each dessert with grated chocolate. Cover and chill at least 30 minutes (but no more than 3 hours) before serving.

Ingredients:
- 8 ladyfingers, halved
- 1 tsp instant espresso powder
- 1/2 cup boiling water
- 2 Tbsp brandy
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 cup light ricotta cheese
- 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 1/4 cup sifted icing sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 square semi-sweet dark chocolate, grated

Liquid Assets

Switch up your wine countries

If you want to learn more about wine you’ve got to be willing to try different styles, from different countries, made with different grapes. Not that I want to rant (look where that’s gotten Mel Gibson lately!); it’s just that the river to liquid expertise is flowing with more than just pinot grigio and merlot.

Take viognier. Tracing its roots to the Rhone Valley in France it has quietly become the hottest white grape on the shelf thanks to its full, floral aromas and light tropical (often spicy) flavours. That kind of personality means it’s more than just menu friendly: it’s a by-the-glass winner that shines bright in the summertime.

If, like me, you’re mad about Thai cuisine, then the 2009 Yalumba ‘Y Series’ Viognier ($14.95 - $18.30) is all about bright, juicy cranberry/cherry flavours ideally matched with a rack of barbecued ribs.