

Menu

[Gruyere Crisps](#) with Honeycrisp Apple Slices

[Broiled Seafood Medley](#)

Mesclun Salad with [Basic Vinaigrette](#)

[Chocolate Peppermint Blobs](#)

The Game Plan

Early in the day (at least 6 hours before dinner), or the day before:

(2½ hours, including baking and cooling time for the cookies)

- Mix the dough for the Gruyere Crisps, roll it into logs, wrap and chill it.
- Make the Chocolate Peppermint Blobs.
- While the cookie dough chills, make the Basic Vinaigrette. Chill the vinaigrette.
- Handwash the dishes and/or load the dishwasher, and clean up the kitchen.
- When the cookies are cool, transfer them to an airtight container.

2½ hours before dinner:

(40 minutes)

- Heat the oven for the Gruyere Crisps. While the oven heats, slice and arrange the crisp dough on a baking sheet.
- Empty the dishwasher.
- While the crisps bake, clean up the kitchen and set the table.
- Take the vinaigrette out of the fridge to come to room temperature.
- When the crisps come out of the oven, let them cool for about 5 minutes on a cooling rack. Meanwhile, cut the seafood into uniformly-sized pieces, dry them with paper towels, arrange them in a single layer on a plate or baking sheet, and chill.
- Slice the apple and arrange it with the Gruyere Crisps on a platter.

Enjoy the appetizer with a glass of cold, crisp white wine.

½ hour before dinner:

(20 minutes)

- Make the butter sauce and crumb topping for the Broiled Seafood Medley.
- Clean up the kitchen.
- Light the candles.
- Heat the broiler for the seafood.

10 minutes before dinner:

(10 minutes)

- Assemble and broil the seafood casseroles. While the seafood is broiling, open the wine and make the mesclun salad: toss prewashed baby greens with the vinaigrette in a large bowl; add shredded carrot, or thin slivers of cucumber or red onion if desired.
- Plate the salad.

After dinner:

- While your partner does the dishes and cleans up the kitchen, arrange the cookies on a serving plate.

Note:

- The hands-on work time estimates (in parentheses below the start times) are for one person doing it all, but some of these tasks can be shared or delegated.