

COOK, EAT, GATHER,
and SHARE

FOOD & ENTERTAINING

AN EASY CENTERPIECE

Inspired by those glass-topped café and tea-shop tables under which menus and postcards are placed, Ayesha reimagined the concept. Here, she's placed a small sheet of clear polycarbonate over prints, ferns, and other natural ephemera. On top are stones, and wisps of evergreens.

Lexan, 12" by 24", \$13.50 per sheet, homedepot.com. Go to page 70 for sources for prints and plates.

"Early spring puts me in mind of long walks through a **RUGGED, VERDANT** landscape—meadows and streams, green rolling hills, and tumble-down stone walls. There is beauty everywhere you look."

—Ayesha Patel, style director



WILD HERB RAVIOLI

ACTIVE TIME 40 MIN. TOTAL TIME 45 MIN.
MAKES 36 RAVIOLI SERVES 6

Egg-roll wrappers make these a snap to prepare.

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1½ ounces chickweed or spinach, stems removed (2 cups)
- 1 ounce deadnettle or henbit tops, including flowers, or spinach, stems removed (1½ cups)
- 1 ounce wild garlic greens or chives, cut into ½- to 1-inch lengths (¾ cup), plus more for garnish
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 ounces ricotta cheese (¼ cup)
- 2 ounces freshly grated Parmesan (½ cup), plus more for sprinkling
- 18 egg-roll wrappers (about 8 inches square)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

1. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add chickweed, deadnettle, and wild garlic greens and cook until bright green and softened, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Season with a pinch each of salt and pepper. Transfer to a medium bowl and fold in ricotta and Parmesan with a rubber spatula. Let cool.
2. Place 9 wrappers on a work surface. On each wrapper, mound 4 separate teaspoonfuls of filling in a grid 2 inches from edges. Dip a finger in water and trace a circle around each mound of filling. Place remaining 9 wrappers on top; press to seal. Cut out 36 ravioli with a 2-inch ring cutter.
3. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil; add oil. Cook ravioli until al dente, 5 to 8 minutes. Drain well. Serve topped with remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter and a sprinkling of Parmesan and garlic greens.



MUGWORT SOUP

ACTIVE TIME 35 MIN. TOTAL TIME 1 HR. 5 MIN.
MAKES 8 CUPS SERVES 6

Mugwort (Artemisia vulgaris) is one of about 300 species in the Artemisia genus. It's what you want for this soup; the others may be too bitter. Watercress will also work; although the soup won't taste the same, it will still be delicious.

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion or 3 small spring onions, thinly sliced (about 2 cups)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 10 medium white mushrooms (about 7 ounces), sliced
- 1 large Yukon Gold or russet potato (about 14 ounces), peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 4 ounces tender mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) or watercress leaves (about 8 cups)
- Tabasco
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until softened, about 4 minutes. Add garlic and mushrooms; cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Add potato and broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Simmer until potato is tender, about 20 minutes.
2. Add cream and mugwort, and simmer 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool slightly. Purée soup in batches in a blender until smooth. Return soup to pot. Add Tabasco to taste; season with salt and pepper.

NATURAL SELECTION

Bring the outdoors in with moss-green plates, vintage botanicals, an earthy cheese or two, a pitcher the color of bark.



SOURCES

1. **Redbreast 12-Year Irish whiskey**, \$50, astorwines.com.

2. **Vintage botanical prints**, from \$15 each, pageantbooks.com.

3. **Tumblers and stones**, \$60 for 2 glasses and 6 stones, dargitane.com. (Chilled and used in place of ice cubes, the stones prevent watery drinks.)

4. **Dinner plate**, in Green Glaze, \$45, joanplattpottery.com. **Robinson side plate**, \$82, by Astier de Villatte,

table-matters.com.

5. **Spare Stripe mug**, in White-and-Green, \$24, shapterrain.com.

6. **Square baking dish**, by Martha Stewart Collection, 8", in White, \$19, macys.com.

7. From left **Irish cheddar and Cashel Blue cheeses**, from \$12 per lb., murrayscheese.com.

8. **Jameson Whiskey marmalade**, \$7.25 for 12 oz., englishteastore.com.

9. **Earthenware pitcher**, in Matte Grey, \$65, thenewgeneralstore.com.

DESIGN | Updated April 12, 2013, 4:35 p.m. ET
FLOWER SCHOOL

Poppy Art

Floral designer Lindsey Taylor gets inspired by the tender twists in Brice Marden's painting 'The Sisters'

By LINDSEY TAYLOR

AS SOMEONE who works with flowers, I'm always looking for new ways to play with color, texture and shapes—and great paintings reliably inspire me to get past predictable bloom pairings. With this new monthly column, I hope to spur you to do the same by choosing a work of art whose colors, imagery or mood feels right for the season, and using it as the blueprint for a flower arrangement.



Ngoc Minh Ngo for The Wall Street Journal. Styling by Lindsey Taylor

The Inspiration



Brice Marden, courtesy Phaidon Press, from the book *Phaidon Focus: Brice Marden* by Eileen Costello

NEW SPRING LINES | The sinuous stems of oriental poppies and French tulips echo the gestural brush strokes in the painting. Ceramic pieces from left to right: Dessert bowl, \$40, joanplattpottery.com; Jan Burtz Vessel, \$60, ABC Home, 212-473-3000; Yellow Striped Cup, stylist's own; Dark Grey "Ripple" Pitcher, \$130, globaltable.com; Gustavsberg Studio Hand-Thrown Vase by Stig Lindberg, \$2,200, Wyeth Home, 212-243-3661

Brice Marden's painting 'The Sisters' served as the inspiration for Lindsey Taylor's arrangement.

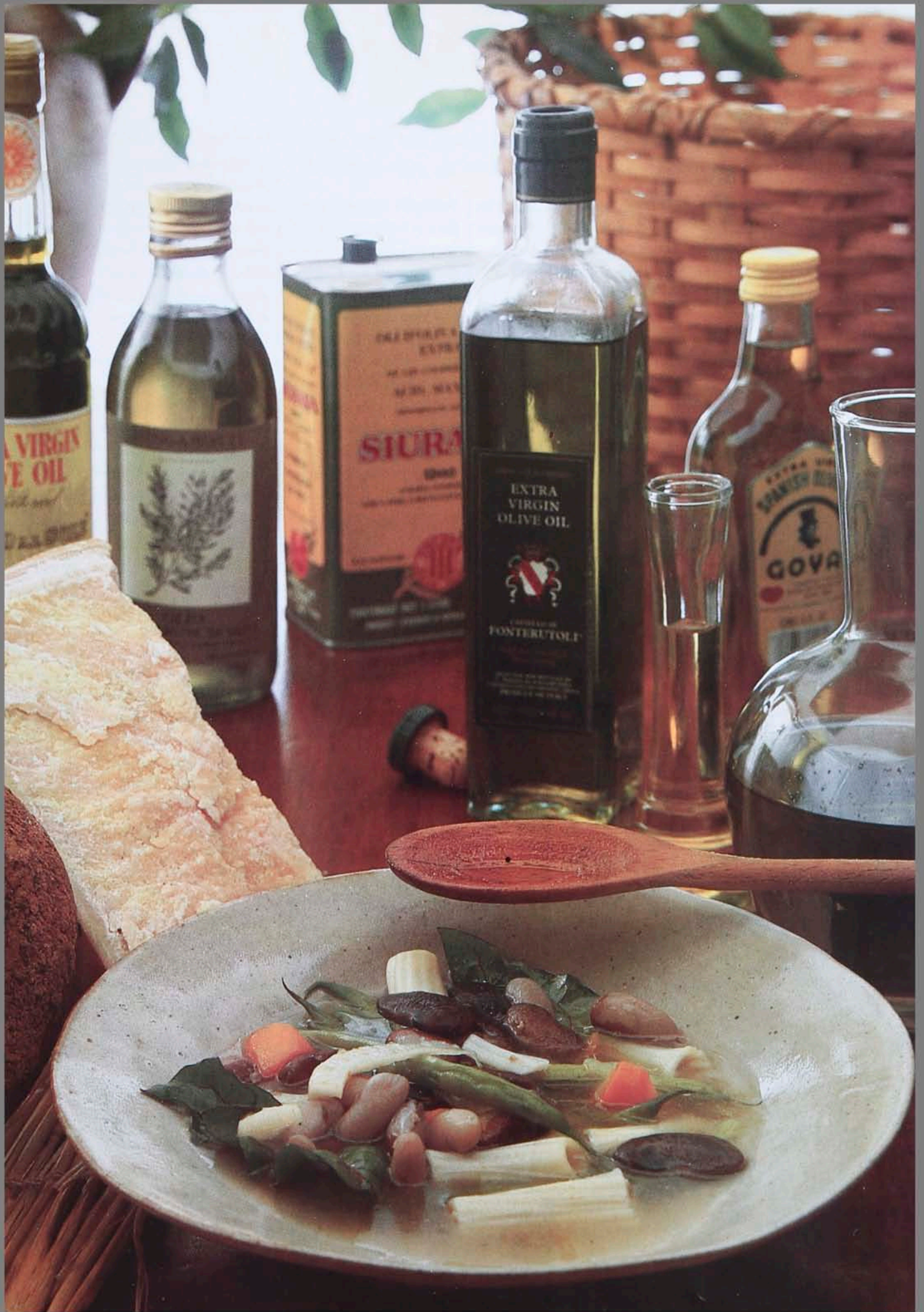
So...April. What caught my eye this month is "The Sisters" (below), a hypnotically luminous 1991-93 abstract work by Brice Marden, one of America's leading artists and the subject of a new book, "Brice Marden: Phaidon Focus" (Phaidon). With its pale yellow glow, "The Sisters" said early spring to me—a time when the witchhazels' spidery blooms are just passing, forsythias are kicking in and daffodils are taking center stage. Not incidentally, Mr. Marden created this painting at his studio in Eagles Mere, Pa., on a heavily wooded property where the natural surroundings and light no doubt greatly affected his work.

I started with oriental poppies and French tulips, whose long stems twist and bend much like Mr. Marden's dancing lines. Then I added black pussy willow branches, a nod to the long sticks Mr. Marden reportedly collects to apply paint—besides, I needed a dark line to stop the arrangement from becoming too soft and feminine. A branch of forced forsythia along with a few stems of daffodils helped deliver the aforementioned yellow glow. To add the layer of grayish blue that distinguishes some of the more furtive lines in "The Sisters," I tucked in some icy blue tweedia and chose a chalky gray vase.

I knew, above all, that the whole thing needed to breathe—there's a satisfying and transporting airiness to Mr. Marden's work. Though I could have easily packed in more of the vibrant poppies, I held back. And I think it works. Here's to April.

A version of this article appeared April 13, 2013, on page D10 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: POPPY ART.





SETTING THE SCENE
continued



This table gets its country chic from clusters of grapes interspersed with glittering votive candles, apples, pears and oranges. Start by wrapping glass votive candleholders in gold mesh fabric. Tie a bow of wired ribbon around each one, and then cut the fabric just below the rim of the candleholder. Next, lay grape clusters of alternating colors, several

inches apart, atop a plaid tablecloth or shawl; the one pictured is Hunting McNichol from The Ralph Lauren Home Collection (\$220; 212-642-8700). Fill in each space with one candle and one fruit, alternating the variety and placement of the fruit, above or below the holder. Now run gold cord down the entire length of the fruit runner. Top the table

with dinner plates (\$48) and bowls (\$36) by the potter Joan Platt (Claiborne Gallery; 212-475-3072), green glass goblets (\$6.99) and highball glasses (\$5.99) from Pier 1 Imports (800-245-4595), Pottery Barn's stainless-steel Stonehenge flatware (five pieces \$35; 800-922-5507) and B²'s leaf-patterned napkins (\$20; 212-645-8164). ■

SPICE ROUTE



PLATE AND PLATTER: JOAN PLATT

MICHAEL GEIGER

Roast pork with cinnamon glaze, as cooked in Goa, suits fried rice, as cooked in Macao.

**Over the years,
Mediterranean flavors have turned
up in the strangest places.**