***Steak au Poivre***

Ingredients:

2 T roughly ground Peppercorns

4 Steaks (preferably Filet Mignon 3-4oz.)

Salt

Butter

2 T Shallots or onions

½ cup beef stock

1/3 cup cognac

1. Ground the peppercorns in a bowl or a mortar and pestle. Dry the steaks on a paper towel. Rub and press the pepper in the steaks. Cover with waxed paper. Let stand for at least a half hour; two or three hours would be better.
2. Put 1 ½ T of butter and 1 ½ T oil in a skillet and place over moderately high heat until the butter foam begins to subside. Sauté the steak 3 to 4 minutes on each side. If you have a thicker cut of steak, place the pan into a preheated 350 degree oven for about 3-5 minutes or until the steak reaches your desired degree of doneness. To test the steak you can cut an incision into it to see the doneness you want. Remove to a hot platter to rest while you complete the sauce.
3. Pour the fat out of the skillet. Add 1 T of Butter and 2 T of minced shallots or onions and cook slowly for a minute.
4. Pour in ½ cup of beef stock and boil down rapidly over high heat while scraping the coagulated cooking juices.
5. Then add 1/3 cup of cognac and boil down rapidly to evaporate the alcohol for a minute or two.
6. Off heat swirl in 3 to 4 T of softened butter half tablespoons at a time. Pour the sauce over the steak and serve.