

*Crispy oysters
with whisky
cream pancetta and
parsnip puree*

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Oysters are one of the most nutritionally well balanced of foods, containing protein, carbohydrates and lipids. The National Heart and Lung Institute suggest oysters as an ideal food for inclusion in low-cholesterol diets. They are an excellent source of vitamins A, B1 (thiamin), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), C (ascorbic acid) and D (calciferol).

Ingredients

8 medium to large oysters of the finest quality
1 cup panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
½ cup flour seasoned with salt and pepper
1 egg, whisked
oil for frying
1 bunch of parsnips, peeled and diced
2 Tbsp butter
1 large onion chopped
250ml cream
salt and white pepper
100g pancetta cut into small dice
1 Tsp sugar
1 Tsp white wine vinegar
½ Tsp soy sauce
50 ml of good peaty whisky

Method

- ❶ Remove the oysters from the shell (keeping the better half of each shell as the garnish) as described in the sidebar – but don't eat them!
- ❷ Toss them in some seasoned flour and then into the beaten egg and, finally, the breadcrumbs. Shake any excess crumbs off. Place in the fridge until required.
- ❸ Melt the butter in a saucepan and add the onion and cook until translucent. This takes about five minutes on a medium heat.
- ❹ Add the parsnips and a little water. Cover with a tight fitting lid and cook on a low heat until the parsnips are very soft.
- ❺ Remove the parsnips from the heat and add 125ml of the cream and season to taste with some salt and white pepper. Blend with a powerful stick blender until you have a smooth puree. Set aside until needed.
- ❻ Heat a nonstick pan until hot and add the pancetta and cook until just crispy.
- ❼ Then add the sugar, vinegar, soy and whisky. This will reduce quickly because of the heat.
- ❽ Then add the remaining cream and cook until just lightly thickened. When serving, place some

parsnip puree in the oyster shell and top with an oyster that has been quickly fried until golden brown and pour over a little of the whisky cream sauce and serve.

Whisky and Tabasco granita

It was rumored that Casanova ate over 50 raw oysters a day to boost his libido. Their most classic preparation is raw, also known as "on the half shell," when they are supposedly their most potent.

Ingredients

8 medium to large oysters of the finest quality
500ml water
100g castor sugar
150ml whisky (we used Laphroaig 10 year old)
Grated zest of 1 lemon
1 Tbsp Tabasco sauce

Method

- ❶ Bring the sugar and water to the boil in a pot and cook until reduced by about half. Remove from the heat and cool.
- ❷ Add the whisky and the zest along with the Tabasco. Pour the mixture into a shallow tray and place in the freezer until partially frozen.
- ❸ Mash the mixture with a fork to break up the ice crystals and return to the freezer for half an hour.
- ❹ Repeat this process until you have a hard, dry, crystalline granita – it should take at least 8 hours so do it well in advance.
- ❺ Serve the oysters in the half shell on some ice with the granita on top. This keeps them chilled from both sides and makes them a pleasure to eat.

How to shuck an oyster

Drape a towel over your open palm and hold the oyster that way - the shell ridges are sharp! Grip the oyster firmly in one hand, knife in the other. Slip the knife blade between the top and bottom shell right by the hinge on back.

1

Run the knife around the oyster until you get to the other side. This sounds easy until you're actually doing it! Some oysters just don't take kindly to people sticking knives in their shell. Be brave and put some muscle into it, but be careful – this is where you'll cut or stab yourself.

2

Using a twisting motion, pry the top and bottom shells apart. Be gentle but firm so you don't lose any of the liquor inside.

3

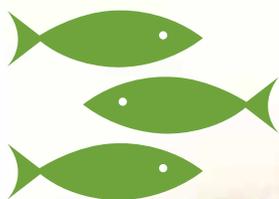
Cut the oyster free from its shell. They are connected by a tough knob on the underside; slide your knife under and sever it. You can either go to the trouble of setting down your blade and using a little fork to pick the oyster out, or you can do like the natives do and just scoop it with your knife and pop it in your mouth. Drink the liquor out from the shell.

4



Dorado with edamame beans, seaweed velouté, yuzu and buttery orzo

This dish just tastes like a dip in the sea, especially when you make your own stock from scratch. The seaweed we use comes from our coastline but this dish is all about freshness. It's a little rich with the cream but it is winter after all... It's also full of goodness packed into the edamame and the seaweed. Remember, in order to make a good velouté you need to start with a good fish stock. Serves 4 as a main course



Ingredients

4 x 200g fillets of Dorado
1 cup fresh edamame beans (young and tender soy beans)
10 ml yuzu juice or lime juice (Yuzu is Japanese citrus fruit)
50g fresh seaweed or dried if you can't get fresh
1 cup orzo, boiled (orzo is Italian rice-shaped pasta)
2 Tbsp butter
salt and pepper
2 cups fish velouté (recipe follows)

Method

❶ Once the velouté is complete, heat it up again and add the seaweed and edamame beans and keep warm. ❷ In a frying pan add 1 tablespoon of the butter. ❸ Season the Dorado fillets with salt and pepper and pan fry until just cooked and lightly golden. Set aside to rest for a minute or two. ❹ Warm the cooked orzo with the remaining butter and season with salt and pepper. ❺ Lay the orzo on a plate and arrange the fish neatly on top and pour over the velouté before adding equal amounts of the yuzu or lime juice for a hint of citrus. Serve.

Dorado with edamame beans, seaweed velouté, yuzu and buttery orzo



Fish velouté

Ingredients

4 shallots, chopped. 120g unsalted butter.
1 bottle white wine. 400 ml Noilly Prat.
1ℓ fish stock . 500 ml thick cream

Method:

- ❶ Sweat shallots in the butter until translucent. Add the white wine and Noilly Prat, and reduce to a syrup.
- ❷ Then add the fish stock and boil to reduce by half.
- ❸ Add the cream and simmer for a few minutes to reduce to a coating consistency and strain through a fine sieve.
- ❹ Set aside until required.

Fish stock

Ingredients

2 kg white fish bones. 2 sticks celery, diced. 2 carrots peeled and diced
2 leeks, diced. 1 bulk of fennel, chopped. 1 bottle dry white wine

Method

Place all the ingredients in a stockpot and cover with water. Simmer for 30 minutes making sure the stock does not boil. Remove any impurities that rise to the surface during cooking to ensure a clean, clear stock. Strain the liquid through muslin cloth and discard the solids. Reduce the liquid by two-thirds over a gentle heat and reserve. Cool the stock completely and refrigerate. Store for a few days in the fridge or freeze for no longer than 3 months.

recipes



Leek and potato soup with a stock of porcini mushrooms and teriyaki smoked snoek

This soup might sound unlikely but it's on my menu and it commands certain expletives so enthusiastic that we can't actually publish them! It's well worth a try at home.

Serves 4 to 6 as a starter

Ingredients

2 leeks, chopped
1 onion, chopped
100g butter
4 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced
1ℓ porcini stock (recipe follows)
salt and white pepper to taste
250ml milk
250ml cream
Finely sliced spring onion as a garnish
teriyaki smoked Snoek (recipe follows)

Method

① Gently sweat the chopped leeks and the chopped onion in butter for 30minutes until soft but do not let them brown – so watch them carefully. ② Add potatoes and sauté for five minutes just to begin the cooking process without adding colour. ③ Add the stock and milk. Bring to a simmer for 30 minutes until the potatoes are soft. ④ Blend in a blender or food processor until very smooth. Strain, cool and reserve. ⑤ When required, heat the soup and place some teriyaki smoked snoek in the centre of the soup and garnish with some spring onions and serve immediately. 🍴



Porcini stock

Ingredients

1 onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
1 large leek, chopped
2 bay leaves
75g dried porcini mushrooms
125ml soy sauce
1 tsp black peppercorns
2ℓ water

Method

Wash all ingredients and place in a pot. Bring to a simmer and cook for 45 minutes. Strain and reserve.

Teriyaki smoked Snoek

We smoke our own Snoek but if you don't know how, there's lots of good smoked Snoek to be found.

Ingredients

200g smoked Snoek, flecked
125ml good quality soy sauce
75g brown sugar
75ml Japanese rice wine or vodka
75ml water

Method

Combine soy sauce, rice wine, sugar and water together and bring to a boil. Reduce until light syrup. Add flecked snoek and reserve.