



Pheasant braised in Red wine, porcini mushrooms and pancetta with spinach and chestnut baked polenta

Just a brief note this month as I have not got a minute to spare. Like every other month things keep moving in the right direction despite the current economic situation, I guess every one's got to eat! This month I have again more launch parties this time for Portland Apartments in Bristol, Christmas parties galore and then I will be making my annual pilgrimage to St Moritz in Switzerland for New Years week celebrations.

In the pipeline I am looking into dinner dances at one of my venues in Conjunction with Michele Webber of the Bristol Dance Factory, yet to be confirmed. I will be supporting Averys of Bristol matching food to wine at their cellars in Culver St, Bristol, starting with Spanish wines and Tapas in January. For more details please call 07920 066 075 or email tyrone@tyronepower-personalchef.com

My recipe of the month is a wonderful winter dish, Pheasant braised in red wine with porcini mushrooms and pancetta. Try this with a lovely northern Italian red wine, either a Barbaresco or Barolo.

I'd like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year, thank you for your support in 2008 and I look forward to working with you all in 2009.

Pheasant braised in Red wine, porcini mushrooms and pancetta with spinach and chestnut baked polenta

Serves 4

Ingredients

2 Pheasants cut up on the bone, legs and thighs together and breast by themselves, (your butcher can do this for you)

1 Medium carrot diced

1 Onion diced

2 Sticks of celery diced

1 Leek, white part quartered and diced

1 Head of garlic

1 small bunch of thyme

3 Bay leaves

300g pancetta cut into lardons

50g Dried porcini mushrooms soaked in hot water for 5 minutes and drained

150g Button mushrooms

250g Block of butter

Sea salt

Black pepper

Extra virgin olive oil

½ A bottle of good north Italian wine like a Barolo or Barbaresco

1 litre Brown chicken stock

375g Quick cook polenta

300g Spinach washed and chopped

1.5 litre Milk

200g Parmesan grated

300g Chestnuts cooked and diced

Method

1) *Heat a pan on the stove with a few tablespoons of olive oil in the bottom, add your spinach, season and cook off until wilted, remove from the heat and place in a colander to drain off excess liquid. Once cooled, squeeze out all remaining water and set to one side.*

2) *Brush a baking dish which is roughly 5cm deep, 15cm wide and 30cm long with butter.*

3) *Place your milk into a large heavy bottomed pot with a bay leaf, 4 cloves of crushed garlic, a good pinch of salt and a good milling of fresh black pepper, bring to a simmer and add your polenta. Stir continuously as it will soon start to thicken. After 4-5 minutes the polenta will be a mash potato consistency. Add your parmesan and stir through.*

4) *Pour out half of the polenta into the baking dish and spread smooth with a palette knife, top with the spinach, then stir through the chestnuts with the remaining polenta and pour on top of the spinach and smooth over again with your palette knife. This can now be placed in the fridge and left to cool.*

5) *Heat a heavy bottomed saucepan or frying pan on the stove, add a good knob of butter and a good glug of olive oil. Lay the pheasant pieces in, skin side down, and brown off basting in the butter, season and turn over, brown off and remove. Place into an earthen ware pot. Repeat this process for the carrot, onion, celery, leek, button mushrooms and bacon lardons. Once all of these ingredients have been cooked off add them to the pot with the pheasant along with 4 cloves of crushed garlic, thyme, 2 bay leaves, porcini mushrooms, wine and stock.*

- 6) *Cover the pot with a tight fitting lid, if this is not available use a sheet of baking parchment along with tinfoil tightly wrapped around the top and place this in a preheated oven at 180 degrees for 2 hours*
- 7) *Towards the end of cooking the lid can be removed to allow the sauce to reduce and thicken if required.*
- 8) *Remove your polenta from the fridge, it should be set by now. Place a chopping board on top and turn the whole lot upside down. Tap the dish on the bottom and it should just fall straight out onto the board. If it doesn't you may need to run a knife around the edge to loosen it up. Chop the polenta into even pieces, about 5cm squared.*
- 9) *After two hours the pheasant should be ready, remove from the oven but keep covered, brush your polenta with more butter and place it into the oven for 15 minutes to warm through. Once it is hot, place it in a bowl along with your pheasant and enjoy with a good glass of the leftover red wine!*

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