



What's Cookin',

Three unusual and exotic recipes by Nicola Loubser (pic). There's more to the Spanish than paella...

Pigeon breasts with Chocolate

A recipe of Spanish origin. The use of chocolate in game sauces and dishes is a Mediterranean favorite as it imparts an amazing richness of flavor.

10 – 14 pigeon breasts, skinned	1 tbsp. red or raspberry vinegar
10 – 14 rashers of streaky bacon, toothpicks	300 ml Chicken or game stock
Salt & freshly ground black pepper	1 wine glass of wine
Sunflower oil or olive oil	2 bay-leaves
One large onion, sliced	2 cloves
1 tbsp. plain flour	3 tbsp. grated bitter chocolate
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped	1 tbsp. sugar

1. Season the breasts with salt and pepper, wrapping each in a strip of bacon and pinning the bacon with a toothpick.
2. Heat oil in a deep casserole and add the breasts, browning on all sides for 5 min or so. Add onion and garlic and cook for 2-3 more minutes until they soften.
3. To the pot add the flour to make a roux, then add vinegar, sugar, stock, wine, bay-leaves and cloves. Bring to the boil and season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Simmer for 20-30 min or until breasts are tender. Transfer the breasts to a serving dish, sprinkle with the grated chocolate and keep warm.
5. Reduce the sauce a bit and then cover the breasts with it before serving.
6. If you like something different you can add 3 tbsp. of kirsch and a tsp. of cayenne pepper to the sauce before you serve it.

Guinea-fowl parcels with fruit coulis

3 – 4 Guinea-fowl breasts	5 juniper berries
6 – 8 sheets of phyllo pastry	1 bay-leaf
oil and a pastry brush	2 sprigs of thyme
250 ml cream	2 sprigs of rosemary
a hand full of basil leaves, chopped	2 onions, one sliced & one chopped finely
2 tbsp. of your favorite chili sauce	2 cups tropical fruit (mango, litchi, etc.)
2 tbsp. Soya sauce	squeeze of lemon juice
1 clove garlic, crushed	2 tbsp. of honey
200 ml chicken or game stock	

1. Tenderize the guineafowl (bash it with a meat tenderizer or similar object) and then cut in halves and braise in the stock with the juniper berries, bay-leaf, thyme, rosemary and sliced onion for a bout 10 minutes or until tender. Set aside to cool.
2. Meanwhile take your fruit, lemon juice and honey and purée. You can make this a bit before hand too, but return it to room temperature for serving.
3. When the guineafowl is cool enough to touch, feather the meat so that no chunks are discernable. Preheat the oven to 140 C.
4. In a pot over medium-high heat brown the chopped onions and garlic. Add the feathered meat, chili, Soya sauce and the cream, stir until cream has been soaked up, taking care not to let it burn. Take off the heat and stir in the basil.
5. Oil your phyllo pasty sheets on both sides one at a time and cut each into four equal squares. Put a generous tbsp. of filling into each square and fold closed so that no filling can ooze out. Place four to six at a time on an oiled baking tray and pop one or two trays in the oven for 10 min or until the pastry is lightly browned. Continue until all the filling has been used. Do not put too much filing in a bit of pastry, it will become soggy.
6. To serve, swirl a few spoons of the fruit coulis onto each place and top with two or three pastries.

Doc...?

Pigeon Chop Suey

250g packet egg noodles or similar
2 tbsp. oil
400g pigeon breast, cut into strips
230g can of peeled water chestnuts
1 onion finely chopped
_ green pepper, chopped
_ red pepper, chopped
1 punnet mushrooms, sliced
150g small broccoli florets
100g cashew nuts (optional)
_ tsp. crushed garlic
1 _ tsp. ground ginger
fresh ground black pepper
5 tbsp. soy sauce
3 tbsp. sherry
6 tsp. Bisto granules

1. Pre-cook the peppers, broccoli and mushroom by steaming or microwaving with a splash of water, taking care not to over cook them.
2. Cook the egg noodles in boiling water for three minutes and drain, set aside and keep warm.
3. In a pot warm the oil and pop in the pigeon and onion, stirring continuously to brown it. Add the vegetables, water chestnuts and cashew nuts. Fry and stir for approximately 5 min or until the meat is cooked through.
4. Add the ginger, garlic, black pepper, soy sauce and sherry and cook for another minute or two, stirring well. With a bit of water make the bisto into a watery paste and stir in gradually to mix with the liquid in the pot.
5. Mix in the noodles or serve noodles with pigeon on top as per taste.



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