

POACHED GREENGAGES WITH GINGERED, TOFFEE CRUMBS & CREAM

Greengage season is upon us and this is just another delicious way to celebrate them!

Ingredients

Serves 4-6

1kg firm, ripe greengages
125ml white wine
110g (1/2 cup) caster sugar
1 star anise

Crumbs

200g day old loaf of bread (sourdough works well) torn into small pieces
75g unsalted butter, roughly diced
200g caster or raw cane sugar
1tsp ground ginger

Cream

Drop or two of vanilla extract
300ml cream, lightly whipped
2 Tbsp icing sugar

Method

Begin by poaching the greengages. To do this put the wine, sugar and star anise in a medium size pot. Bring to the boil to dissolve the sugar, reduce the heat to simmer and place the greengages into this syrup. Gently poach for 10 minutes or until tender. The skins will flake off a little and if you like you can peel them off when cool.

Meanwhile to make the crumbs preheat the oven to 180C.

Spread the torn bread crumbs over the base of a roasting dish in a single layer then dot with the butter. Bake the crumbs until they are deep golden in colour and crisp (20 minutes). Remove from the oven and spread over a large baking tray lined with baking paper.

Place the sugar and 1/4 cup water in a small saucepan and slowly bring to a simmer. Cook over medium heat for 7-8 minutes (do not stir) or until you get a rich, caramel colour. Carefully pour over the crumbs, using a fork toss the crumbs over in the toffee to coat well. Sprinkle with a little ginger powder and cool. When cool, separate, they can be stored in an airtight container for up to a week.

Whip the cream with vanilla and icing sugar until thickened.

To serve – place the poached greengages and a little syrup in a bowl, add a generous spoonful of cream and sprinkle with the toffee crumbs.

SIMPLY GRILLED EGGPLANT WITH BALSAMIC VINEGAR & OREGANO

EGGPLANT/AUBERGINE, There are so many wonderful dishes throughout the world that celebrate this versatile vegetable. This is just one of many dishes and techniques that work well with Eggplant.

Ingredients

1 medium eggplant – per person
Slice the eggplant into ½ cm thick slices – lenthways
1 clove garlic, sliced into thin slices
1-2 Tbsp balsamic or red wine vinegar
4 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil (you may need more)
Sea salt flakes and freshly ground pepper
1 Tbsp fresh oregano leaves – basil, parsley and marjoram work well

Method

Heat a grill or BBQ up to medium-hot

Place the eggplant slices side by side onto the hot grill. Cook until grill mark appears on each side and the flesh feels tender and the slice of eggplant begins to wilt (3 minutes each side).

Meanwhile add all the other ingredients into a serving dish and when the eggplant slices are cooked plunge them immediately into the dressing and allow them to soak up the dressing. Continue until all the eggplant is cooked. It can be eaten hot or at room temperature.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING VENDORS FOR THEIR FANTASTIC PRODUCTS.

JUDGE ROCK WINES – wine
TE MAHENO – bushfire pumpkins and garlic
ETTRICK GARDENS – greengages
WAIKOUIATI GARDENS – zucchini flowers
CARDRONA MERINO LAMB – sausages

ROAST BUSHFIRE PUMPKIN WITH CHILLI

Ingredients

Serves 4-8 as main or side

1 bushfire pumpkin (1kg), cut into 8 wedges
1 red chilli
1 fresh nutmeg
Extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
Handful fresh sage, marjoram, coriander, or flat leaf parsley, roughly chopped

Method

Preheat your oven to 200C, Place the pumpkin wedges on to a baking tray and drizzle with oil on both sides. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and grated nutmeg add sage or marjoram leaves (if using) roast for 8 minutes. Turn over pumpkin and continue cooking until tender.

Make a quick dressing by adding 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar with 6 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, sprinkle of salt and pepper and mix to combine.

Remove from oven and drizzle over the dressing, sprinkle over the chilli if using and coriander or parsley Serve. If wanting to eat as a main course, serve it with a handful of peppery rocket leaves and perhaps a drizzle of yoghurt mixed with a little tahini or herbs!

BATTERED ZUCCHINI FLOWERS

ZUCCHINI FLOWERS – the female flower is a brilliant golden blossom which is attached to the end of the emergent zucchini. The male flower grows directly on the stem of the zucchini plant. Both flowers are edible.

Ingredients

8- 12 flowers
Vegetable oil for frying
Sea salt
A handful of fresh mint leaves, finely sliced
1 lemon zest and juice

For the batter:

1 cup self-raising flour
1 cup beer or soda water
Sea salt
1 egg white, whisked

Methods

Handle the flowers gently and check inside and out for any stray bugs and remove the stamen. Mix the first 3 ingredients for the batter together in a bowl. Whisk the egg whites until firm and fold into the batter.

½ fill a large heavy-base fry pan up with oil until it reaches 180C or until a small cube of bread immediately bubbles.

Dip each courgette with its flower into the batter, and fry in the oil until crispy and golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper, then place them on a serving plate, sprinkle with salt, and mint.

CARDRONA MERINO LAMB SAUSAGES WITH PASTA DORO PASTA

Ingredients

Serves 4

4 Cardrona merino lamb sausages
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 clove garlic
2 tomatoes, roughly cut
Olive oil for cooking
Handful fresh spinach, silver beet, rocket or cavalo nero (optional)
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Freshly grated parmesan cheese
500g pappardalle, tagliatelle, fettuccine or linguine pasta – fresh or dried

Method

Start by 2/3 filling a large pot with heavily salted water and bring to a rolling boil. Meanwhile heat a large fry pan with a dash of oil, remove the meat from the sausages by simply squeezing the meat out so it forms little meatballs. Add them to the fry pan and cook for a couple of minutes or until golden, add the onion and cook for 1 minute, add the garlic, and tomato and toss through with the sausage. Allow to fry for another minute until the tomato starts to colour and caramelize a little, add ¼ cup water to loosen up the tomatoes and to get all the tasty bits off the bottom, reduce until thick and glossy.

Add the pasta to the boiling water and give a brief stir to ensure it doesn't stick. If using fresh pasta it will only take about 3-5 minutes (always check the packet for times), if using dried it will take considerably longer.

When your pasta is cooked drain away 90% of the cooking liquid and reserve the remaining. Add your pasta to the sausage mixture and toss well to combine. Add a little of the water if needed to loosen the sauce so it clings comfortably to the pasta – add more liquid if needed. Season well with salt and freshly ground pepper and grate over plenty of parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

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