

RECIPES

Arise, Sir Loin'

The sirloin is a great roast lunch option and is regarded to be the rib-eye's refined older sibling as it's got more balanced marbling and fat and beautifully flavoured when well-aged, and cooked correctly.

King James I is said to have knighted a particularly delicious loin of beef during a meal at Hoghton Tower, near Preston, Lancashire, in 1617 and thus we are presented with the name sirloin as it became 'knighted' by a monarch.

It's also said to have come from the French word 'surloynge' - which is made up of 'sur', meaning 'over' or 'above', and 'loynge' meaning 'loin'.

Whatever the interpretations one of the most important cooking elements for this joint is making sure you get plenty of caramelisation on the cooking of the meat which is called Maillard's reaction.

A soupçon of this process is the browning reactions that take place between amino acids, proteins and sugars in the meat producing a plethora of flavorful compounds which include; malty, toasted, bready and nutty notes.

I find that pot roasting the joint is one of the best ways to create these flavours and also makes the sauce somewhat easier at the end as you shall have accumulated all that wonderful flavours during the cooking process.

RECIPE

POT ROASTED BEEF SIRLOIN AND GRAVY

INGREDIENTS

1kg Aged sirloin

1 carrot

1 shallot

5 cloves of garlic

2 sprigs of thyme

2 sprigs of Rosemary

Trimmings or shavings of vegetable peelings at hand, any of the tomato trimmings from the salad would be great (could save these during the week and then use for the sauce in this recipe)

Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Take the beef from the fridge an hour before cooking to bring it to room temperature.

Then season the meat with salt.

Heat a le creuset pot with some vegetable oil and brown on the fat side down slowing in the pot, should take about 20 minutes then seal roast all the other parts of the meat, take out any excess oil.

Add the carrots and shallots to the pot and charred them.

Then add the garlic, herbs and trimmings of leftovers.

Add a splash of red wine now if you have some and about 300ml of water then place the beef on top and into a preheated oven at 190 degrees or gas mark 5.

Cook for between 20 to 30 minutes, checking the core temperature as you go through the process, ideally cook to about 50 degrees core which is rare, 55 will give you a more medium and over 60 you're going more to well-done range.

Once cooked to correct taste them take the beef out and rest for 20 minutes.

Place the pot back on the heat then add 400ml water to deglaze the pot with all the vegetables and reduce to consistency, pass then add a small square of cold butter and a little cracked black pepper, serve over the slices of beef.

RECIPE

CARROTS GLACÉ

INGREDIENTS

3 carrots sliced

200ml water

30g butter

1 tablespoon spoon of sugar

Salt and pepper

METHOD

Slice the carrots finely into circles and place in a pot with all the ingredients.

Cook with a lid on for 3 minutes, then take the lid off and cook until the water is almost evaporated and the carrots look nice and shiny and then serve.

RECIPE

FRENCH BEANS

INGREDIENTS

300g French beans

200ml water

1 clove of garlic

50ml olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Prepare the French beans by taking the tops off. Then wash and place in a pot with the water and salt and pepper.

Cook with lid on until tender.

Crush the garlic with the back of a knife and then add some salt and crush into a paste with the blade of the knife.

Add crush garlic to olive oil.

Once beans cooked add the garlic olive oil and serve.

RECIPE

WHOLE ROASTED CAULIFLOWER

INGREDIENTS

1 Cauliflower

50g Butter

1 sprig thyme

1 sprig Rosemary

1 clove of garlic

Salt and pepper

Spices if available in the ladder any of the following, cumin, coriander seeds, turmeric, or even a little nutmeg, would do nicely.

METHOD

Wash the vegetable then take off the putter leaves, may chop and keep these for the beef sauce trimmings.

Square the base up a little by trimming, making sure to keep it whole.

Season with salt and then toast in a pan with vegetable oil.

Caramelised strongly all around the vegetable then place on its base standing upright and add the butter, start the butter foaming and then add the garlic, herbs and spices.

Place in the oven at 180 degrees, gas mark 4 for 5 minutes, then take out and bast the butter over the cauliflower, keep placing in and out of the oven while basting every 3 minutes until a knife goes through it easy, then season with salt and pepper and serve on a plate, to be carved with the beef.

RECIPE

ROAST POTATOES

INGREDIENTS

500g Chippers potatoes

Garlic, herbs

Vegetable oil or duck fat if available

Salt

METHOD

Wash and peel the potatoes, then cut into odd shapes, the more sides or surface area the better, some say that they should be cut at about a 40-degree angle.

Wash off some of the starch then place in a pot with salted water, salt to your taste.

Cook with a clove of garlic, and whatever herbs you may have available, bay leaf, thyme, rosemary, sage, tarragon stalks any would work perfectly.

Boil the potatoes until almost falling apart then gently strain in a colander, stir them in the colander to fluff the potatoes a little.

I would generally do this process the night before and place the potatoes flat on a tray to dry out uncovered in a fridge.

Heat some vegetable oil in a large pan or tray and then add the potatoes, I try to brown a little all-around at this stage as it prevents the oil becoming too smoky when placed in the oven.

Once the potatoes are golden all around then take off the tray and season with some salt and serve.

RECIPE

HERITAGE TOMATOES, MUSTARD AND SHALLOT DRESSING

INGREDIENTS

1kg Heritage tomatoes
1 Shallot
1/2 Lemon juice of
1 Sprig Basil
1 Sprig Marjoram
100ml extra virgin olive oil
50ml water
1 spoon Dijon mustard
Salt, pepper to taste

METHOD

Make sure that the tomatoes are ripe and at room temperature, this shall have a great impact in the flavours.

If they feel rather cold then you can slice them onto a plate and leave for 30 minutes at room temperature.

Dice a shallot into very fine dice, add to a whisking bowl, with mustard, water, a splash of sherry vinegar if available and lemon juice.

Whisk in the olive oil gently, season with salt and pepper.

Dress the tomatoes with the shallot vinaigrette, pick some basil and marjoram over the tomatoes and serve.

RECIPE

CARAMELISED NECTARINES

INGREDIENTS

4 Nectarines
80g caster sugar
2 strips of lemon zest no white
20g unsalted butter
200g Crème fraîche
Lemon juice to taste

METHOD

Wash and cut the nectarines in halves and remove the stones.

Caramelize the sugar in a pan, mix in the butter, and place face down in the sugar the fruits and cook until coloured, add the lemon zest and then the lemon juice.

Cook until fruits are soft, grate some lemon zest into the crème fraîche and serve a dollop with the warm nectarines.