**Venison Loin, Venison and black pudding bonbon, celeriac puree, cavalo nero and pickled blackberries**

This recipe is similar to the dish I made for the critics on MasterChef, but I have added the black pudding and venison bonbon since I am not restricted by time, as was the case on the show. The dish would work very well without it, but it just adds an extra element and some crunch to the dish. I have also changed the vegetables as many of them are currently out of season and difficult to get hold of in local shops.

Serves 4

Ingredients

*For the venison and bonbon*

1 Venison Loin (these can vary in size, so best to explain the supplier or butcher the number of people you intend to serve). Each person should get 3 good slices of the loin.

1 venison shin (the bottom of the leg portion – this is to slow cook and shred for the bon bon)

Venison bones (if possible it is good to get some additional bones to help flavour your sauce.

Onion, celery, carrots, juniper, thyme

Rosemary, thyme, garlic

3-4 juniper berries

150g black pudding

70g panko breadcrumbs

70g plain flour

1 egg

*For the puree*

1200g celeriac

10g butter

75ml whole milk

25ml cream

salt

Truffle oil

*For the pickled blackberries*

12 blackberries

100ml red wine vinegar

50g sugar

*For the Venison Jus*

Some of the strained liquid from the venison shin

Beef stock

Redcurrant jelly

Cassis

Red wine

*For the Cavalo Nero*

Cavalo Nero

Butter

Method

*For the Bon Bon*

* Place celery, carrot, onion, rosemary, juniper berries in a heavy bottomed pan with a small amount of sunflower oil
* Brown the vegetable on a high heat and remove
* Now add venison shins, neck, bones to the pan and brown on a high heat
* Mix vegetables and shins together and add a glass of red wine, a bsp.. redcurrant jelly, 1 litre beef stock
* Put a lid on and place in over at 130C for a 2-3 hours
* The cooking time may depend on the size of the meat joint
* Once cooked, the meat should come away from the bone easily
* Remove the meat from the sauce and leave aside to cool. Once cool, shred the meat from the piece of venison. Seize the sauce and keep in a jug until later.
* Now take the black pudding and warm it slightly in a pan to reach a texture that can be moulded.
* Mix the venison meat and black pudding together in almost equal quantities. There should be plenty of meat mixture to make at least 4 bon bons and probably a few more. Shape the mix into round balls around the size of a golf ball and place in the fridge to set
* Once set (maybe an hour) place flour, egg and breadcrumbs in 3 separate bowls in front of you. Roll the bon bon in flour, then egg, then breadcrumbs.
* Set aside and deep fry a few minutes before plating
* Set the oil at 180C, or when a breadcrumb fizzes in the oil
* Fry until golden brown just before service

*Celeriac puree*

* Place a saucepan with lid on the heat and add butter
* Gently soften the celeriac (cubed) for around 5 minutes in the pan
* Add the milk, cream and salt to the pan. Simmer gently for around 10 minutes until celeriac is soft all the way through
* Use a slotted spoon to remove the celeriac from the pan and add to a food blender. Blend the celeriac and use a little of the butter, cream and milk mixture to get to a smooth texture (like a loose mashed potato). Now add a few drops of the truffle oil and seasoning to taste (this is optional, but really does add flavour to the puree)

*Pickled Blackberries*

* Place vinegar, juniper berries and sugar in a saucepan. Bring to the boil and add blackberries
* Turn off the heat and leave for 5 mins in hot vinegar
* Remove and retain for plating

*Sauce*

* Take the remaining sauce from the cooking of the shin, etc.
* Hopefully this will now be cool and the fat will have separated from the sauce
* Add to a pan, add 75ml of cassis (if using) or port
* Simmer the liquid and reduce by around a half, or until you have a glossy sauce
* Grate a little dark chocolate in at the end if you have some

*Venison Loin*

* Use a heavy based pan (ideally cast iron) or frying pan and heat to a high temperature. Add a little oil and wait until smoking hot.
* Season the venison fillet and place carefully in the pan. Do not move the meat and allow it to form a seared crust.
* Turn the fillet and sear all exposed edges.
* Add butter, 2 cloves of garlic and rosemary, thyme, etc to the pan. With a spoon, baste the loin in the butter and oil continually
* You could put the venison in a pre-heated oven at 200c for around 5 minutes, or continue to cook in the pan. The venison will be pink when there is still a little bounce in the meat to touch. If using a thermometer

*Cavalo Nero*

* Take the stiff middle vein out of the cavalo nero with a knife
* Add butter and a small amount of water to a plan – wilt the vegetable so still green

*To Serve*

* Take a spoonful of the celeriac puree and place on the plate. Take the spoon and drag it through the puree to make a smear on the plate
* Slice 3 pieces of the venison and place at the bottom of the swoosh
* Place 3 Blackberries around the meat
* Fold the Cavalo Nero and place on the plate
* Add bon bon to plate
* Pour sauce over the meat or serve in a jug on table