

A recipe by Raymond Blanc OBE

CONFIT OF SALMON

with cucumber, cauliflower & horseradish sauce



This dish is a great classic at Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, and one I proudly served on my Royal Ascot menu in 2016 - my very first year as chef-in-residence in the Panoramic restaurant. Our guests loved the lightness and delicateness of the salmon. I remember I then served two beautiful cuts of Royal Estate lamb; the slow-cooked lamb shoulder and a small cutlet from the best end served medium and still blushing. To finish was another of my classics - summer fruits steeped in red wine with herbs

- finished at the table with a splash of pink champagne. I can remember it all so clearly! The beauty of nostalgia.

I appreciate this is not the shortest of recipes, but I urge you to give it a try at home. It is such a wonderful light dish to start a meal, especially in the summer months when the sun is shining and the skies are blue.

I truly hope to see many of you at Royal Ascot 2021. It is one of the most magical sporting events in the calendar and one of the great British traditions that I love. And until we are back at Royal Ascot again, I wish you bon appétit.

THE RECIPE

Serves 4

For curing the salmon

INGREDIENTS

240g organic salmon, filleted, pin-boned, skinned
2 tsp sea salt
3 pinches caster sugar
1 pinch white peppe
1/2 tsp dill, chopped
1/4 lemon, zested

METHOD

1. Place the salmon in a straight sided tray lined with enough clingfilm to wrap the salmon.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the salt, sugar and white pepper and evenly sprinkle on both sides of the salmon.
3. Next, mix together the dill and lemon zest and evenly distribute on both sides of the salmon.
4. Refrigerate and marinate for 40 minutes.
5. Wash off the marinade and pat the salmon dry.
6. Portion into 4 even pieces, cover and reserve in the fridge.

For the cucumber ribbons

INGREDIENTS

1 cucumber, peeled
2 large pinches sea salt
2 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp black and yellow mustard seeds, soaked in just-boiled water for 2 hours minimum
2 tsp dill, chopped
4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
4 tsp white wine vinegar
2 pinches caster sugar

METHOD

1. With a mandolin set to 3mm, slice the top and sides of the cucumber to square it up. Slice the cucumber into ribbons, turning it as you go, leaving the core of seeds which you discard.
2. In a bowl season the cucumber ribbons with the salt, stir and freeze for a minimum of 3 hours.
3. Defrost the cucumber and taste; if slightly salty, wash briefly under cold running water, drain and reserve.
4. In a bowl mix together the cucumber ribbons and all the remaining ingredients; taste and correct the seasoning. Reserve.

For the cauliflower florets

INGREDIENTS

80g cauliflower florets
1 pinch sea salt
2 tsp horseradish sauce
1 tbsp crème fraîche

METHOD

In a small bowl, mix the cauliflower florets with the salt, followed by the horseradish sauce and crème fraîche. Taste and reserve.

For cooking the salmon

INGREDIENTS

400ml extra virgin olive oil

METHOD

1. Line a small, shallow sauté pan with a piece of greaseproof paper, pour in the olive oil and heat to 42°C.
2. Add the salmon portions, ensure they are not touching each other and that they are covered in the olive oil.
3. Confit at this temperature, ensuring it stays at a constant 42°C for a minimum of 14 minutes and a maximum of 25 minutes.
4. Lift out the salmon with a slotted spatula or something similar, drain and place on kitchen paper to remove excess oil.

To serve

INGREDIENTS

2 tsp caviar, Oscietra

METHOD

Place the salmon portion in the centre of each plate, arrange the cucumber ribbons, cauliflower florets around the centre, then top the salmon with a little caviar and serve.

VARIATIONS

This method of cooking salmon is great whatever time of year it is. It can be accompanied by many different garnishes too, such as apples, beetroot or even some new season Jersey Royal potatoes in the spring! In the summer you can try infusing the cooking oil with verbena or even elderflowers. For even more flavour, you can cold-smoke the fish before cooking it or cooking it in smoke-infused oil.

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