



When food imitates art

celebrating the newest works of Canada's own Edward Burtynsky

By *Sebastien Centner*

Enjoy these delicious and aesthetically pleasing recipes inspired by the dishes from Sebastien's column in Homefront's summer 2011 issue.

Asparagus royale

- 1 lb. bunch asparagus
- Pinch citric acid
- 4 oz. cream
- 3 tbsp. Italian parsley leaves
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 2 sheets gelatin
- 1 level tsp. agar agar
- Salt + pepper to taste

Method

- Steam asparagus and spinach for three minutes then plunge into an ice bath to stop cooking and keep the colour
- Bring cream to a gentle boil and dissolve into it the agar agar, simmering for 6 – 8 minutes
- Bloom the gelatin in ¼ cup cold water
- Pat dry asparagus and spinach and pulse in a blender with parsley and citric acid
- With blender running, slowly add cream to puree until well blended
- Strain warm mixture through a fine sieve and blend in evenly the softened gelatin
- Adjust seasoning if necessary
- Pour into a 9" x 13" baking dish lined with plastic wrap
- Chill until set
- Invert royale onto a cutting board and cut into desired size with a sharp knife or shaped cutter dipped in warm water

Beet consommé

- 4 cups beet juice
- 1 tbsp. whole black peppercorns
- 3 sheets gelatin—or more for firmer gelee
- 2 tsp. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. balsamic vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Bloom gelatin in cold water for 5–10 minutes
- Bring beet juice and peppercorns to a gentle boil
- Add lemon juice and vinegar
- Remove from heat and strain through a fine sieve or cheesecloth
- Stir in gelatin until dissolved and pour into a 9" x 13" dish (or smaller for thicker shapes)
- Chill until set – approximately 8 hours or overnight
- Remove from refrigerator and using a small sharp knife or shaped cutter dipped in water, create a shape slightly smaller than the asparagus royale

Chevre phyllo sandwiches

- 3 sheets phyllo
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves
- ½ tsp. crushed black pepper
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- ½ cup chevre, whipped until soft

Method

- Pre-heat oven to 350° F
- Lay out one sheet of phyllo and brush evenly with olive oil



- Sprinkle half the thyme leaves and black pepper over top and press down
- Lay second sheet of phyllo on top and repeat the process
- Brush top sheet with remaining oil and sprinkle with sea salt
- Cut into 1½" squares and bake until golden—approximately seven minutes
- Let cool and set aside
- Soon before service, pipe or spoon a small dollop of whipped chevre onto one small square and top with a second
- Repeat for the number of salads required

Stem salad

- ½ cup celery leaves, with stems
- ½ cup watercress stems, leaves removed
- ½ cup beet stems
- ½ cup swiss chard stems
- ½ cup parsley stems
- micro greens - optional

Method

- Wash all stems thoroughly and cut into 3" pieces
- Steam over salted water for 2 minutes
- Plunge into an ice bath to stop cooking
- Remove, pat dry and reserve for service

Assembly

- Using an offset spatula, place royale to one side of your plate
- Place beet on top then phyllo sandwich on the beet
- Toss stems with 1 tbsp. extra virgin canola oil and a pinch of black pepper and sea salt and pinch approximately 2 tbsp. on top of optional greens
- Drizzle with extra virgin canola oil and aged balsamic

Smoked duck consommé with chanterelle, caramelized onion, poached quail egg and carrot foam

- 1 barbecued duck, cut into large pieces
- 5 lbs. roasted chicken bones
- 5 cloves garlic
- ½ cup each coarse chopped carrot, onion, celery, fennel
- 1 large tomato, chopped
- 2 tbsp. ginger root, roughly sliced
- ¼ cup champagne vinegar
- 12 cup cold water
- 3 stems thyme



Method for stock

- In a large stockpot, put the garlic, carrot, onion, celery, fennel, tomato and ginger and cook over medium high heat until they start to brown
- Add the duck pieces, vinegar and the water
- Add the thyme and bring the mixture to a boil
- Reduce heat and simmer for two hours
- Allow to cool, then strain through a fine sieve
- Chill in refrigerator
- Remove fat and discard

Method for raft

- ½ cup each finely chopped carrot, onion and celery
- 3 egg whites
- Combine the minced vegetables and egg whites and slowly whisk until it becomes a light foam.
- Put the chilled duck stock in a pot and slowly stir in the egg white mixture and place over a medium low heat
- Bring to a gentle simmer – do not boil – then do not stir this mixture again
- When the egg white mixture has risen to the top, gently break a hole in the centre of the 'raft', if one has not formed and simmer for 30 minutes
- Through the hole in the 'raft', gradually ladle out the consommé and strain through a cheese cloth lined sieve
- *do not strain or break up the raft
- Reserve consommé until ready for service

Chanterelle sautee

- 1 lb. chanterelles (or shitake, enoki, king mushrooms)

Method

- Sauté lightly in olive oil and season to taste

Caramelized shallots

- 2 lb. of shallots, peeled

- 2 tbsp. clarified butter
- salt and pepper to taste
- finely chopped Italian parsley

Method

- Slice shallots thinly lengthwise
- In a shallow pan, heat the butter over medium heat and add sliced shallots
- Stir to combine evenly with the butter
- Allow to sweat to remove moisture—approximately 15 minutes—and lower heat
- Continue to stir over medium low heat until the sugars in the onions turn golden brown
- Season to taste and allow to cool then add parsley

Poached quail egg

- 1 quail egg per serving
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice

Method

- In a small shallow sauce pot, bring 6 cups of water to a boil then add lemon juice
- Lower heat to a simmer
- Stir the pot to make the water swirl
- Crack eggs into swirling water and poach for two minutes
- Remove using a slotted spoon and immediately plunge into an ice bath
- Place on a dry rag to remove excess water

Assembly

- On a baking sheet, portion the mushrooms and onions into small compact piles
- Warm in a 250° F oven for 10 minutes
- Gently place poached egg in desired service piece—preferably a soup bowl with a small base
- Bring consommé to a boil
- Arrange the warmed onions and mushrooms beside the poached egg
- Slowly pour heated soup over the garnish trying not to disturb the arrangement
- Garnish with fennel fronds and serve immediately. ■