

Pepper Encrusted Mountain Trout

with Wild Mushroom Risotto and Creamed Ramps

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Serves 4

Wild Mushroom Risotto

Ingredients:

1.5 cups arborio rice
1 medium onion, finely diced
1 stick of butter
4 oz crimini mushrooms, sliced
4 oz shitake mushrooms, stems removed and sliced
5 cups chicken broth
2 oz white wine (optional)
1/2 cup fresh grated parmesan cheese
Salt and fresh ground pepper

Method:

Using half of the butter, sweat the onions over medium-low heat in a Dutch oven until slightly browned (about 7 minutes). Add mushrooms and stir until fragrant (about 2 minutes), then add the rice. Stir until glossy and well coated with butter. Once the rice begins to smell toasted, add wine and stir until absorbed, then stir in 1 cup of the broth. Stir frequently until rice absorbs liquid, and then add another cup. Continue adding the broth until 1/2 cup remains. At this point you should taste the rice to check for doneness. It should be done but not mushy. Stir in remaining butter and cheese. Salt and pepper to taste. The remaining 1/2 cup of broth can be used in case the rice needs more liquid to finish cooking, or to cream the rice back up if it is to be served at a later time.

Creamed Ramps

Ingredients:

1 1/4 lbs ramps (about 24)
4-6 oz heavy cream
Salt and fresh ground pepper

Method:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Trim the root ends of the ramps, being careful not to cut off too much of the white portion as this will cause them to fall apart. Trim off the greens and slice for garnish (like scallions). Tightly arrange ramps in a baking dish in one layer and fill dish with cream halfway

up the sides of the ramps. Generously season with salt and pepper. Place in the oven. After 20 minutes, use a fork or spoon to push the ramps back into the cream as they will begin to curl up. Bake another 10-15 minutes (until the cream has thickened but has not turned oily).

Pepper Encrusted Trout

Ingredients:

4 large trout filets
4 T fresh coarsely ground black pepper
Salt
1 oz brandy (optional)
1 oz chicken broth
Non-stick cooking spray

Method:

Wash filets and pat dry with a paper towel. Lightly sprinkle with salt. Pour pepper onto a plate and lay filets (flesh side down) onto the pepper. Gently press the filet to make the pepper stick. Heat a large skillet on high heat until it is smoking hot, then spray with non-stick cooking spray. Sear the trout pepper side down for 1 minute then flip. Cook another minute and a half and remove from heat. Splash pan with brandy and swirl. Return the pan to heat to cook off brandy, then add chicken broth. Cook until the liquid has reduced by one half.

To Serve:

Spoon rice onto the center of four plates and place the trout on top. Spoon the ramps and cream over top and serve.