



Chef David Hawksworth's Red Wine-braised Oxtail

An old standby for soup and stews, oxtail is given a sophisticated treatment here, served boneless, in spheres, with pumpkin gnocchi. Serves 4



Chef David Hawksworth

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Ingredients:

Braised Oxtail

8 oz pork caul
 1 bottle (750 mL)
 full-bodied red wine
 1 oxtail (ask butcher to
 cut into 6 equal pieces)
 1 carrot, finely sliced
 1 onion, finely sliced
 2 cloves garlic,
 peeled and crushed
 1 rib celery, finely sliced
 1 tsp crushed
 black peppercorns
 1 sprig thyme
 1 bay leaf
 3 Tbsp vegetable oil
 8 cups chicken stock
 2 Tbsp creamed horseradish

Pumpkin Gnocchi

2 lbs sugar pumpkin
 Pinch of grated nutmeg
 3 Tbsp + 1 tsp
 extra-virgin olive oil
 1 egg
 1 egg yolk
 1 cup or less Tipo 00 flour
 or all-purpose flour
 1 Tbsp olive oil

Shallots and Pancetta

2 tsp olive oil
 12 shallots, peeled
 3 1/2 oz pancetta,
 in 3/4-inch pieces
 1/2 cup chicken stock
 2 Tbsp sherry vinegar
 2 tsp unsalted butter

Directions:

Braised Oxtail

This recipe must be started 6 days before serving. Place pork caul in water in a covered bowl in the refrigerator for 5 days, changing the water daily.

Warm the wine to just over room temperature in a non-reactive pot on medium heat. Remove from the heat, then add oxtail, carrot, onion, garlic, celery, peppercorns, thyme and bay leaf. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

Remove oxtail from the marinade and pat dry. Drain vegetables and reserve. Reserve the marinade.

Preheat the oven to 285°F. Heat 1 1/2 Tbsp of the oil in a frying pan on medium heat. Add oxtail and brown all over.

At the same time, in a large ovenproof pot, slowly cook the reserved vegetables with 1 Tbsp of the oil on medium heat for about 10 minutes, or until soft. Add the reserved marinade and simmer for 10 minutes, or until reduced by four-fifths. Add oxtail and cover with stock, then bring to a boil and remove from the heat.

Cut out a parchment paper circle, with a small hole in the centre, to fit just inside the pot. Place the paper circle right on top of the liquid and bake in the oven for 4 hours, or until meat begins to fall off the bone.

Remove from the oven, strain the cooking liquid through a finemeshsieve and reserve the solids. Separate vegetables from meat; keep carrots but discard the remaining vegetables.

Place the cooking liquid in a pot on medium-high heat and simmer for about 20 minutes, or until reduced by about four-fifths to a sauce consistency. Strain the sauce through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl.

Remove the meat from the bones, shred and combine with the reserved carrots. Stir in horseradish and a few tablespoons of the sauce, then season with salt and pepper.

Form the oxtail mixture into four pieces the size of golf balls, place on a tray and refrigerate for 1 hour or longer. Wrap each meatball with pork caul and refrigerate for 1 hour or longer.

Heat the remaining 1/2 Tbsp of the oil in a frying pan on medium heat. Add meatballs and sear gently until browned. Transfer meatballs to a small pot and add the remaining sauce.

Pumpkin Gnocchi

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Cut pumpkin in half, then remove and discard seeds. Season with nutmeg, salt and pepper, then drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil.

Place pumpkin, cut-side up, on a rimmed baking sheet and bake in the oven for 1 to 1 1/2 hours, or until tender. Scrape out pumpkin flesh, pass through a food mill into a large bowl and allow to cool to room temperature. Mix in egg and egg yolk, then begin to work in flour a little at a time, adding only enough to form a dough. (The amount

of flour used will depend on how wet the pumpkin is. If it appears very wet after it has come out of the oven, dry it a bit in a pan on the stovetop.)

When the dough begins to come together, knead for 1 minute. Roll into logs 1 inch in diameter, then cut the logs into 3/4-inch-long cylinders and pinch the ends to create a pillow-like shape.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil on medium heat. Add gnocchi, poach for about 1 minute, then drain. Add olive oil and toss gently.

Shallots and Pancetta

Preheat the oven to 400°f. Heat oil in an ovenproof frying pan on medium-high heat. Add shallots and pancetta and cook for about 5 minutes, or until shallots are caramelized. Drain and discard any excess fat. Season with salt and pepper, stir in stock and bake in the oven for about 15 minutes, or until shallots are soft and liquid is reduced by four-fifths.

Remove from the oven and place on the stovetop on medium heat. Add vinegar and deglaze the pan. Stir in butter, spooning over shallots to glaze them.

To Serve

Heat up oxtail meatballs in the sauce. Bring a pot of water to a boil, add gnocchi and simmer for 20 seconds, then drain and season with salt and pepper. Arrange meatballs on warmed plates, top with gnocchi and spoon the shallot and pancetta mixture over each serving.

Wine

Mission Hill Family Estate Winery Quatrain (with Syrah in the Bordeaux blend)