



*Basil Crusted Rabbit, Wild Mushroom Ragout,
Sweet Garlic Cream and Mille-Feuille*

Nickel & Nickel John C. Sullenger Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Oakville, Napa Valley

by Executive Chef Robert Curry of Auberge du Soleil

Ingredients

Herb Crust:

2 bunches basil, leaves picked

6 ounces panko (about 1 bag)

1 quart peanut oil

Garlic Cream:

1 cup heavy cream

6 garlic cloves, peeled

Salt and pepper, to taste

Mille-Feuille:

4 squares of puff pastry,
cut to 2 ½"

Egg wash – 2 eggs, beaten,
and mixed with 2 tsp of water

Sherry Vinaigrette:

¼ cup sherry vinegar

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

½ cup pure olive oil

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

Salt and pepper, to taste

Red Wine Jus:

1 onion, peeled

1 carrot, peeled

1 leek, pale part only, cut in half
lengthwise and washed

1 garlic head,
cut in half lengthwise

3 ounces pure olive oil

½ 750ml light-bodied red wine
(and an additional 4
tablespoons to finish)

METHOD

Herb Crust:

Heat peanut oil to 350°F. Fry basil until crisp and translucent (this will occur very quickly) and drain on paper towels. Place the basil and panko in a food processor bowl and mix until smooth, bright green and dry to the touch. Pass through a tamis.

Garlic Cream:

Over medium-low heat, reduce the cream by half and set aside. In a small saucepot, add garlic, cover with cold water and bring to a boil. Repeat twice, or until the garlic is tender. Slice garlic and add to the cream.

Mille-Feuille:

Brush squares with egg wash and bake until crisp and the edges start to lightly brown.

Sherry Vinaigrette:

Place the vinegar and mustard in a small bain-marie. Slowly add the olive oils while mixing with an immersion blender to emulsify. Season with salt and pepper. Toss with frisée prior to final assembly.

Red Wine Jus:

Preheat oven to 450°F. Cut the onion, carrot and leek into medium dice. In a medium saucepot, sweat the vegetables and garlic in 2 tablespoons of olive oil until translucent and soft. Add the half-bottle of red wine and reduce by half, about 30 – 45 minutes. Add the veal and chicken stocks and bring to a simmer, skimming scum off the surface often.

Heat a pan and add remaining olive oil and rabbit bones. When the bones start to gain color, place the pan in the oven. Roast the bones until golden brown, about 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Add the bones to the sauce and deglaze the pan with 2 tablespoons of red wine. Add the deglazed fond to the sauce, and reduce the sauce by half, about 30 – 45 minutes. Strain the sauce, discarding bones and vegetables, and continue to reduce to desired consistency.

Add remaining 2 tablespoons of red wine. Season with salt and pepper, and pass through chinois.

Rabbit and Vegetable Ragout:

Set the rabbit loins aside. Heat oven to 400°F and wrap the exposed leg bones with aluminum foil. Season the rabbit legs with salt and pepper.

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2 cups veal stock
2 cups brown chicken stock
Rabbit bones,
cut into small pieces
Salt and pepper, to taste

Rabbit and Vegetable Ragout:

2 rabbits, butchered to yield
4 loins and 4 hind legs,
silver skin and thigh bones
removed and reserved
2 ounces pure olive oil
1/4 cup Dijon mustard
1 1/2 cups herb crust
(see recipe above)
6 ounces wild
mushrooms, cooked
12 gold pearl onions,
blanched and peeled
1/4 cup sugar snap peas
1/2 teaspoon garlic, chopped
6 springs thyme, chopped
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
3 ounces red wine jus
(see recipe above)
2 tablespoons flat-leaf
parsley, chopped
1 tablespoon butter
3 – 4 tablespoons
sherry vinaigrette
(see recipe above)
1 head frisée, cleaned
Salt and pepper, to taste

Heat a large sauté pan and add the rabbit legs and 1 ounce olive oil, careful not to overcrowd. Over medium heat, sauté the legs on the presentation side until golden. Turn the legs and place the pan in the oven. Roast until almost cooked, about 6 – 10 minutes, depending on the size of the rabbits.

Meanwhile, cut the rabbit loins into large dice and season with salt and pepper.

Remove the legs from the oven and brush the presentation side of the legs with Dijon mustard. Push the mustard-coated side of the legs into the herb crust, knocking off any excess. Return the legs to the oven for about 3 – 4 minutes. Then, return the pan to the stove top and cook over medium heat until golden. Add the diced rabbit loins and cook until they also begin to golden. Add the garlic, thyme and mushrooms. Cook for 30 seconds and then add the red wine vinaigrette and the red wine jus. Reduce the jus by about half. Add butter, parsley and peas and reduce until the ragout is glazed but still moist.

To assemble, remove the foil from the legs. Split each puff pastry square in two and place the bottom halves of the pastry on four plates, reserving the tops. Spoon garlic cream on each puff pastry square. Place ragout on top of the garlic cream and top that with frisée tossed in sherry vinaigrette. Finally, place the puff pastry on top of each and lay a rabbit leg alongside.

Serves 4