



Marinated Skirt Steak, Grilled White Asparagus, Morel Mushrooms and Creamy Polenta

Nickel & Nickel Branding Iron Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Oakville, Napa Valley

by *Executive Chef Trevor Eliason*

Ingredients

Skirt Steak Marinade

- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon peppercorns
- 1 bunch fresh thyme sprigs
- 4 rosemary sprigs
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 pounds skirt steak

Creamy Polenta

- 3 cups milk
- 3 cups chicken stock or water
- 2 cups polenta
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup parmesan
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Sautéed Morels

- ¼ pound morel mushrooms, fresh or dried
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 2–3 tablespoons butter

Grilled White Asparagus

- 1 bunch white asparagus
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt, to taste

Tools

- Vegetable peeler

METHOD

Skirt Steak Marinade

In a casserole pan, combine the garlic cloves, olive oil, peppercorns, thyme sprigs, rosemary and bay leaves. To help release the herbs' essences, press the ingredients with a spoon. Lay down the skirt steaks in the marinade and coat evenly. Cover the pan and refrigerate for at least two hours, preferably overnight.

Creamy Polenta

In a stainless steel, medium-sized pot, pour in the milk and chicken stock. On medium-high heat, bring the liquid to a simmer, then immediately add the polenta. Whisk continuously until well blended. Reduce the heat to low and cover with a lid, whisking every five to 10 minutes. Allow the polenta to cook and thicken for 40 minutes, then stir in the butter and Parmesan cheese. Add salt and pepper to taste and set aside.

Sautéed Morels

Start by rinsing the fresh morel mushrooms. If using dried morels, soak for 20 minutes, then rinse twice. Cut the spongy caps into rounds and dispose of the white stalks. Place the mushrooms on towels to air dry.

Coat a medium-sized sauté pan with the olive oil and set on high heat. To avoid overcrowding the pan, we recommend cooking the morels in two to three batches. With each batch, stir to evenly coat the mushrooms. Add salt and pepper. Turn the heat down to medium, then cook until the edges are a beautiful golden brown. To finish, add a tablespoon of butter and combine. Set aside the finished morels on a plate and continue the process until all are cooked.

Grilled Skirt Steak and White Asparagus

Preheat your grill. Remove the skirt steak from marinade and let stand until room temperature, about 20 minutes. While it cools you can prepare the white asparagus. Trim two inches from the ends of the asparagus, as this is the part that tends to be too woody to eat. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the outer skin of the white asparagus starting from the base of the tip to the end of the stalk. Place the peeled asparagus in a baking dish and drizzle with olive oil and salt.

Season the skirt steaks with salt and pepper, then place on the high-heat portion of the grill. Cook for five minutes on each side, or until desired doneness. Skirt steak is very thin—it's best to cooking it quickly on high heat! Allow the steak to rest for five minutes, then, cutting against the grain, slice half-inch pieces and set on a paper towel-covered plate.

Place white asparagus on the grill on medium heat. Using tongs, rotate the asparagus after a minute to get golden brown marks. Set aside on a plate when tender.

Presentation

Place a generous scoop of polenta in the center of each plate, then top with five slices of skirt steak. Garnish with three white asparagus on the diagonal, and a spoonful of morels. Enjoy with a glass of Nickel & Nickel Branding Iron Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon!

Serves 4