

Pre-prep notes for Les Marmitons

ZOOM Dinner, January 23, 2021

Chef Ross Midgley

Good Day, Gentlemen,

I am looking forward to our time 'virtually' preparing a meal together. You will have received a shopping list and a few specific recipes which we will all be using on the Saturday night. I have tried to be as specific as possible, but I am sure that I may have missed some things and I am very aware that the group will be a mix of more and less experienced cooks and we all have different kitchens in which we will be executing the meal, so I thought walking through the menu in this fashion and highlighting what members may want to have prepared in advance of the ZOOM might be helpful. It will be an adventure, to be sure, and I encourage each of us to be patient, flexible and, mostly, to HAVE FUN and share in the community that is cooking together.

The Soup:

This mushroom soup relies on a good amount of roasting time to get the best flavour from the mushrooms before adding the liquids and blending, so this step should be done in advance. I will be blending the soup during the demo, however, if members should care to prepare the entire soup before the meeting, this is certainly fine. The soup should serve 6 ppl, so you will have extra for another meal.

With some grated parmesan, I will demo the tuilles, which are easy. The tuilles require a sheet pan with parchment paper, or a silpat mat for any fortunate enough to have one.

I will also be whipping a little 35% cream and folding in the fresh chopped tarragon, which is another garnish.

The Main Course:

Before we begin the demo, **it will be helpful if each member can have a 'standard' breading station set up for the schnitzel.** The Breading station will be three shallow dishes (like pie plates, bowls, or pyrex casseroles) that are large enough to fit the cutlets you have chosen (I will demo the pounding of the cutlets and some tips for breading). The three bowls should have the following:

1. Flour that has been seasoned with a little paprika, coriander and salt and pepper
2. 2-3 eggs, beaten, with a little splash of water and salt and pepper
3. Panko breadcrumbs seasoned with salt and pepper and chopped, fresh thyme

You will need a frying pan that can accommodate the size of your schnitzel and I will discuss how to fry in batches and then plate all together.

The schnitzel will be placed on the spaghetti squash, which I will sauté with the bacon lardons, strained tomato and sage during the demo. Because the roasting of the squash will take time, **please do this step in advance**. To roast the squash, split a spaghetti squash in half and scoop out the seeds and pulp and discard. Place the two sides of the squash, cut side down, on a sheet pan and roast until the squash yields when pressed. At this point, allow squash to cool slightly and then 'shred with a fork' (I will demo this part).

The Brussel sprouts will be sliced into ribbons and sauteed a la minute, I will demo how.

For the potatoes, I will be slicing into 3"x3/4" baton shapes (also called Pont Neuf) and then tossing the batons in oil and some caraway seeds and then roasting. **This step can be done in advance and then warmed once plating, if desired.**

We will blend the thyme sour cream during the demo, simply by stirring with some fresh lemon juice, chopped fresh thyme and paprika. The other half of the lemon will be for squeezing on the finished schnitzel.

Dessert:

I will begin the session by putting together the cake on demo and then letting it bake while we prepare the remainder of the meal. I will also demo the caramel, but **most members may wish to have the cake and caramel prepared in advance, and simply warmed when you are ready to eat dessert.**

The apple 'pearls' are simply Granny Smith apples that I ball with a small melon baller (hence pearls), if members do not have a melon baller, the apples can be julienned for similar taste experience. I will be coating the apple pearls in icewine that I have reduced to a syrup.

The Chantilly cream will be a little bit of the whipped cream reserved from our tarragon cream in the soup course (without the tarragon) that I will infuse with a little vanilla extract.

I hope some of the above helps with pre steps. I truly am hoping that what we achieve is the magic of a number of men creating the 'same' meal in a variety of households – my wife and teenage boys will be having the meal I create together with you on that night, also.

I will be drinking Creekside wine, as this is my professional home these days, and I think Rob and Yvonne make some of the best Niagara wines. I will drink Red Tractor Chardonnay 2018 with the soup, Creekside Gamay with the schnitzel and, of course, a little icewine with the cake.

Best Dishes,