

Creative *about* Cuisine

Partridge and Wild Mushroom Terrine



Partridge make a perfect portion as a main course for one simply roasted with some seasonal vegetables but, like most game, they work very well as a terrine, too. The controlled cooking and the addition of some good fatty streaky bacon keeps the terrine succulent and a mixture of mushrooms adds another flavour dimension.

As with all shot game, examine the meat carefully for any stray shot or bits of feather. On the breasts, lift up the fillet to check under it.

Serves 6-8 as a starter

Preheat oven to 100°

INGREDIENTS

- 4 rashers smoked, streaky bacon, roughly chopped
- 8 boneless, skinless partridge thighs
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 2 banana shallots, peeled, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 75g chestnut mushrooms, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 75g wild mushrooms such as girolles, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 50ml medium Madeira
- 2 tbs double cream
- 8 boneless, skinless partridge breasts
- Maldon sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 6 slices prosciutto



Method

Start by mincing the bacon and partridge thighs together, running them through the mincer twice. If you don't have a mincer but do have a food processor, dice the meat, chill in the freezer for 30 minutes and then pulse in the food processor. Place the meat in a bowl in the fridge.

Heat the oil in a small frying pan, add the shallots with a pinch of salt and cook over a moderate heat until the shallots start to soften. Add the mushrooms and cook until they have wilted and any water has been driven off. Once the mix starts to fry again, add the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the Madeira and reduce completely. Transfer the mix to a plate and chill.

When the mushrooms are cold, beat them into the farce made with the leg meat. Beat the cream into the farce and season well. Fry a teaspoon of the mix to taste and check the seasoning and adjust as required. The mix should taste robustly flavoured warm as it will be less so when cold.

Wipe your worktop with damp kitchen paper and lay out sheets of cling film to make a rectangle 40 x 60cm with the short side towards you. Repeat, laying the film in the opposite direction to give a double thickness.

Lay four of the partridge breasts in a line 10cm in from the edge of the film, skin side down and slightly overlapping to form a neat rectangle, season lightly. Using a spoon and a palette knife, spread the farce evenly over the top of the breasts and then lay the remaining four breasts on top of this, skin side up. Fold the clingfilm up over the partridge and gently shape into a cylinder. Roll up tightly, pulling towards you to get some tension. The film should stick to the damp surface. When the terrine is completely rolled, twist the ends up tightly. Next, wrap in a sheet of foil, again twisting the ends up tightly and pushing inwards to get as compact a cylinder as possible.

Lay the terrine in a deep roasting tin and cover with cold water. Heat on the hob to a temperature of 80°, cover with foil and transfer to the oven. Cook for approx. 1 hour. Test the internal temperature with a probe at the end of the cooking time, it should be between 70-75°. If you have a steam oven, the terrine could be steamed as an alternative.



Allow the terrine to cool for 20 minutes and then transfer to iced water. Ideally use a roasting tin of iced water that can then be put in the fridge. Allow to chill completely.

Lay out sheets of cling film as you did when shaping the terrine. Starting 10cm in from the short edge, lay two of the prosciutto slices lengthwise left to right, overlapping them slightly. Lay the other four slices running away from you starting at the far edge of the first two slices to give a rectangle roughly 30cm x 25cm. Unwrap the chilled terrine and put any jelly and juices in a small pan. Reduce this liquid down to a syrup and brush over the ham, this will help to stick the ham to the terrine. Lay the terrine on the ham close to the long edge and, with the help of the cling film, wrap the ham tightly around the terrine. The terrine will end up in the middle of the cling film sheet. Straighten the film out and carefully roll the terrine back to the edge of the film. Wrap as tightly as possible in the film and twist the ends tightly. Tie the ends to keep everything in place and chill the terrine.

To serve, slice the terrine, allowing two slices per person. It will be easier to slice through the cling-film and remove this afterwards. Allow the terrine time to come to room temperature before serving. Pickled mushrooms, apple chutney, cornichons, sourdough toast, brioche - all would make good partners for the terrine alongside a few simply dressed leaves.

