



Maltese Rabbit Fricassee with Garlic Confit and Syrah Sauce

Main Course, Serves 8

Rabbit:

2 (1 1/4-kg./2 3/4-lb.) rabbits, each cut into 8 pieces
 200 g./1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
 30 g./2 tbsp. unsalted butter
 200 ml./7/8 cup vegetable oil
 2 medium white onions, cut into cubes
 2 large carrots, cut into cubes
 16 garlic cloves, peeled
 Sea salt to taste
 Freshly ground pepper to taste
 1 sprig fresh thyme
 100 ml./7 tbsp. cognac
 2 bottles Syrah/Shiraz wine

Pasta:

Sea salt to taste
 50 ml./3 tbsp. olive oil
 320 g./3/4 lb. fresh tagliatelle

Garnish:

120 g./4 1/4 oz. back bacon, cut into cubes
 200 g./7 oz. button mushrooms, cut into cubes
 80 g./3 oz. white baby onions
 Freshly ground pepper to taste

For the Rabbit:

• Toss the rabbit pieces in the flour. Heat the butter and the vegetable oil in a deep frying pan and panfry the rabbit until golden brown. Add the white onions, carrots and garlic cloves to the rabbit, along with a dash of salt and pepper and the thyme sprig. (Alternately, the rabbit pieces can be boned and stuffed with a mixture of the sautéed vegetables.) Cook for 5 minutes and then add the cognac and flambé. Add the red wine and simmer, covered, for 1 hour on low heat.

For the Pasta:

• Bring a pot of water to a boil; add the sea salt and the olive oil. Cook the tagliatelle until al dente. Drain and keep warm.

For the Garnish:

• Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the bacon, mushrooms and baby onions and panfry until golden brown. Season with freshly ground pepper.

To Serve:

• Divide the pasta between 8 serving plates. Place 2 pieces of rabbit on each bed of pasta and cover with one ladle of sauce from the pan in which the rabbit was cooked. Top with the garnish and serve immediately.

Watermelon and Chicken Liver Salad

Salad, Serves 8

Chicken Livers:

100 ml./7 tbsp. olive oil
 300 g./2/3 lb. chicken livers
 80 g./2/3 cup all-purpose flour
 1 sprig fresh thyme
 Sea salt to taste
 Freshly ground pepper to taste
 25 ml./5 tsp. Maltese prickly pear liqueur (or substitute any pear liqueur)

Watermelon and Arugula:

1 large red watermelon
 100 ml./7 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
 100 ml./7 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
 Sea salt to taste
 Freshly ground pepper to taste
 320 g./3/4 lb. arugula
 Chopped parsley to garnish (optional)

For the Chicken Livers:

• Heat a pan over medium-high heat and add the olive oil. Toss the chicken livers in flour and place them in the hot pan with the thyme, salt and pepper, and cook until golden brown. Sprinkle the prickly pear liqueur over the livers and toss. Remove from the heat and cut each liver into four pieces.

For the Watermelon and Arugula:

• Peel the watermelon with a knife and cut into sixteen 1-centimetre/1/2-inch thick discs with a diameter of 8 centimetres/3 inches each.
 • Place the balsamic vinegar in a pan over medium heat and reduce by one-half. Add the olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Remove from the heat and let cool. Just before serving, toss the arugula with a little of the cooled dressing.

To Serve:

• Place a portion of the arugula in the middle of each of the plates. Top with one disc of watermelon followed by four pieces of chicken liver and repeat this one more time. Drizzle the remaining dressing around the plate and add a sprinkling of parsley.




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InterContinental Malta
 St. Georges Bay
 St. Julians, STJ 02 Malta
 p. 356.21.377600
 f. 356.21.372222

