

Sea Salt and Ancho Rubbed Kobe Beef With Mocha Java Butter & Toasted Macadamia Nuts

SHARI AUBURN



4 Kobe Culotte or Hanger Steaks 6-8 ounces each

FOR THE RUB:

2 teaspoon ancho powder
2 teaspoon coarse sea salt
fresh ground black pepper to taste

FOR THE COMPOUND BUTTER

4 ounces fresh unsalted butter softened (margarine will not work)
1 ounce espresso (you can substitute 1 teaspoon instant coffee but espresso has much better flavor)
1 teaspoon high quality cocoa powder
1 teaspoon fresh ground garlic
1 teaspoon fresh ground shallots
½ teaspoon honey
salt and pepper to taste

FOR THE MACADAMIAS

½ cup softly crushed macadamia nuts
2 teaspoons butter
pinch salt

DIRECTIONS:

To make the compound butter, soften the butter until very soft but not melted, add all the ingredients to a deep bowl with the butter and fold briskly. Be sure your espresso is at room temperature. Roll the butter into parchment paper in the shape of a thick tube, or place in a plastic container. Prepare and chill the compound butter at least 6 hours in advance. You can store any unused butter in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks or freeze it for several months.

Assemble the rub by combining the sea salt, ancho, and salt & pepper in a small bowl. Generously rub the steaks on all sides and allow to rest at room temperature for 10-15 minutes before cooking. Grill or sauté the Kobe over high heat until desired doneness. High heat will caramelize the beef and give a pleasant crust on the beef. Allow to rest for 2-3 minutes before plating.

While the Kobe is resting, in a small sauté pan melt butter over medium heat, add the macadamias and toast until they just start to brown. "Carry-over" cooking will toast the nuts the rest of the way.

To plate, spoon the nuts onto the bottom of a warm plate, and place the still warm but rested steak on top, slice the cold butter, and place on top of the warm steak (the butter will start to slightly melt on the steak) garnish and serve promptly.

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Aaron Gaertner

Aaron began his career in the culinary arts with a degree from Bay Arenac Career Complex in 1996. By 1999, he earned his certification as a sous chef through the American Culinary Federation. Although he has worked at several jobs, including the extensive cheese counter at Eastman Party Store and a wine distributor for Viviano, he has spent the majority of his career at Shari Gourmet Dining. He began working there as garde manager while still in high school and worked his way up to executive chef and general manager in 2008.

In his spare time, Aaron coaches the culinary team at the Saginaw Career Complex for the Pro-Start Culinary Competition. He was the team's coach in 2009 and 2010 and is currently looking forward to working with the 2011 students for their competition. In the spring of 2010, Aaron was named Michigan Restaurant ProStart Mentor of the Year.

Shari Smith

After graduating at the top of her class from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and spending several years in Lake Tahoe, California, studying under a Belgian master chef, Shari Smith moved back home to mid-Michigan to open her own restaurant. On Valentine's Day 1990, Shari opened a fully-remodeled Willard Hillton just outside of Auburn. Her goal was simple, to provide the tri-cities with the ultimate dining experience. Highlighting fine food, wine and exceptional service since the fall of 2008, Shari has been the culinary instructor at the Saginaw Career Complex. It has been a lifelong dream of hers to help educate and prepare the next generation of culinary professionals.



Herb and Dijon Crusted Pork on Butternut Squash and Apple Confit with Maple Balsamic Drizzle and Crumbled Stilton

FOR THE CONFIT

- 6 strips uncooked bacon chopped
- 2 apples peeled and diced
- 2 cups butternut squash small diced
- 1 teaspoon crushed shallots
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- salt & pepper

FOR THE DRIZZLE

- 2 cups balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup maple syrup
- 1½ cups cane sugar

FOR THE PORK

- 1 pork tenderloin cut into 6 medallions (Be sure to remove the "silver skin")
- salt and pepper
- 1 ounce olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon each basil, rosemary, and thyme fine chopped
- 4 ounces Stilton blue cheese

DIRECTIONS:

In and ovenproof thick bottom sauté pan, over medium heat add the bacon. Render the bacon slowly until crisp; remove bacon from the pan leaving only the fat. Increase heat to medium high and add the apple, squash and shallots. Sauté until apples start to caramelize, add salt & pepper and brown sugar. Place in oven at 300°F for 30-45 minutes, or until tender. After removing from the oven be sure to adjust the salt & pepper.

In a small, thick-bottom stock pot and also ovenproof, thick-bottom saute pan add balsamic, maple and sugar. Reduce to "nappe" (to coat the back of a spoon) or light syrup.

Liberally dust the pork with salt & pepper. In and ovenproof thick bottom sauté pan, with oil heat on medium high, sauté the pork on each flat side for 2-3 minutes or until golden. Turn the heat off and very carefully rub the top of each medallion with the Dijon and herbs. Place in oven at 300°F for 5-6 minutes or until desired doneness. Remove from the oven and let rest for 2 minutes.

To plate, place the warm confit on the bottom on the plate and place the pork on top of that, crumble the stilton around the pork, finish with spooning the warm syrup over the top.



SEAFOOD CIOPPINO FRESCO

- 2 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces fresh Alaskan salmon
- 12 shrimp peeled, deveined and split
- 6 sea scallops
- 1 teaspoon crushed garlic
- 1 small sweet onion
- ¼ cup white wine
- 1 pint grape tomatoes split in half
- 4 ounces arugula roughly chopped
- 1 avocado diced

DIRECTIONS

In a large sauté pan heat the oil over medium high heat. When hot, add the salmon, garlic, onion and scallops, wait for 1 minute and add the shrimp. Sauté until desired doneness, splash with wine and reduce the heat to medium low. Add the tomatoes, avocado and arugula and gently sauté till the arugula turns bright green. Serve promptly (arugula will turn an ugly dark green if heated too long) in a warm bowl.