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CHRISTMAS RECIPES

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MOTORING

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CHANTEL DARTNALL
AND HER CULINARY ALCHEMY

CULINARY ALCHEMY

The progression of culinary alchemist Chantel Dartnall at Restaurant Mosaic has been an extraordinary journey.

Photo: **Merwelene van der Merwe**

This year Chantel – who is as ethereal as some of her delicate creations – reached what many would regard as the pinnacle of success in the restaurant world when she was named the world's Best Female Chef at The Best Chef Awards 2017, which took place in Warsaw, Poland. At the same time, she was placed at number 32 in the Best Chef Awards Top 100 list for 2017, ahead of such luminaries as Spain's Elena Arzak at 33, France's Sébastien Bras at 35 and celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal at No 37. Chantel was also the only South African chef listed in the top 100.

But while Chantel is clearly delighted with the hype and razzmatazz, and grateful for the recognition, this isn't her driving force and never has been. The creation of her food is her motivation and a keenly personal experience for her.

She's fascinated by botanical cuisine (*'la cuisine du terroir'*) and has always credited the father of botanical cooking, Michel Bras, as the inspiration for her use of edible flowers and unusual herbs.

Chantel also looks holistically at ingredients when planning a new menu – it's not simply about making a plate look pretty, although Restaurant Mosaic is renowned for its incredible presentations that many have described as 'art on a plate'. It is a convergence of art and living food, where the plate is the canvas upon which fresh, organic, heirloom produce creates the painting.

"Guests don't always realise that we are deliberately enhancing their experience – and not only visually. For example, fennel aids digestion and stops bloating and the hibiscus flower helps to reduce the symptoms of alcohol as well as swelling ankles," the petite chef explains.

She draws her inspiration from fresh, seasonal produce to create dishes that taste as wonderful as they look. She also believes in buying sustainable produce and supporting local suppliers.

Chantel regularly travels the world to keep up with international trends and to ensure that Mosaic continues to compete with the best dining establishments around the globe.

However, many of her creations have come about while she's been walking through the beauty that is the Francolin Conservancy where Restaurant Mosaic at The Orient is situated, or strolling on the beach near the family hideaway in Nature's Valley.

Like a true artist, she's usually found with a notebook in her hand, filled with beautiful sketches and copious notes. She believes that each dish should tell a story; each course should slowly build on the previous one and that nothing should happen haphazardly.

The dishes are part of a journey and this too is reflected in the tableware. Specific plates – many hand-painted and made to order – are chosen for each course.

STYLIST/CONCEPT: Elzilda Becker • PHOTOGRAPHER: Merwelene van der Merwe • PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT: Nicole Louw • MAKE-UP AND HAIR: Maria de Vos used 'Evo Hair' wax for hair
MODEL: Chantel Dartnall • JEWELLERY: Cartier • MAGNOLIA FLOWER: Willem Janse van Vuuren • DEKAT TEAM: Theresa Meyer, Matty Naudé & Maria Mataboge



Each seasonal menu has a theme that picks up from the one it follows. She explains: "Our autumn menu, *Tabula rasa* – Latin for blank slate – referred to the epistemological idea that individuals are born without built-in mental content and that therefore all knowledge comes from experience or perception. Our latest menu – titled *CosmOrganic* – alludes to the big bang and that from the ashes of its cataclysm first life sprouts. I have already conceptualised our new menu to be launched on the March 22 equinox. It follows on these two menus and it's about evolution, something that people have seen in my food and journey during the 11 years that Restaurant Mosaic has been operating."

CosmOrganic demonstrates just how far Chantel has come since she returned from the UK, after having worked in the kitchens of Nico Ladenis and Michael Caines, and opened Restaurant Mosaic on the family property at Elandsfontein outside Pretoria. Now international chefs want to collaborate with her and learn from someone at the top of their game.

There is a selection of tantalising amuse bouche – miniature taste explosions and bite-sized works of art followed by a prelude of first courses. *Song of the Sea* combines salmon with ground wasabi peanuts, coconut flour, oyster leaf, kombucha and yuzu oil in a brilliantly balanced gastronomic delight.

In *Sea Mist*, soft aromas of the sea merge with succulent langoustine and scallop with a touch of saffron foam, while *Some Birds Don't Fly* is a cold beetroot and ostrich tartare accompanied by a hot ostrich ravioli in a rich consommé.

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Paying homage to The Orient's Moorish architectural style there's *Tajine du Maghreb*, a goat terrine served on the scapula (shoulder blade) alongside a goat tajine with a deep yet slightly sweet sauce. The less rich *Cote D'Azur* combines perfectly cooked sea bass with a courgette flower and flavours of ratatouille.

Mosaic is known for its cheese trolley and you can opt for this or the 36-month matured Charles Arnaud French Comte.

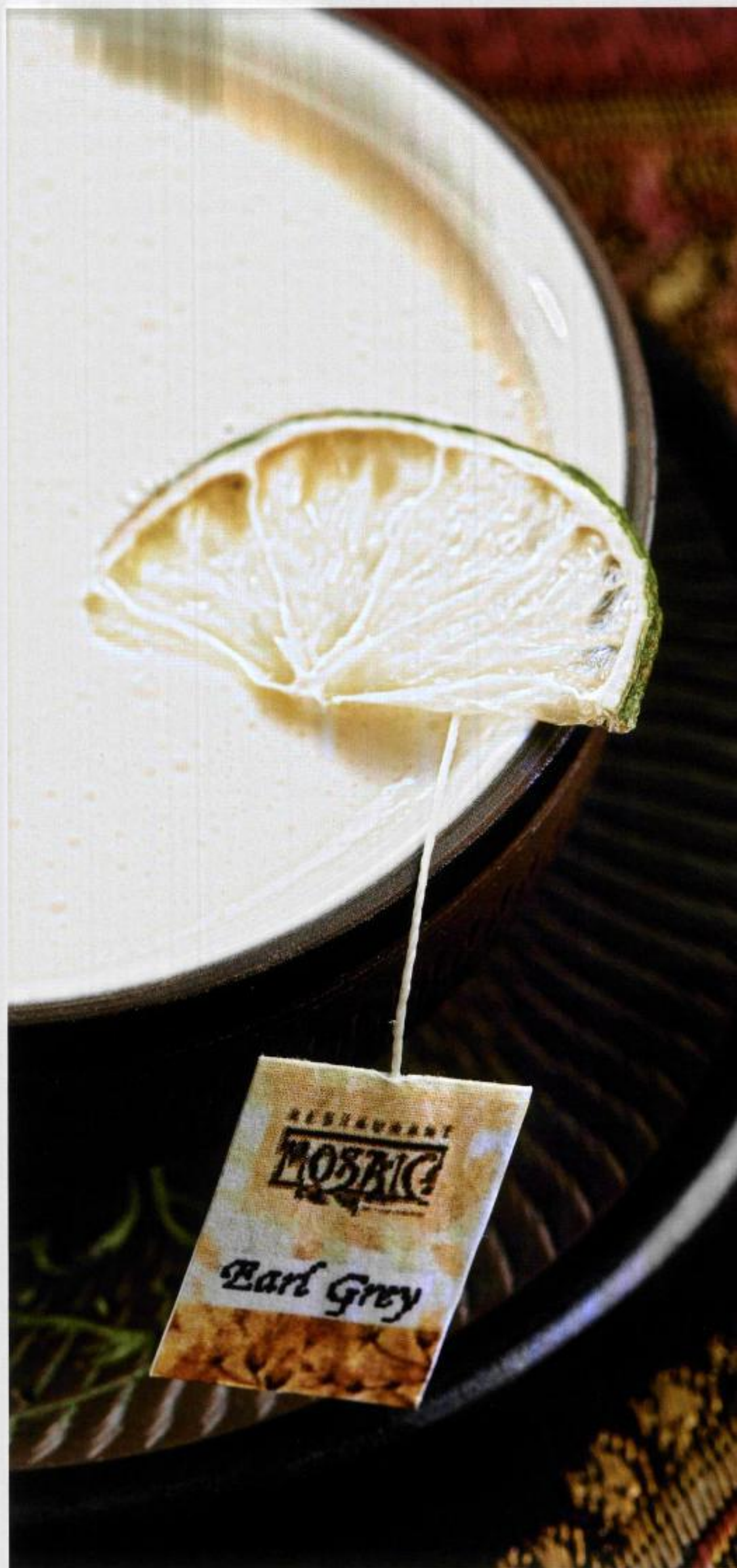
For the dessert course, Chantel pays tribute to Quetzalcoatl, who gave cacao to humans, in a dish named after the Aztec god. The colourful *Clash of the Constellations* is a lighter option made with granadilla, mango and fresh berries.

Restaurant Mosaic also boasts one of the most comprehensive and lauded wine cellars in Africa, comprising more than 75 000 bottles of wine under 5 500 different local and international labels and so each course is paired with what the team believes is the perfect wine to enhance the dish.

For the teetotallers, Chantel and her team put as much thought into the non-alcoholic pairing with drinks specially chosen to complement the meal: for example, *Sea Mist* is served with a lime and lemongrass spritzer; *Cote D'Azur* is accompanied by a tomato and basil tonic; the cheese board with a spiced pear toddy, and the chocolate finale with a berry Bellini.

It's all part of the incredible attention to detail Restaurant Mosaic has become renowned for.

Meanwhile, the artist – because that's what Chef Chantel is – is already dreaming up new creations to inspire and delight.



RECIPE

Tea granita

INGREDIENTS

1 Earl Grey teabag
1 drop bergamot essence
3ml glucose
2,5ml sugar

METHOD

In a medium bowl place the teabag and 1L of water at 80°C. Stir in the sugar and bergamot essence and allow to steep for 10 minutes. In a small pot heat the glucose to a light simmer. Remove the teabags and add the glucose to the mixture and allow to cool. Once cooled churn the granita in an ice-cream churning.

Lemon and honey ice-cream flavouring syrup

INGREDIENTS

20ml honey
½ lemon juiced
½ lemon zested

METHOD

In a saucepan heat the honey and the lemon juice. Stir in the zest and remove from the heat. Strain out the zest.

Lemon and honey ice-cream base

INGREDIENTS

160ml cream
50ml milk
1 egg
35ml castor sugar
20ml lemon and honey syrup

METHOD

In a large pot bring milk and cream to a scald. Whisk together the egg yolk and the castor sugar. Temper the scalding milk into the egg mixture slowly then return to the heat and allow to thicken. Add the lemon and honey syrup and allow to cool by means of contact covering it. Churn well in ice-cream churning.

Lime zest

INGREDIENTS

1 small lime
10g castor sugar

METHOD

Slice the lime in half and cut thin slices. Bring the sugar to a boil with a dash of water. Place in the lime and allow to cool. Place in the oven at 80°C briefly to crisp up.

To assemble

Freeze a tea cup and fill with 1 tsp of granita. Top off by piping 30ml of ice cream into the cup and smoothing out the top with the back of a spoon. Top off with a lime segment and insert homemade tea tags.

SOME BIRDS DON'T FLY

Ostrich tartare

Marinade (6 portions)

INGREDIENTS

30g lemongrass
5g ginger
80ml soya sauce

METHOD

1 Sweat chopped lemongrass and ginger in a large pan. Add the soya sauce and allow to scald before removing the pot from the heat and allowing the flavours to steep while cooling.
2 Pour the marinade over the ostrich fillet and cover by means of skin contact.

Tartare (6 portions)

INGREDIENTS

100g ostrich fillet
30g plums
30g beetroot
2g thyme
20g pickles
2g coriander
2g basil
5g wholegrain mustard
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste

METHOD

1 Cook beetroot in seasoned boiling water with thyme. Cut small brunoise of the plums, beetroot, pickles and marinated ostrich.
2 Mix together with the finely chopped coriander and basil. Add the mustard and seasoning to taste. Stack 20g of the mixture into greased cylindrical ring cutters 3cm in diameter and press down well.
3 Pour over 5ml of the liquid beetroot gel and allow to set in fridge.

Beetroot gel roulades (6 portions)

INGREDIENTS

140ml beetroot juice
35ml plum juice
One drop hibiscus aroma
One drop white balsamic
2,5ml agar agar
Salt to taste

METHOD

1 Heat the beetroot and plum juice along with the hibiscus aroma and white balsamic in a large saucepan. Slowly add the agar agar to the simmering water while whisking well to avoid lumps.
2 Allow to simmer for a further 2 minutes to ensure the agar agar is activated. Pour the mixture into flat trays 2mm thick and allow to set on the counter top. Cut into squares 5cm x 5cm. Roll out 1m of plastic wrap onto a slightly damp countertop avoiding air bubbles as far as possible. Lay sheets of beetroot onto the wrap and spoon on 10g of the tartare mixture on the side facing you.
3 Shape the tartare into a cylindrical shape in order for the sheet to roll around the roulade. Roll the beetroot sheet over tightly in the plastic wrap and twist the edges slightly to ensure the tartare cannot fall out. Set in the fridge until ready to plate.

Plum purée (6 portions)

INGREDIENTS

1 plum
1 hibiscus aroma

METHOD

1 Cut plums in quarters with the stones removed. Place into a vacuum pack bag with the hibiscus aroma and seal tightly. Sous vide plums at 80°C for roughly an hour depending on the ripeness of the plums. The plums should dissipate when pressed. Drain excess juice and blend the pulp. Pass through a tamis sieve and store in a piping bag.

Liquorice tuile (6 portions)

INGREDIENTS

1 egg
50g gluten-free flour
5g xanthan gum
One drop liquorice essence
Small pinch activated charcoal

METHOD

1 In a mixing bowl, lightly whisk egg. Add gluten-free flour and activated charcoal, whisk to a smooth paste. In a small saucepan heat liquorice essence with xanthan gum and a splash of water while whisking vigorously. Add xanthan to egg mixture and stir in well. Place into a piping bag and pipe into zigzag tuiles 5cm long and roughly 1cm wide. Bake at 150°C in the oven for 10 minutes.



Horseradish cream (6 portions)

INGREDIENTS

40ml cream cheese
15ml yoghurt
1ml white balsamic
5ml horseradish cream
1g dill
Salt to taste

METHOD

1 In a kitchen aid paddle the cream cheese until soft. Paddle in yoghurt and white balsamic. Pass the horseradish cream through a tamis sieve to ensure there are no lumps. Add the horseradish to the cream cheese while paddling. Fold in finely chopped dill with a spoon and season to taste.

To assemble the dish

PER PORTION

1g caviar
3g micro herbs and flowers

METHOD

1 Place the tartare stack onto the plate and remove the cutter. Pipe on six small drops of the horseradish cream around the top edge of the stack. Use the cream as a glue to build a small garden in a half moon shape on top of the stack. Finish off with a touch of caviar.
2 Carefully unwrap the roulade and place onto the plate with an offset palette knife. Pipe a line of plum purée along the topmost length of the roulade. Using the purée as an anchor, place the liquorice tuile and once again build a garden along the length of the roulade.

FROM THE ASHES

Blood orange jelly

INGREDIENTS

300ml blood orange purée (Boiron)
50ml blood orange syrup (Monin)
5ml salt
5g agar agar (can be replaced with 3 sheets of gelatine)
1 sprig thyme

METHOD

- 1 In a medium saucepan, add together blood orange purée, syrup, salt and agar agar. Whisk together until agar agar has dissolved.
- 2 Add thyme and bring to a boil, the mixture must boil for 2 mins to make sure the agar agar is activated.
- 3 Strain through a fine sieve, and pour into flat non-stick tray about 1–2mm thick.
- 4 Refrigerate for 30 mins or until completely set.
- 5 Use a round cutter to cut the jelly.

Quince purée

INGREDIENTS

700g (4 large) quince (peeled and cored)
water for soaking quince
1 lemon
500ml water
500ml sugar
1 vanilla pod
10ml lime juice

METHOD

- 1 Slice quince in 3mm rings and soak in water and juice of 1 lemon to keep them from discolouring.
- 2 Place the water, sugar and vanilla into a large heavy-based pot and bring to a boil, making sure the sugar has dissolved completely.
- 3 Remove quince from water and add to syrup.
- 4 Cook on a high heat for 10–15 mins until quince are soft.
- 5 Use the slices of 1 quince to cut into small uniform blocks.
- 6 The rest of the quince can be added to a blender with a small amount of the liquid.
- 7 Blend together into a smooth thick purée (add more liquid to get desired consistency).
- 8 Pass through fine sieve and place into piping bag with a small nozzle or into a small squeeze bottle.

Lava meringue shards

INGREDIENTS

120g egg whites
40g castor sugar
5ml fine salt
2,5ml citric acid
2ml lemongrass aroma (Selectal)

2ml bergamot aroma (Selectal)
20g activated charcoal powder
Dried flowers and micro herbs
Round template cut-out (that will completely cover your serving dish)

METHOD

- 1 Flowers can be dried out the night before, would recommend using nasturtium flowers. Flowers can be dried out in oven on 70°C – takes up to 3 hours to dry out.
- 2 Whisk egg whites on a high speed until soft peaks, gradually add sugar until meringue is glossy and holds its shape. Fold in the citric acid, salt and aromas. Can adjust flavour according to taste.
- 3 Sieve charcoal powder into mixture and fold in gently, spread out onto baking sheet using a round stencil.
- 4 Spread out meringue very thin, using the back of a palette knife create a texture to resemble flowing lava.
- 5 Scatter dried flowers and micro herbs on top of meringue, dry out meringue on 100°C for 30–40 mins or until meringue has dried completely.

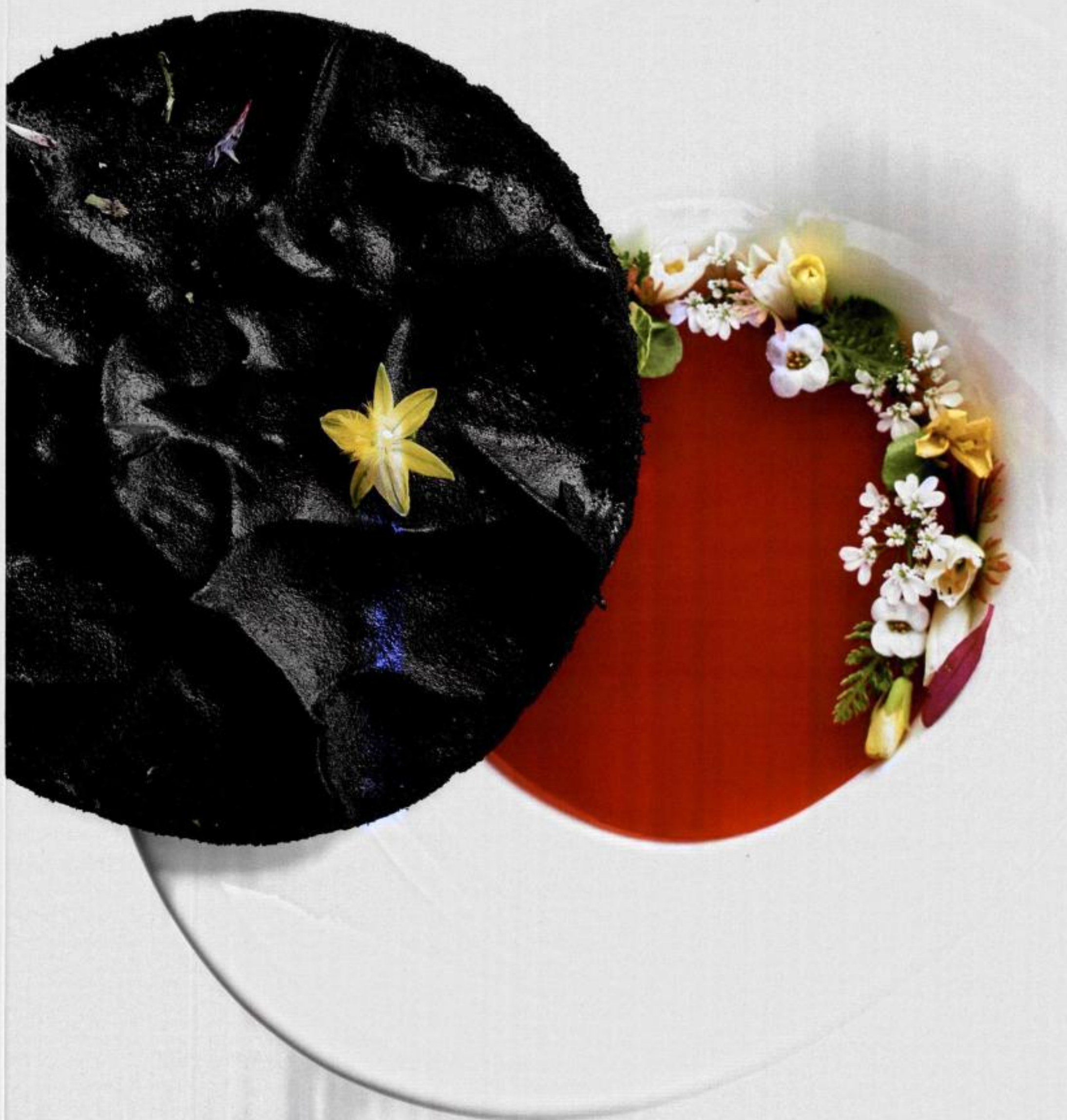
Duck liver parfait

INGREDIENTS

½kg duck liver
½ onion, roughly chopped
1 garlic clove
3 sprigs of rosemary
3 sprigs of thyme
Zest of ½ an orange
1 glass of monbazillac or muscadet wine
½ a block of butter
500ml milk
5 eggs

METHOD

- 1 Start by cleaning the gristle off the livers. Using the back of the knife, and holding the gristle, scrape the liver off the gristle. Then place the livers into a bowl with the milk and let them soak for at least 2 hours. This removes unwanted bitterness and also any excess blood.
- 2 Now you need to get your mise-en-place ready to bake the parfait. So get a large pot ready, filled with water. This needs to come to a rolling boil. You will also need a deep baking tray and a bread tin or a terrine mould. Lightly oil the bread tin and line with baking paper.
- 3 The bread tin will sit inside the baking tray. The boiling water will be poured into the baking tray so that the bread tin is surrounded by water. This water bath is called a bain-marie and it prevents direct heat from burning or overcooking the livers as the heat from a bain-marie is much more even and delicate. The oven can also be turned on to 100°C.
- 4 After the livers have soaked for 2 or more hours they need to be rinsed. Take a large sieve and rinse the livers under cold running water until the liquid runs clear. The process of actually making the parfait can now be started.
- 5 In a large pot melt ½ of the butter, then add the onion. When the onion has sweated out and almost started to turn translucent, add the garlic, thyme, rosemary and orange zest. Cook until the mixture becomes wonderfully aromatic. At this point the wine is added and reduced to the



point where the mixture is thick and syrupy. The rest of the butter is now added. When the butter is completely melted and on a gentle simmer, add the livers, and immediately take the pot off the heat. The livers must just warm up and not cook completely through, so stir continuously. The liver/butter mixture is ready when the livers start to turn grey on the outside.

6 Put the liver/butter mixture into a blender and blend until smooth.

7 Now add the eggs and blend once more.

8 This is now poured into the lined bread tin. The baking tray is filled with boiling water. Wrap the baking tray twice with foil and place into the oven for 1 hour, being very careful with the baking tray as it will already be very hot.

9 Remove from the oven after 1 hour. Again, very carefully remove the baking tray from the oven. Extreme caution must be used when removing the foil as the steam that releases from underneath can burn your hands and arms. Let the parfait cool in its mould for another hour. At this point the parfait should be quite set and can be placed into the fridge until later.

Chef's note:

Boiron purées and Selectal aromas are available from La Marina Foods.

How to assemble dish

1 Place small brunoise of quince at the bottom of your serving dish.

2 Cover with a small layer of quince purée.

3 Pipe in duck liver parfait.

4 Cover with blood orange jelly, making sure liver is completely covered.

5 Pipe small dollops on the edge of the jelly in a half moon shape, to make sure you can place your garnish and edible flowers on them.

6 Flowers used: alyssum, rocket, micro basil, micro radish shoots.

7 Place meringue shard on top, without letting the meringue touch the garnish.

BY THE SEASHORE

Seared scallops

INGREDIENTS

6 large scallops
200g salted butter
Cake flour for dusting
Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C.
- 2 Remove the roe from scallops, and rinse under cold water to remove any small particles of sand. (Rinse under slow running water, hold the scallop in the palm of your hand and wash gently to avoid breaking the scallop.)
- 3 Place rinsed scallops on a clean dry cloth, make sure to pat them dry before you start frying.
- 4 Melt butter in a saucepan, and place inside an ovenproof baking tray once completely melted. (The butter should be able to cover the scallops, once fried.)
- 5 Heat a frying pan or grill. While you are waiting, you can lightly dust the scallops with flour on both sides.
- 6 Season with Maldon salt.
- 7 Fry scallops to get an even golden colour on both sides, without cooking completely.
- 8 Remove scallops from the frying pan, and place inside butter tray, continue cooking scallops inside the oven until cooked.

Dried scallops

INGREDIENTS

1–2 large scallops
Maldon salt
Wax paper

METHOD

- 1 Remove roe from scallops, and rinse under cold running water.
- 2 Slice scallops paper thin and place on a baking sheet, without overlapping but as close to each other as possible.
- 3 Sprinkle with a small amount of Maldon salt
- 4 Place another sheet of wax paper on top of the sliced scallop.
- 5 Using a rolling pin, roll out to make a paper thin sheet.
- 6 Dry out in oven on 70°C with the fan on, making sure the oven is not on grill.
- 7 The sheet should take 2–3 hours to dry out. It should be dry and crispy when ready, without any colour.

Pak choi

INGREDIENTS

3 pak choi
100g salted butter
100ml water

METHOD

- 1 Melt butter in a small saucepan together with the water, and bring to a boil.
- 2 Remove the root of the pak choi. Only using the leaves, blanch pak choi in butter and water until cooked, remove from saucepan and place on paper towel.
- 3 Season with additional salt if needed.

Shaved asparagus

INGREDIENTS

6 asparagus
Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Fill medium pot with water, add Maldon salt once water is boiling.
- 2 Using a peeler, thinly shave the asparagus, starting from the root (this will help prevent the tip of the asparagus from breaking apart).
- 3 Blanch asparagus in water. Once cooked season with additional Maldon salt.

Pickled shimeji mushrooms

INGREDIENTS

100g brown shimeji mushrooms
40ml white balsamic glaze (Giuseppe Giusti)
150ml lemon olive oil
Pinch Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Whisk together balsamic glaze, lemon olive oil and salt until combined.
- 2 Blanch mushrooms and place in balsamic pickle to marinade for at least 30 mins to absorb the flavour.

Pickled radishes

INGREDIENTS

4 baby radishes
20ml aged white balsamic vinegar (Giuseppe Giusti)
20ml Persian lime olive oil
30ml olive oil (good quality)
Pinch Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Whisk together vinegar, olive oils and Maldon salt until completely combined.
- 2 Slice radishes lengthways with the skin on, very thin, on a mandoline, about 1–2mm thick.
- 3 Blanch radishes for a few seconds.
- 4 Place radishes in pickling liquid.



Baby marrow

INGREDIENTS

3 baby marrows
Maldon salt
50ml lemon olive oil

METHOD

- 1 Fill medium pot with water, add Maldon salt once water is boiling.
- 2 Top and tail the baby marrow, then use a peeler to create thin shavings.
- 3 Blanch baby marrow in water, season with additional Maldon salt, and store in lemon olive oil.

BOUNTIFUL BEETROOT

Asparagus spears

INGREDIENTS

18 asparagus tips
Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Fill medium pot with water, add salt when water is boiling.
- 2 Cut the tips off the asparagus (keeping the stems for the cream).
- 3 Blanch asparagus spears in water, once cooked season with additional Maldon salt.

Fava beans

INGREDIENTS

100g fava beans
100g salted butter
100ml water
Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Melt butter in a small saucepan together with the water and bring to a boil.
- 2 Blanch fava beans until cooked, but still tender and bright green.
- 3 Season with Maldon salt.

Baby candy-striped beetroot

INGREDIENTS

4 baby candy-striped beetroot
40ml white balsamic glaze (Giuseppe Giusti)
30ml lemon olive oil
50g salted butter
Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Slice beetroot in thin slices, you can use a small round cutter to achieve desired shape.
- 2 Blanch beetroot in water and salt.
- 3 Melt butter in a small saucepan.
- 4 Whisk together the balsamic glaze, salt and lemon olive oil, once combined add melted butter in a thin stream while whisking to emulsify. The liquid should thicken.
- 5 Place beetroot slices inside vinaigrette. When placing them on the plate, place on paper towel to make sure there are no drops of oil on the plate.

Pickled micro baby radishes

INGREDIENTS

20 micro baby radishes
40ml white balsamic glaze (Giuseppe Giusti)
150ml lemon olive oil
5ml vanilla paste
Pinch Maldon salt

METHOD

- 1 Peel 6 of the baby radishes, and slice off the stems so they can stand on the plate.
- 2 Slice 2 baby radishes very thin with the skin on.
- 3 Keep the rest of the baby radishes whole, with the skin on.
- 4 Blanch radishes separately to ensure even cooking.
- 5 Whisk together balsamic glaze, lemon olive oil, vanilla and salt together until combined.
- 6 Place radishes inside liquid (separately) and leave to marinade for 30 mins.

Beetroot jelly

INGREDIENTS

500ml beetroot juice
1 sprig thyme
3 black peppercorns
20g light brown sugar
1 bay leaf
10g dried hibiscus leaves
1,25ml sour cherry aroma (Selectal)
5g agar agar

METHOD

- 1 We make our own beetroot juice by grating the beetroot and pressing out the juice with a muslin cloth, but you can buy beetroot juice from your local supermarket. Or juice fresh beetroot in a juicer.
- 2 Cook together beetroot juice, thyme, peppercorns, sugar, bay leaf and dried hibiscus. Allow to simmer for 20 mins.
- 3 Remove from heat, strain through a fine sieve, and place in medium saucepan.
- 4 Leave to cool down to room temperature, whisk in agar agar and cook on stove top until liquid boils for 2 mins.
- 5 Add cherry aroma and strain through fine sieve into a flat tray, making the layer about 5mm thick.
- 6 Leave to cool down for 30 mins, refrigerate for 1 hour.
- 7 Cut jelly using a round cutter.



Asparagus cream

INGREDIENTS

18 asparagus stems
1 tin white asparagus
300ml cream
Maldon salt
1 lemon

METHOD

- 1 Slice asparagus stems into thin rings to help blanch faster and keep the colour green.
- 2 Blanch asparagus and refresh in ice bath.
- 3 Blend together with white asparagus (drained), cream and salt.
- 4 Add the juice of 1 small lemon (optional).
- 5 Pass through a fine sieve to ensure a velvety, smooth cream.