



Photo Credit: Kelly Lane

VEGETABLE NAPOLEON

BY HEAD CHEF FELIPE BARAJAS, OPAL RESTAURANT & BAR

PREP TIME: 2 HOURS 30 MINUTES

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS

3 Large Yukon Gold Potatoes
4 Ounces Crumbled Gorgonzola
1 Cup Instant Polenta
4 Ounces Shiitake Mushrooms
4 Ounces Oyster Mushrooms
½ Eggplant
4 Large 4" Portobello Mushrooms, De-Stemmed
(and De-Gilled If Desired)
2 Large Red Peppers, Cut in Half, with Stems, Seeds,
and Membranes Removed
5 Ounces Spinach

½ Garlic Clove, Finely Diced
8 1/2 Ounces Olive Oil
5 Tomatoes, Cut in Half
5 Red Bell Peppers, Cut in Half
1 Small Onion
8 Garlic Cloves, Peeled
4 Cups Vegetable Stock (Ideally Homemade)
¼ Cup Fresh Sweet Basil, Chopped Fine
Salt
Pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Peel potatoes, place in a medium saucepan with 4 cups of water and bring to a boil. Simmer for 15 minutes or until soft. Place in a medium bowl to cool slightly, then whisk in Gorgonzola pieces until thoroughly blended. Season with salt and pepper to taste, then form into patties and set aside.
2. In a large saucepan, bring water to a rolling boil. Season heavily with salt. Gradually add in instant polenta and stir with a wooden spoon until well combined.
3. Reduce heat to low and continue to cook until mixture thickens, stirring often.
4. While polenta is cooking, spray a casserole dish with a small amount of cooking spray. Once the polenta has thickened after approximately 30 minutes, check for seasoning and add salt if necessary. Pour mixture into dish. Place into the refrigerator for approximately 2 hours to set.
5. To make the polenta cakes, use round cookie cutter or glass to make cakes, and remove from dish with spatula. Place a sauté pan over medium heat and add 1 tablespoon olive oil. When oil is hot, place the polenta circles into the pan. Cook until a golden crust has formed on both sides, turning as little as possible. Set aside.
6. Wash wild mushrooms, cut into thin strips, sauté gently in olive oil for 10 minutes, add salt and pepper to taste, then set aside.
7. Slice eggplant in 4 disks, brush lightly with olive oil and place on sheet pan. Brush portobello mushrooms lightly with olive oil, also place on sheet pan and put in preheated 400°F oven for 15 minutes or until both eggplant and mushrooms are tender. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
8. In oven preheated to 450°F, lay peppers on foil-lined baking sheet, cut side down. Roast peppers for 15-20 minutes or until the skins are very dark and have collapsed.
9. Once the skins are blackened, remove peppers from the oven. Let peppers cool for a few minutes until comfortable enough to handle, then peel the skins off and discard. Slice into thin strips and set aside.
10. In a medium saucepan, sauté garlic and spinach in olive oil until garlic is browned and spinach is soft. Add salt and pepper to taste and set aside.
11. Sauté garlic and onion until translucent. Add tomatoes and red peppers and sauté gently. Add vegetable stock and basil. Bring to boil and simmer for about 20 minutes. Then put in roasting pan and place roasting pan in oven preheated to 350°F for 5-10 minutes.
12. Remove from oven and season to taste. Blend entire sauce to a smooth consistency.
13. To prepare the dish, first spread the tomato sauce on the serving plate. The order for assembly goes as follows: sauteed spinach, grilled eggplant, polenta cake, grilled portobello mushroom, gorgonzola potato cake, wild mushrooms, and then roasted red peppers. Enjoy!