

Chef John Vander Jagt Creative Dining Services

The Mothership of Tomato and Mozzarella

Ingredients serves 3-4

- 2 1/4 pounds mixed ripe tomatoes, different shapes and colors
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- A good pinch of fresh oregano and basil
- Basil Oil And 18 year balsamic vinegar
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and grated
- 1 fresh red Chile, seeded and chopped

This is an incredible tomato salad but there are two things to remember if you want to wow your guests with something so simple.

The first is that you should try to get a mixture of different, tasty, local (if possible) tomatoes in all different shapes, sizes and colors. Second, salting the tomatoes brings out the flavors so don't skip this bit. Some people get worried about putting this much salt on their food, but the bulk of it will drip off, leaving you with really beautiful, intensely flavored tomatoes.

If you can get hold of some fresh Basil and oregano then do, as it has the most heavenly flavor. Feel free to use the dried stuff that you get in a little container, but fresh is the better choice, fragrant flavor you get from the fresh herbs.

Depending on the size of your tomatoes, slice some in half, some into quarters and others into uneven chunks. Straightaway this will give you the beginnings of a tomato salad that's really brave and exciting to look at and eat.

Put the tomatoes into a colander and season with a good pinch of sea salt. Give them a toss, season again and give a couple more tosses. The salt won't be drawn into the tomatoes; instead it will draw any excess moisture out, concentrating all the lovely flavors.

Leave the tomatoes in the colander on top of a bowl to stand for around 15 minutes, and then discard any juice that has come out of them.

Transfer the tomatoes to a large bowl and sprinkle over the oregano.

Make a dressing using 1 part vinegar to 3 parts oil, the garlic and the Chile. Drizzle the tomatoes with enough dressing (Oils and Vinegars to coat everything nicely).

Raw Beet Ravioli

Ingredients

- 5 oz. Boursin Cheese
- 5 oz. Goat Cheese
- Golden Beet & Purple Beet
- Heirloom Tomato
- Fustini's Fig Vinegar and Pomegranate Vinegar
- Pomegranate Gastrique

Start out by mixing Goat cheese and Boursin cheese together with a mixer. When mixture is smooth, let sit out at room temp while preparing the beets, tomatoes and Gastrique.

Steps to clean and peel a raw beet

Step 1: Run the beets under cold water and remove any dirt using your fingertips. Handle them gently, being careful not to break the skin.

Step 2: Put on a pair of latex gloves if you do not want to scrub stains from the beet juice off of your hands when you are finished.

Step 3: Hold the beet firmly in your non-dominant hand. Using your dominant hand, grip the peeler and peel the beet the same as you would peel an apple or carrot. Use the vegetable peeler slowly and methodically, always peeling away from your hands, to avoid cuts.

Step 4: Dispose of the peelings and continue your preparation of the beets for your recipe.

Pomegranate Gastrique

- 1/2 cup of sugar
- 1/2 cup of white wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup of pomegranate juice

Start with a stainless steel pan, heat sugar over medium heat until sugar dissolves and begins to caramelize. Once sugar is has dissolved, add remaining ingredients (the sugar will hiss, crackle, and harden, let sugar re-dissolve).

Reduce heat to a low medium and let liquid reduce to 1/2 cup or until syrup-like.

Remove from heat and cool for 1-hour.

Preparation

Take a clean beat, and slice as thinly as possible with as many pieces possible (if a mandolin is available, it makes the process a little easier). Set aside in a water bath. Prepare heirloom tomato by cutting 1/4 inch thick slice and set aside.

Building the Ravioli

If a piping bag is available, this eases the process; Pipe or spoon Boursin cheese mixture onto heirloom tomato. Layer with a sliced beet; continue the cheese and beet layering until materials run out.

Drizzle with pomegranate Gastrique over top of ravioli.

Drizzle with Fustini's fig vinegar and pomegranate vinegar.