

EXCLUSIVE RECIPE

THOMAS BELL, chef at the splendid Nags Head in Great Missenden, shares a delicious dish with our readers

HONEY GLAZED OX CHEEK WRAPPED IN CABBAGE LEAF AND CAUL FAT, SERVED WITH A CREAMY CHESTNUT MASH

Ingredients, serves 4

- 2 ox cheek (cleaned and cut in 1/2)
- 1 bottle red wine (Cabernet Sauvignon)
- 1 litre beef stock
- 1 bunch of celery
- 1 white onion
- 1 Savoy cabbage
- 100g caul fat
- 2 tbs honey
- 4 shallots, quartered
- 4 cloves garlic
- Vegetable oil
- Bay leaf
- Flour for dusting the meat and parsnip

For the mash

- Potato 2kg
- Chestnut 200g
- Double cream
- Salt and pepper to season

For the garnish (Optional)

- Rosemary
- Pea shoot
- 1 parsnip
- Vegetable oil (rapeseed)



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A mouth-watering feast which will delight your guests



Method

The Meat

Dust ox cheeks with flour and pan fry with a little oil. Brown off your meat. Place ox cheek into a deep tray. Heat up frying pan again and de-glaze pan with a glass of red wine, add to your tray.

Chop onion and celery. Dice each as finely as possible, add to the tray. Add stock to the rest of the red wine and a couple of bay leaves and two cloves of crushed garlic. Cover tray with tin foil and place into preheated oven at 175c. The meat should need 4/5 hours of cooking time. Roughly three and a half hours later you can prep your cabbage, chestnut mash and shallots. Once the meat is cooked and falls apart, remove from stock, but don't bin the stock as we will use it later.

Place onto a tray and leave to cool for 20 minutes. Then pour stock into a pan and reduce to a thickness and taste, ready to be used as rich gravy for the ox cheek. Once the meat is cool enough to work with, place caul fat under running hot water. This helps to make it more workable. Place the fat onto a table surface and flatten, then place a cabbage leaf onto it and add ox cheek on top. Wrap the leaf and ox cheek together, cut off any excess with a knife. Turn over ox cheek and place on an oiled cooking tray. Halve and peel shallots. Place on the same tray. Drizzle the ox and shallots with a little honey and cook at 175 c for 15/20 minutes. Remove and serve.

The Cabbage Leaf

Just remove as many as you need for portions,

eg four leaves for four meals. Remove the central stalk and put the leaves into boiling water for 2 minutes, then place in cold water. Once cold, remove from water and drain.

The Mash

Peel and 1/4 potatoes. Place in a pan of cold water with pinch of salt. Bring to boil and boil for 10/15 minutes until soft. Check with a knife that you can cut through the potato. Once cooked, drain and mash with a little double cream and season to taste. Roughly chop chestnuts and fold through the mash. Place a lid on pot and leave in a warm location.

The Garnish

Add extra texture to your dish with crispy parsnips. Pour oil into your fryer/deep pot and heat up to 160c. Peel parsnips and take off the top and bottom; you won't need these so put aside or bin them.

Continue to peel the parsnip until you get to the core on one side. Turn the parsnip and repeat till it's completely peeled. Take your peelings and toss them into flour. Drop into oil, fry for 5-7 minutes (till golden brown), remove and drain and place on kitchen roll or a cooling rack. Finally, season with salt.

To finish, grab a plate (preferably a deeper plate) and add mash. If you fancy, add the mash to a piping bag with a star nozzle and placing under the grill for a few minutes, to get a golden brown colour to the edges. Remove and add ox cheek and shallots and pour gravy over the meat. Add sprig of rosemary and some pea shoots, then finally top it off with your parsnip crisps. ♦