

Scotch Boeuf en Croute

Scotch Boeuf en Croûte

The overall subtlety of the 8 year old Hazelburn and the elegance of its peppery finish elevates this already impressive dish to a new level.

This wonderfully glamorous dish is perfect for a dinner party because you can do so much preparation well ahead of the arrival of your guests.

1kg beef fillet

30mls Knockando 12 year old Malt Whisky

butter and olive oil for browning the beef

Mushroom Filling

125g mushrooms, finely chopped

2-3 shallots, finely chopped

salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 large sprig of thyme, with the leaves stripped off the stems (or 1 large pinch of dried thyme)

1 tablespoon fresh flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

350g puff pastry (shop bought is fine, but look for the one made with butter)

1 egg, beaten, to glaze pastry

Whisky Sauce

500mls beef stock

200mls red wine

20mls Knockando 12 year old Malt Whisky

juices from the rested fillet*

1 teaspoon redcurrant jelly

1 teaspoon mushroom ketchup

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 220C/Gas7

Start this dish 3 or 4 hours ahead of serving time.

Start by trimming the fillet free of any fat, brush with some of the whisky and set aside for an hour.

Heat the butter and olive oil in a large pan until very hot and brown the joint on all sides, and then roast the beef on a rack in the oven for about 15 minutes until part cooked. Remove the beef from oven and set aside until cold. Reserve any juices from the fillet for the sauce.*

Gently fry the shallots and mushrooms in the pan the meat was browned in, adding a little butter if necessary, season with the remaining whisky, salt and black pepper and stir in the thyme and parsley. Allow this mixture to cool until you are ready to complete the dish.

You can prepare up to this point as much as 24 hours in advance, but the beef must be brought to room temperature before wrapping in pastry and cooking or the meat will not cook through in the cooking times given.

About 45 minutes before you want to serve the beef, heat the oven to 220C/Gas 7 and begin by rolling out the pastry into a rectangle slightly longer than the joint and wide enough to cover the beef and have sufficient to tuck in and seal.

Spread the mushroom mixture in the centre of the pastry and place the beef on top and season lightly with salt and pepper. Cut out 4 squares from each corner of the pastry and set them aside. Brush the edges of the pastry rectangle with beaten egg and wrap them over the beef. (make sure you don't have too much double thickness because the pastry on the bottom won't cook in time) Turn the beef parcel over so that the sealed edges are on the bottom. Transfer to a lightly oiled baking sheet and brush with the egg glaze, decorate with the pastry trimmings and glaze them as well. Bake for about 30 minutes until golden brown. You can test to see if the meat is cooked with a meat thermometer or failing that you can insert a metal skewer into the beef and if it comes out cold it is not cooked, if it is warm it is rare and if it is hot it is well done.

Meanwhile make the sauce. Place the stock in a pan, bring it to the boil then reduce it by a half, add the red wine and reduce again by about a quarter, now add the remaining ingredients, bring back to the boil and check the seasoning.

To serve

Cut the Croûte into thick slices, drizzle some of that glorious sauce around and serve with buttered parsley potatoes and vegetables. Absolutely wonderful!