





Welcome!

I am delighted to welcome you all here tonight to my cookery demonstration. Firstly I want to thank the organisers for inviting me here. I would also like to thank all the wonderful local artisan producers for coming and showcasing their wonderful products!

For me, cooking is all about using the best local, seasonal and Irish food. Tonight's recipes are all about fast healthy food that all the family will enjoy. I hope you enjoy the dishes I cook tonight and that you will try them at home. You may be lucky enough to win them tonight! If you have any questions about food please come up and ask me or my team. Thank you again for coming and let's have a fun evening.



Sweet Potato and Coconut Soup with Ham

Serves 6-8

I like to use leftover ham hock in this soup, but you could use shop bought or even bacon would work well. It keeps well for 2–3 days in the fridge. It can also be frozen for up to 1 month, but it may need to be blitzed with a hand blender when reheating, as it may split.

Ingredients

900g (2lb) sweet potatoes, cut into cubes

2 tbsp Donegal Rapeseed Oil

1 onion, finely chopped

1 celery stick, finely chopped

1 red chilli, halved, seeded and thinly sliced

1 tbsp Irish Bee Sensations Honey

1.25 litres (2 ¼ pints) vegetable or chicken stock

4 tsp tomato purée

400g (14oz) can Thai Gold coconut milk

225g (8oz) cooked, shredded ham

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

handful of fresh coriander leaves, to garnish

crusty bread, to serve

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F/gas mark 6). Place the sweet potatoes in a baking tin, drizzle over half the honey and roast for 25–30 minutes, until tender. Set aside.

Heat the remaining oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the onion, celery and chilli and sweat for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the reserved roasted sweet potato with the stock and tomato purée, then bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes, or until the liquid has slightly reduced and all of the vegetables are completely tender.

Reserve 3–4 tablespoons of the coconut milk as a garnish and pour the remainder into the pan with most of the shredded ham hock, again holding a little back to garnish. Cook for another 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Season to taste and ladle the soup into warmed bowls. Add a drizzle of the reserved coconut milk and scatter over the rest of the shredded ham hock and the coriander leaves to garnish. Serve hot with crusty bread on the side.



Speedy Coq au Vin

Serves 4

This coq au vin is made with chicken thighs, which have a more succulent flavour, but you could use chicken breasts if you prefer. I love it with the garlic mashed potatoes, but buttered noodles would also work well and take much less time to prepare.

Ingredients

25q (1oz) plain flour

450g (1lb) skinless, boneless chicken thighs, quality assured

2 tbsp Donegal rapeseed oil

knob of butter

175g (6oz) button onions or small shallots, halved

175g (6oz) button mushrooms, trimmed

100g (4oz) smoked bacon, quality assured

450ml (3/4 pint) chicken stock (from a cube is fine)

150ml (1/4 pint) red wine

2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp chopped fresh thyme, plus extra leaves to garnish

2 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

mashed potatoes, to serve steamed French beans, to serve

Method

Season the flour and toss the chicken pieces in it until lightly coated, shaking off any excess. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan over a medium-high heat and tip in the dusted chicken. Sauté for 3–4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until just beginning to brown.

Add the butter and toss until evenly coated, then add the onions or shallots, mushrooms and bacon and cook for another 3–4 minutes.

Pour the stock into the pan with the wine and Worcestershire sauce, then add the thyme. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer gently for about 15 minutes, until the chicken and vegetables are cooked through and the sauce is slightly reduced and thickened. Stir in the parsley and season to taste.

Place the mashed potatoes on warmed plates and spoon over the coq au vin. Garnish with some thyme leaves and add some French green beans to serve.



Roasted Hake with Cherry Tomatoes, Basil and Mozzarella Serves 4

Hake has a lovely soft texture and slight sweetness when it is very fresh. It is highly regarded by chefs as it offers great value for money. Ask your fishmonger for the hake fillets from the centre cut so that they are nice and chunky.

Ingredients

4 x 175g (6oz) hake fillets, skin on and pin bones removed

12 cherry tomatoes, thinly sliced

small handful of fresh basil leaves, roughly torn

125g (4 ½oz) ball of buffalo mozzarella, sliced

2 tbsp basil pesto (shop-bought or homemade)

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

lightly dressed green salad, to serve

buttered baby boiled potatoes tossed in snipped fresh chives, to serve

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F/gas mark 6).

Place the hake on a baking sheet, skin side down, and season the flesh. Arrange the tomato slices on top and tuck in the basil leaves. Cover with the mozzarella and drizzle over the pesto.

Place the hake in the oven and bake for 15–20 minutes, until the hake is cooked through and the mozzarella is bubbling and lightly golden. Transfer the hake with cherry tomatoes, basil and mozzarella to warmed plates and have bowls of green salad and buttered baby boiled potatoes to hand around separately.



Beef Stroganoff with Fluffy Rice and Dill Pickle Shavings Serves 4

Traditionally this was served with buttered noodles, not unlike tagliatelle, but it is so much nicer with fluffy rice. The soured cream is not strictly necessary and regular cream will work just as well.

Ingredients

1 tbsp plain flour

2 tsp sweet paprika, plus extra to garnish

450g (1lb) sirloin steak, cut into thin strips

25g (1oz) butter

2 tbsp Donegal rapeseed oil

1 large shallot, finely chopped

150g (5oz) button mushrooms.halved

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 tbsp white wine vinegar

150ml (1/4 pint) chicken stock

4 tbsp white wine

2 tsp tomato purée

1 tsp Dijon mustard

150ml (¼ pint) Avonmore cream sea salt and freshly

ground black pepper

fluffy rice, to serve

dill pickle shavings, to serve

Method

Toss the flour and paprika together in a shallow dish with seasoning and then use to coat the steak. Heat half the butter and oil in a frying pan over a high heat. Add the steak and stir-fry for 4–5 minutes, until sealed and lightly browned. Tip onto a plate and set aside.

Reheat the pan over a medium heat. Add the rest of the butter and oil and then add the shallot. Sauté for 2–3 minutes, until softened but not coloured. Increase the heat to high and add the mushrooms to the pan with the garlic. Season to taste and continue to sauté for another 2–3 minutes, until tender.

Add the white wine vinegar and allow to bubble right down, then add the stock, wine, tomato purée and mustard, stirring to combine. Tip the sautéed beef with any juices back into the pan, then bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer gently for about 5 minutes, until the sauce has reduced by half, stirring occasionally.

Stir the cream into the pan and return to the boil, then reduce the heat again and simmer gently for a couple of minutes and cook until the sauce has thickened and slightly reduced. Divide the fluffy rice between warmed plates and spoon over the beef stroganoff. Add dill pickle shavings and serve at once.



White Chocolate Coole Swan and Raspberry Cheesecake Serves 4

Ingredients

200g (7oz) cream cheese finely grated rind and juice of 1/4 lemon

1/2 vanilla pod, split in half and seeds scraped out

100g (3.5oz) white chocolate, buttons

100ml (3.5fl oz) Avonmore cream

4 shortbread biscuits, finely broken up

100ml Coole Swan

fresh mint sprigs, to decorate

FOR THE POACHED RASPBERRIES:

150ml (1/3 pint) red wine

1 tbsp crème de cassis

35g caster sugar

1/2 cinnamon stick

1 star anise

1/4 vanilla pod, split in half and seeds scraped out

200g (7oz) raspberries, plus extra to decorate

Method

Using an electric mixer, beat the cream cheese, lemon rind and juice and vanilla seeds for about 2-3 minutes, until smooth and light.

Melt the white chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool a little. Meanwhile, place the cream in a separate bowl and whip until stiff.

Fold the melted chocolate into the cream cheese mixture and then carefully fold in the whipped cream. Transfer to a piping bag fitted with a 1cm (1/2in) plain nozzle and place in the fridge until needed.

To poach the raspberries, place the red wine and crème de cassis in a pan with the sugar, cinnamon stick, star anise and vanilla pod and seeds and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes, until reduced by half and slightly thickened. Place the raspberries in a heat proof bowl and pour over the wine mixture through a fine sieve, discarding the cinnamon stick, star anise and vanilla pod. Stir to combine and leave to cool.

To assemble the cheesecake, divide the poached raspberries among martini glasses and crumble the shortbread biscuits on top. Pipe the cheesecake mixture right up to the rim of the glasses and decorate with raspberries and mint sprigs.

To serve, arrange the cheesecakes on plate.

COOK AHEAD

The poached raspberries will keep in the fridge for up to 5 days. All the other elements can be prepared 24 hours in advance and assembled just before serving.

Spun Sugar

Ingredients

225g (8oz) caster sugar 1 tbsp powdered glucose

Method

Place the sugar, glucose and 250ml (9fl oz) of water into a heavy-based pan. Bring to the boil and then reduce the heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes until you have achieved a golden caramel colour. The sugar syrup should be a thick honey consistency but not too runny. It thickens a little as it cools so if it gets too thick, then simply heat it again and it will loosen fairly instantly.

Using a clean, small metal spoon and a knife-sharpening steel, dip the spoon into the caramel and lift it out again, then twist it around the steel to create some sugar curls, working very carefully as the caramel is extremely hot





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