



Roast scallops with smoked salmon and leek mousse, apple and cashew nut dressing

This dish has oodles of visual appeal and there are some great flavours, too - especially if you can find the best diver-caught scallops direct from Scotland.

Start with the salmon and leek mousse, which takes a little more time to prepare. Blanch the leeks in boiling salted water and allow to cool.

Process the smoked salmon, egg white and cream in a blender. Season to taste.

Roll the mousse mixture into a sausage shape inside a leek skin and wrap the 'sausage' in cling film before plunging it into water that has just come off the boil.

Allow the pan to stand away from the heat. The mousse will poach as the water cools. This can be done the day before.

The scallops are lightly salted and peppered, then quickly seared in a hot, heavy bottomed pan with just a touch of oil. At the Queen's Head we dry out the roes in a low oven, then powder in a blender and use them to sprinkle on the scallops for added natural flavour.

The scallops are used to create 'mushrooms' on top of a 'stalk' of mousse, so there's a hot and cold contrast in this presentation.

For the apple balls, use a Parisienne scoop (melon baller) to create five or six balls from each apple. Heat butter in a pan until foaming, add the apples and sprinkle lightly with sugar. Cook for a minute or so.

For the dressing use three-quarters apple juice to one quarter cider vinegar. Reduce slightly over a moderate heat with a teaspoon of sugar. Add the apple balls and cashews along with a little butter to emulsify the sauce. Finally add a sprinkling of chopped chives and stir in before serving.

Recommended wine: Puligny Montrachet, Vincent Girardin, 2002

Ingredients

Serves four

Scallops (diver-picked) - 12

Mousse

Smoked salmon - 250g

Leek - 2 large

Egg white - 2

Double cream - 50ml

Salad

Apples - 2

Caster sugar - 1/4 tsp

Toasted cashew nuts - 5 to 6 per person

Unsalted butter - 1 tsp

Dressing

Apple juice - 100ml

Cider vinegar - 25ml

Caster sugar - 1 tsp

