



Smokey Poached Leg of Grey Squirrel, Squirrel Boudin, Hazelnut & Girolles

by James Goss, Chef Patron at The Kings Arms Inn



Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

MARINATE SQUIRRELS

- 2 squirrels (ribs snipped off and discarded. Legs removed)
- 150ml Madeira
- 75ml marsala
- 25ml cognac

POACHED SQUIRRELS

- Marinated squirrel
- 200g good quality smoked pancetta
- 2 carrots
- 6 garlic cloves
- 2 sticks celery
- 1 banana shallot
- Few sprigs of thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Small sprig of thyme & parsley
- 8 black peppercorns
- 1 litre or enough light chicken or veal stock to cover the jointed squirrel

BOUDIN

- 125g of basmati rice
- 250ml of the cooking liquor from the squirrel
- Squirrel meat
- The reserved cooked pancetta and vegetables
- Soaked natural sausage casings

LIGHT DIJON SAUCE

- 1 tsp of Dijon mustard
- 50g of unsalted butter
- 250ml reserved cooking liquor
- 50ml double cream

GARNISH

- 2 tbsps blanched podded and shelled broad beans
- A handful of Girolles mushrooms
- Pea shoots
- Hazelnut oil
- 25g roasted smashed hazelnuts

PLATING UP

- Sunflower oil
- Butter
- Sea salt

METHOD

MARINATE SQUIRRELS

1. Marinate the squirrels for 2-4 hours in four parts Madeira, two parts marsala and one part cognac.
2. Drain off liquid and reserve for the boudin.

POACHED SQUIRRELS

1. Dice the vegetables and lightly sauté together in an ovenproof casserole dish until softened.
2. You can either cook in the oven or in a water bath.
3. For the oven, set the oven at 120-140°C. Add the squirrels and aromatics then cover with stock, place in the oven and leave to cook for 8 hours, check every couple of hours and top up with water if necessary.
4. If using a water bath, allow the vegetables to cool and add 200ml of stock. Place in a bag with the squirrel and aromatics, and pac-vac. Place in the water bath for 16 hours at 75°C.
5. When finished cooking, empty the casserole dish or vacuum bag into a large colander. Remove the aromatics, reserve the softened vegetables, pancetta and cooking liquor. If using sous-vide method now add the remaining 200ml of stock to your cooking liquor. Pick the squirrel meat off the main body but leave the legs whole and set to one side.

6. You should now have 4 whole cooked squirrel legs, a pile of picked cooked squirrel meat, a pile of cooked vegetables and pancetta, a small bowl of marinade and finally the reserved cooking liquor.

ADDING THE SMOKE

1. Lay the cooked squirrel legs and picked meat onto a tray for the smoker. you only want to add 1 hour of cold smoke to the meat. Any cold cabinet smoke will do but take care not to over smoke the delicate squirrel meat.

BOUDIN

1. To cook the rice, add 250ml of the cooking liquor into a pan with the 125g of rice and cook until light and fluffy.
2. When cooked just empty the rice onto a tray and fork through to allow it to cool and to avoid big clumps forming.
3. In a shallow frying pan add 500ml of the remaining cooking liquor, cooked vegetables & pancetta, then heat gently until all the liquid has been absorbed.
4. Put onto a tray and cool before mixing together with the cooked rice and picked squirrel meat. Check for seasoning. This is now our sausage stuffing mix.
5. Stuff into the casings and pinch off to required size.

LIGHT DIJON SAUCE

1. In a saucepan slowly melt the butter and Dijon mustard together with the squirrel marinade.

2. As soon as you have an emulsion add the stock and reduce to coating consistency.
3. Add the cream and check seasoning and reduce to desired finish.

PLATING UP

1. To a frying pan add a little oil and a knob of butter.
2. Place the boudin and poached legs into the pan and gently baste with the oil and butter for about 5 minutes, season and rest for a couple of minutes.
3. Add a spoonful of sauce to the centre of the plate. Place the leg whole onto the plate, cut the boudin in half on the slant and place onto the leg.
4. Now garnish with the warmed broad beans and girolles, pea shoots and smashed hazelnuts.

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