

BEST MAIN COURSE PLATE

CRISPY SKIN DUCK BREAST + BRUSSELS SPROUTS + PLANET CARROTS + PLUM JUS + PLUM SUPREME

CONCEPT

The concept and objective of this plate was to make a typically heavy dish of savory duck into a lighter dish. The colors in this dish are eye-catching, and the protein, while still the star of the dish with a perfect cook, is harmonious with the light vegetables and tart plum sauce.

PRODUCTION / PRESENTATION

Crispy skin duck breast was the perfect alternative to culinary wedding monotony. More traditional proteins were not in our bride's sights when she set out to impress her guests. Paring it with plums (the un-sung hero of stone fruits) was our idea. The texture of the scored, crispy skin accomplished matching the complexity of the plums. After being beautifully seared and roasted, the duck breasts were held and the blanched planet carrots & brussels sprouts were sautéed with butter, seasoned, and laid upon each plate with care, and the duck breasts were sliced and presented atop. The dish was finished with plum supremes, and sweet plum jus was intentionally spilled around the plate.

CHALLENGES / OBSTACLES

The main challenge for this event was an additional table and a half showing up without a reservation. As we always want to make guests feel included (even the less-than-polite ones), we quickly realized that we would be out of entrees with this unexpected guest count. We typically reserve an overage in case of emergencies or go-backs, but tonight was not a night for generous left overs. Chef had to serve the last minute guests fewer portions of duck, but supplemented with the vegetarian meal, creating an on-the-fly duet plate.



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RECIPE: CRISPY SKIN DUCK BREAST & PLUM

1ea 6 to 7oz Duck Breast, Skin Rendered Crispy, Cooked Medium and Sliced
1cup Brussel Sprout Leaves Blanched
1cup Glazed Plant Carrots, Peeled, Blanched and Halved
2oz Plum Reduction
3ea Plum Wedges – If you can't find velvet plums regular will work
Fleur de Sel to taste
*Subrecipes noted below

*Duck Breast

1ea 6 to 7oz Duck Breast
Salt & Pepper to taste

Start by washing and drying the duck breast. Next, score the breast on the skin side making sure to not go down further than the skin. Season the breast with salt & pepper, now place the duck breast in a cold pan and place on stove over medium low heat and start to render. Continue to render the breast until the all fat releases and skin becomes crispy about 5 to 10 minutes. Set aside until ready to cook. When ready to cook place pan in a 350* oven and cook until medium rare, about 5 to 7 minutes. Pull breast from oven and let stand for 5 to 10 minutes, slice and serve.

Assembly

On the center of your plate lay a bed of Brussel sprouts leaves down; next arrange the plant carrots on the bed of Brussel sprout leaves. Add the sliced duck breast to the top of the Brussel sprouts and carrots then season the duck with fleur de sel and arrange the plum wedges on top of the duck breast. Finally spoon the sauce around the plate and serve.

*Glazed Planet Carrots

First get a small pot of water boiling on the stove and prepare an ice water bath to shock the carrots. Next peel and clean the carrots, once cleaned blanch them just until al dente. Now remove them from the pot and shock them in the ice water bath to stop the cooking process. Once cooled remove them from the ice water bath and place on paper towel to drain excess water. Now get a small pan on the stove and add the water, butter, sugar and salt. Heat on medium until butter and sugar dissolve, let mixture reduce a little maybe 2 minutes. It will thicken up and become foamy or bubbly. Once you achieve this add the carrots and cook until carrots are hot through making sure to not burn the sugar and butter while tossing the carrots to make sure they are coated evenly.

*Plum Reduction

2ea Plums
1oz Shallots Finely Chopped
1tea EVOO
Salt & Pepper to taste

1 tblsp Honey (this is only if needed, depends on sweetness of plums)
Water to cover, about 1 cup

Start by removing the pit from the plums. Next rough chop them and set aside until ready. In a small pot add the EVOO and shallots, place on stove over medium heat and sweat shallots making sure they do not color. Now add the plums and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, after add the water and let cook for 20 minutes. Water should reduce and plums should become soft and breakdown, now in a blender add the mixture to and puree until smooth. Once pureed strain through a chinois and add reduction to a clean pot. Finish Reduction with honey if needed and salt & pepper.

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