



Venison Epigrams

by Jose Souto

Senior Chef Lecturer in Culinary Arts at Westminster Kingsway College



Epigrams of lamb are good, but venison ones are even better as they have more flavour. The boned-out breasts are cooked slowly until tender in a well-flavoured stock with herbs and wine but they can also be cooked sous vide in wine and herbs for 13 hours overnight at 75°C, then pressed. This dish can be eaten as it is or as part of another venison dish.

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 2 boned out breasts of venison to the weight of about 2 kilos.
- 1.5 litres venison stock or brown chicken stock
- 2 glasses red wine
- 1 medium onion
- 1 medium carrot
- 1 clove of garlic
- Sprig of thyme
- ½ bay leaf
- Salt and pepper as required
- 100g Dijon mustard
- 2 eggs
- 200g plain flour
- 200g fresh or Japanese breadcrumbs
- Oil for deep frying and frying off vegetables

METHOD

1. Roughly chop onion, carrot and garlic.
2. Place some oil into a deep pan large enough to take the venison breasts.
3. Heat the oil and fry off the onions for 5-6 minutes. Now add the rest of the vegetables and herbs, and cook for a further 5-6 minutes, then add the wine and reduce by half.
4. In a separate pan, bring stock to the boil.
5. Place breasts on top of the herbs and vegetables, season, add boiling stock and bring back to the boil slowly.
6. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 2-3 hours, or until meat is tender. When the meat is cooked you should be able to take it in between your finger and thumb and as you pinch, your fingers will go through the meat.
7. Once meat is cooked, take out of the stock and allow to cool slightly for 10 minutes.
8. Place one of the still just warm breasts onto a sheet of grease-proof paper on a tray and then place the other breast on top, covering with another sheet of paper. Place a weighted tray on top of both breasts and put in the fridge to chill overnight.
9. Once chilled, remove the paper and carefully place the breasts onto a chopping board. They should have become loosely bound together.
10. Trim and square off the whole breasts then cut into portion sizes. These could be squares, triangles or rounds.
11. Once you have cut them, place a wooden toothpick into the centre of each portion. This will help you to pick them up, and the portions will hold together during cooking. Holding the pieces by the toothpick, brush them liberally with Dijon mustard then pass lightly through flour, tapping off any excess. Next, pass through beaten egg and then through the Japanese breadcrumbs, making sure that all the areas are covered in the breadcrumbs, still holding them on the toothpick.
12. Heat the oil to 170°C and carefully lower the epigrams into the oil with the toothpicks standing up, fry until golden-brown then drain, remove toothpicks, and serve.