



PRESS RELEASE

Really wild venison: served as a carpaccio with panna cotta, as saltimbocca, with coffee or pan-fried Granny Smith apples.

Lucerne / Interlaken / Bern / Zurich, 20.10.2011 (IB) – It's time for every gourmet's heart to beat a little faster: the hunting season is open and delicatessen displays everywhere are bedecked with medaillons, loins, saddles and entrecotes of venison. The four head chefs of the Victoria-Jungfrau Collection at the Bellevue Palace in Bern, the Palace Lucerne, the Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel in Interlaken and the Eden au Lac in Zurich give venison a "really wild" slant this year and reveal their exceptional recipes. "Roast venison with bread dumplings, gravy and cranberries is tasty and attractive," explains Kerstin Rischmeyer from the Palace Luzern on behalf of her three colleagues. "But this game specialty can be given a much more exciting and quite literally wilder feel."

Officially number one in the Michelin-starred kitchen of the Jasper restaurant in the Palace Luzern since 1 March and described as a "genuine culinary asset" by GaultMillau Switzerland, she herself prefers to serve venison as saltimbocca, best known in this country as an Italian veal speciality. In this version, the venison is cooked with smoked ham and sage leaves which have been lightly fried in butter beforehand. "The typical taste of game, combined with the aromatic ham and the subtle sage, creates fascinating contrasts" according to blue ribbon chef **Kerstin Rischmeyer**. As an accompaniment, she recommends "Heaven and Earth" – in other words an apple purée prepared with a hint of vanilla, lemon and white wine and served with a crispy potato fritter enhanced with nutmeg and shallots. Roast onions, their colour heightened with a sprinkling of paprika, add the final touch to this Italian-inspired venison recipe.

Also drawing its inspiration from the "Dolce Vita" of Italy is the recommendation from Denis Schmitt, head chef at the Eden au Lac in Zurich. He advises amateur chefs to try, at least once, a venison carpaccio with an exquisite accompaniment of cranberries and hazelnut panna cotta. For this recipe, you need to cut one pound of venison entrecote very finely using a sharp knife – "preferably on the same day as it is purchased", says Denis Schmitt. For venison to taste good raw, it must be absolutely fresh. It is then marinated in hazelnut oil and chopped hazelnuts and served with a cranberry compote seasoned with red wine and cinnamon. For the panna cotta, the hazelnuts are first boiled with double cream and sugar before gelatine is added. "This makes the venison carpaccio a fascinating combination of starter and dessert, blending sweet and sour flavours in a single dish," explains this native of Alsace.

This autumn, Denis Schmitt's colleague at the Bellevue Palace in Bern recommends smoked medaillon of venison in a spice-bread crust. **Gregor Zimmermann**, of whom GaultMillau Switzerland recently said that his cooking was “worth 16 points any time of the year”, explains that “the crust means that the venison remains tender and loses none of its juiciness”. He accompanies it with pan-fried Granny Smith apples marinated in lemon juice and serves the dish with Jaroma cabbage, the lighter and flatter original form of white cabbage, and quince sautéed in sesame oil, mixed with slices of apple and seasoned with a hint of chilli and thyme. “When presenting the dish on the plate, add a drop of pumpkin seed oil and a couple of pumpkin seeds for decoration” explains Zimmermann.

Lukas Stalder – who according to GaultMillau 2011 is on the verge of “becoming one of the best hotel chefs in the country” – swears by venison served with pumpkin. This autumn, the head chef in the blue riband La Terrasse restaurant at the Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel & Spa in Interlaken has smoked loin of venison with whole coffee beans. “The bitter taste of coffee and the strong taste of venison complement each other perfectly,” says Stalder. Once it has been smoked, the venison is lightly sautéed in butter with rosemary and juniper. He serves it with a basmati pumpkin cream in which basmati rice has been cooked until soft and the pumpkin has been lightly braised in caramel. The cream is then seasoned with vanilla and cardamom pods and puréed. The result is enhanced with a finishing touch of coconut milk and lime.

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