

Reindeer Fillets with Wild Mushroom & Chocolate Sauce

1 onion (or 2-3 shallots) finely chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
200g fresh mushrooms (everyday button mushrooms are fine)
1dl dried mushrooms, cep (boletus varieties) are ideal*
2dl warm water
2-3 tablespoons butter
4-5 juniper berries, crushed
1 garlic clove, finely sliced
2dl cream
1-2 squares of dark chocolate, finely grated
Splash of red wine (optional), or any dark spirits are good too

1 small reindeer inner fillet per person,
or about 10-15 cm reindeer outer fillet per person.
Allspice, ground
Salt and pepper
Coconut oil

Soak the dried mushrooms in 200ml of warm water.

Slowly cook the onion in the oil and a little butter on a low heat until brown and sticky.

Add the fresh mushrooms and soaked mushrooms (keep the water for later in the recipe), cook and stir until there is no longer any moisture in the mushrooms and they stick to the bottom of the pan. This can take up to 5 minutes depending on your mushrooms.

Then add the butter and stir until you can see the mushrooms going golden brown - this can also take up to 5 minutes. Add the crushed juniper berries.

Add the finely sliced garlic and stir until you can smell the garlic, which takes a minute or so. Then add the mushroom soaking water and cream, and the square of grated dark

chocolate. Season with salt and pepper. Taste to check your salty/sweet balance of flavours.

Have your sauce ready, table set and other accompaniments for your meal ready before you start cooking the reindeer meat.

Sprinkle salt and pepper on the reindeer fillets.

Heat oil in a pan until you can see the oil shimmering and smoking. Brown the fillets on all sides and cook only until just more than rare (they will continue to cook afterwards). You can cut into a fillet to check. Once cooked place on a plate, cover with foil and leave to rest in a warm place for a few minutes.

If you have some red wine and want to use the cooking flavours from the pan, wait for the pan to cool down and then add some red wine. Stir with a wooden spoon to 'clean' the pan and then add mushroom sauce to heat through.

Slice the fillets into medallions - add juices into the sauce. And serve. Those that prefer their meat well cooked can select the medallions from the thinner part of the fillet.

Serve with lingonberries (or cranberries) and/or lingonberry (or cranberry) jam and sliced pickled cucumbers.

*You can buy dried wild mushrooms in some supermarkets. Dry the sliced fresh mushrooms in a low 70°C oven with the door slightly open and until mushrooms are crispy, which can take up to 12 hours. Please seek advice on the varieties you are picking before you consider eating them - mushroom identification is an art!