

CUISINE DU MOI

The heart of my passion

GAVIN CANARDÉAUX

AS TOLD TO BEN CANAIDER

ALLEN&UNWIN

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DE-RE-UN- CONSTRUCTED T-BONE FOAM



A CLASSIC FOAM



SOMETIMES, WHEN I HAVE HAD A PARTICULARLY
GRUELLING WEEK OR I'VE BEEN OUT ALL DAY
RIDING ROUGH ON ONE OF MY HORSES OR
GIRLFRIENDS, MY APPETITE CAN BE ENORMOUS.
THAT'S WHEN I LIKE TO EAT A SIMPLE T-BONE.
WHEN ONE SPENDS AS MUCH TIME AS I DO IN
KITCHENS CONSTANTLY PERFECTING
IMPERFECTABLE DISHES NEVER BEFORE SEEN OR
TASTED, IT IS NICE TO COOK SOMETHING SO
SIMPLE YET SO SUSTAINING. SIMPLICITY IN THE
KITCHEN—AS ANY OF WE GREAT CHEFS WILL
TELL YOU—IS, AFTER ALL, KING.


1 x 650 g T-bone (free-range, not battery)

350 g sea salt, hand-harvested

1 tbsp agar

1 metric sprig of parsley





Cook the T-bone perfectly over your Tuscan or Provençal charcoal grill. I tend to do this in Tuscany or Provence, but if you can't get there import one of these grills and the effect will be pretty similar, particularly if you use some rosemary to brush over the steak as it cooks. (Brushing meat with rosemary gives you great options back in the editing suite, too.) In any case, a 650 g T-bone that is 45 mm in thickness will need 6 minutes on its left side. Salt the meat, turn onto its right side. Cook another 3 minutes. Remove from grill and rest in a warm place, such as Florida, for a further 3 minutes. Debone the T-bone. Remove any fat and discard. Keep the bone, however. Process the meat in a vitamiser on high for 10 minutes. Mix this pureed meat with the agar and then force into a whipped-cream canister equipped with an N₂O cartridge (available in most supermarkets). Place the T-bone onto a plate and then extrude the foam around the T-bone. The extrusion should take the shape and form of a perfectly chargrilled steak. Garnish with parsley. It is the only way to appreciate this cut of beef. This is beef in its most natural state.

SERVES 1, OR IDEAL AS
A PHOTO SHOOT FOR
SEVERAL FOOD STYLISTS.

THE
CULINARY
ARTS

*The trouble with raw ingredients
is that you have to cook them.*

RAYMOND BLANC,
BLANC MANGE

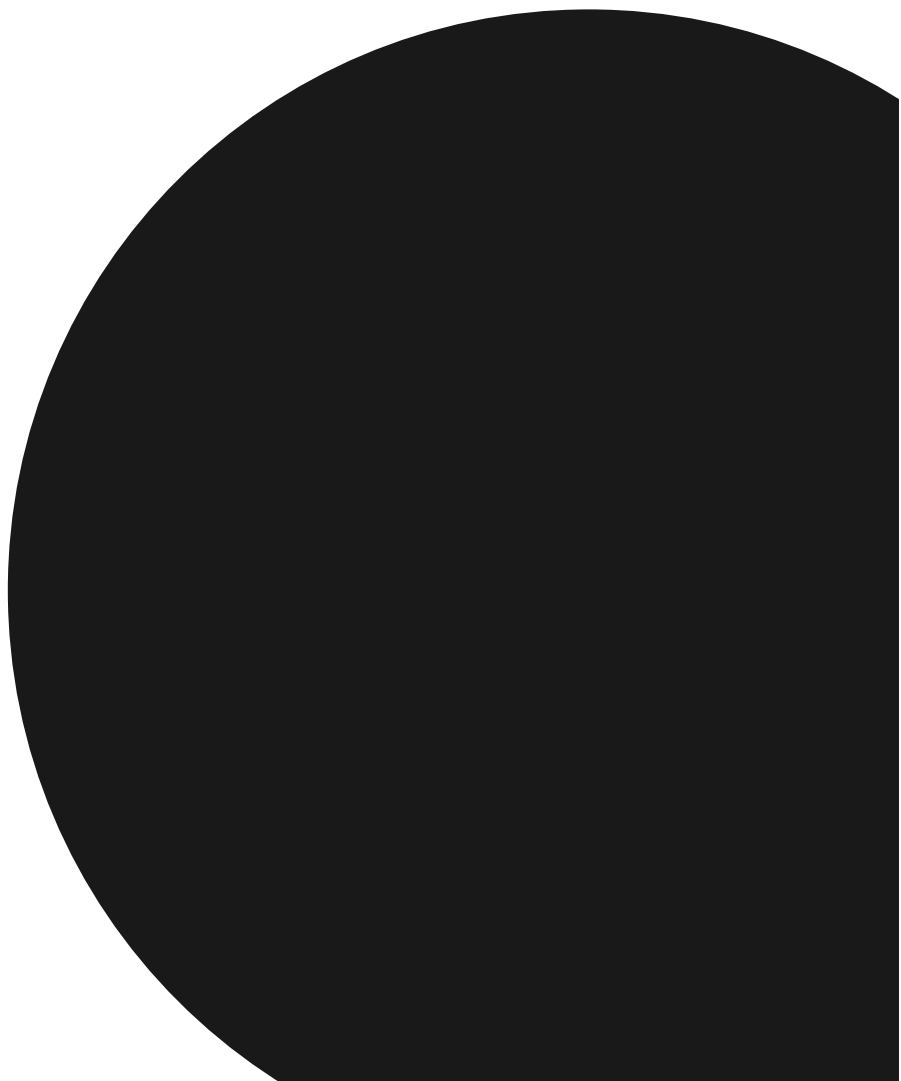
CORNFLOUR

Seriously, I don't know how anyone could painstakingly prepare a genuine sauce or jus or gravy or soup without this traditional Aztec ingredient. I only use Aztec cornflour, and I buy it from an antiquarian conquistador cornflour merchant in Spain. It costs a fortune, and people at home will never be able to get it, but if you don't have it then you are just kidding yourself and you're insulting your guests and your family every time you serve them food that's not been tossed through this essential glistening agent. Not tossing food through cornflour before serving it is equivalent to not splashing on some aftershave before you go to a nightclub. But that's the world we live in nowadays ...



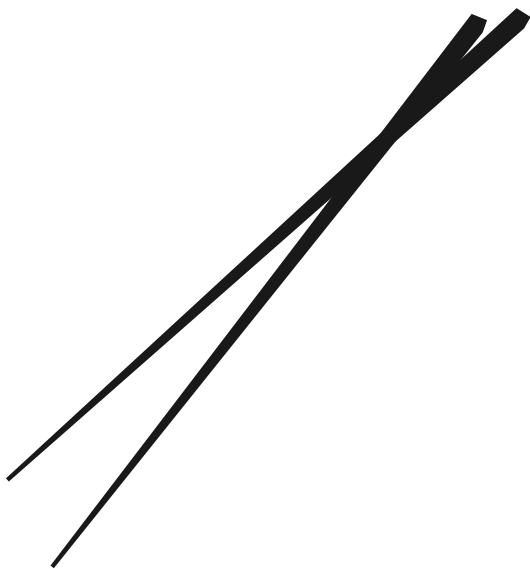
BIG WHITE PLATES

Keep plenty of these in your fridge or freezer at all times. Heat them up in a low oven (gas mark 1) for twenty minutes before garnishing with foodstuffs. If I had a dollar for every big white plate I've sold I'd be a substantially more wealthy man than I am today. And I'm very fucking well-off, let me tell you. Bransonesque, if you know what I mean.



INFUSIONS

Place anything you find in your refrigerator into a pot and then pour boiling water over it. Let it stand overnight, or for fifteen minutes, strain through a muslin cloth, and there you have it: an infusion. Use such infusions as a simple party-starter or as a first course or as a light summer luncheon dish. They are great with lots of crusty bread and some sauvignon blanc. Eat with chopsticks to bring a real air of the Far East to your *al fresco* table.



*People say I'm a monster,
but I'm not a monster.
I just have to maintain a high
standard that people are paying
a fortune for.*

GORDON RAMSAY

FIVE KITCHEN NIGHTMARES (AND HOW TO AVOID THEM).

NIGHTMARE #1: THE LOOK. Get your kitchen looking right before you attempt any sort of dinner party. All the surfaces should be spotless. Almost mirror-finish. A few vases of expensive flowers placed on the chopping boards, on the draining board, and maybe on the stove top. Have the fridge emptied and the interior thoroughly cleaned; restock it with a bottle of champagne, a piece of nicely wrapped cheese, some stunningly fresh fish, and a few small vases filled with asparagus and other such green vegetables.



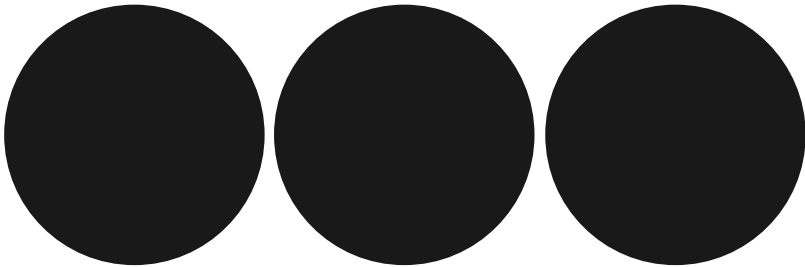
NIGHTMARE #2: THE EQUIPMENT. A brand-new espresso machine is pretty much essential. Do not be tempted to use it before the dinner party as it will then look soiled. Some brand-new retro-style vitamisers and pasta makers and the like are also useful. Once again, try not to use them before the dinner party. Have an enormous block of knives in the corner somewhere, well away from the chopping board.



NIGHTMARE #3: THE PREPARATION. The worst thing most home cooks do when giving a dinner party is to pre-prepare some of the dishes. Where the fuck they got this loony-tune idea from I don't know. Don't cook, let alone chop up a thing, until the doorbell has rung and you've got everyone in the sitting room and on to the third bottle of sparkler. Then pop into the kitchen and quickly throw together the fish terrine or some homemade pasta and an oxtail stew and maybe make some ice-cream for dessert. This is really very basic and simple, straightforward food that I can cook on any one of my TV shows in about 23 minutes of air time. With confidence, and in the familiar surroundings of your own kitchen, you should be able to do this too.



NIGHTMARE #4: THE SERVICE. So many well-meaning home cooks try to bring an unfussy and informal feel to their dinner parties by serving things on shared plates or, worse still, in the pots the food's been cooked in. Your guests are then supposed to dig in and help themselves. Fucking hell. You are not in India, you know. You don't have to eat like some sort of untouchable. So make sure you've got big white plates for your terrine, and then bigger shallow bowls for the pasta, and then really, really big white plates for the oxtail. Also use about three medium-sized side plates per person per course for such things as salad, parboiled greens, turned root vegetables and pills. With a good system in place you can plate up, serve, clear the table, plate up, serve, clear the table and so on all very nonchalantly and in such a way as to draw absolutely zero attention to yourself. There's no reason why any of your guests should even notice your absence from the table for a moment.



NIGHTMARE #5: THE FOOD ITSELF. Having attended your dinner party your guests are obviously going to be fascinated by the dishes you've served and how you cooked them and your inspiration for them and the wines you served alongside of them and so on and so forth. Dinner-party guests, in my experience, can't get enough of this sort of charming insight and sparkling infotainment. So don't feel worried about really unleashing yourself and describing in great and passionate detail the way you managed to weave together the evening's magical feast. Talk and talk and talk about the dinner-party's preparation as if there is no tomorrow.

And when everyone has finally departed in cabs, give the still near-spotless kitchen surfaces a quick wipe down and enjoy a sneaky post-prandial as you contemplate the gorgeous success of the night and browse through a few new cookbooks, looking for next Saturday night's inspiration.





TO PROFESSIONALLY CHOP AN ONION YOU MUST ALWAYS START IN THIS POSITION.

‘CHESTNUT PANS: I USE THEM A LOT, OF COURSE I DO; BUT I NEVER TRUST THEM. IT’S WHY THEY RESPECT ME.’



‘RANGE ROVER RAN THIS BIKE UP FOR ME AS A COMMEMORATIVE GIFT. IT’S A GREAT WAY FOR ME TO DELIVER 5-STAR MICHELIN FOOD TO HOMELESS PEOPLE, WHICH IS SOMETHING I LIKE TO DO ON A WHIM ...’

‘AN OLD KNIFE, AND A FAV, I MUST SAY. CHÉF DE CHÉF OF THE XANADU SHANGRI-LA ORIENTALÉ HOTEL IN HONG KONG, WINSTON PONG, THREW IT AT ME ON THE FIRST DAY OF MY APPRENTICESHIP THERE. THE CHIP OUT OF ITS BLADE CORRESPONDS EXACTLY TO A CHIP OUT OF MY THIRD RIB. THAT WAS DISCIPLINE, THAT WAS TRAINING, THAT WAS PASSION ...’



FIN

