

Sexy Food

ASPARAGUS WRAPPED IN SERRANO HAM

250g bundle of fresh asparagus
8 slices of Serrano ham
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
25g fresh parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 200°C 400°F, gas mark 6.

Wrap individual asparagus spears in Parma ham, then place in a shallow ovenproof dish and drizzle with olive oil. Roast in the oven for 10-15 minutes. Serve scattered with shavings of parmesan.

TWICE COOKED DUCK

1 fresh duck
500ml chicken stock
4 cloves garlic
3 stalks of lemon grass
1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
2 tbsps Chinese five spice powder
6 tbsps soy sauce
4 tbsps orange juice
6 tbsps runny honey

In a large pan, bring the stock to a gentle boil, then add 2 garlic cloves, the finely chopped lemon grass, the grated ginger and 1 tbsp of five spice powder. Add the duck, then top up with boiling water until the bird is covered. Simmer the duck gently for 50 minutes, then cool.

Remove the duck from stock, reserving about 300ml of the liquid, then place the duck on a wire rack over a roasting tin. Preheat the oven to 200C, gas mark 6.

Mix the remaining five spice powder and garlic cloves with the soy sauce, orange juice and honey and drizzle half the sauce mixture over the duck. Roast the duck for forty minutes until nice and crisp.

Strain the reserved stock, add the remaining sauce mixture and heat gently in a saucepan, simmering until slightly reduced.

Serve with little cubes of roasted potatoes [these can cook while the duck is roasting] and green beans.

SEXY STRAWBERRIES

100g bar best dark chocolate, such as Green and Blacks

1 punnet strawberries

4 tablespoons Cointreau

50g caster sugar

25g butter

2 tablespoons double cream

NB Make sure you haven't had too much to drink before attempting this recipe!

Wash, hull and halve the strawberries.

Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of hot water or in a microwave.

Heat a frying pan over a medium heat and add the strawberries and Cointreau. Warm through for half a minute, then remove from the heat, light with a match and stand back! Once the flames have subsided, remove the strawberries with a slotted spoon, keeping the juices in the pan. Put the frying pan back over the heat, add the sugar and butter, stirring together until the mixture begins to go gooey, then add the cream, mixing well. Pour the unctuous sauce over the strawberries, drizzle over the melted chocolate, and serve to your lover with a long spoon.

Veronica Henry 2007

<http://www.veronicahenry.co.uk>