

# CHEF LAURIE GEAR

## November recipe & kitchen news

**O**ur inspiration for this dish was to use a seasonal, locally sustainable wild shot venison from our very own Chiltern Hills, and combine with the best of season. With the leaves falling and the cooler air moving in it is time to make the most of the last of the autumnal squashes and the bounty of English hard fruits. Earlier in the season the elder tree

offered it plump purple berry which we converted through kitchen alchemy at the restaurant into a traditional old English sauce called 'pontack' to glaze the local pears to accompany the venison. This provides an acidity to help balance the dish. By the time this recipe has reached you the elderberry will have fallen but can be substituted by the more seasonal cranberry. ■



### Autumn into Winter Lunch Tasting Offer -

We invite *Life Magazines* readers to enjoy Autumn at its best, sample our Autumn Lunch Tasting Menu with a complimentary glass of Kir Cardinal (French sparkling wine and creme de mure) - served upon arrival.

This Lunch Tasting Offer is available until the end of November, from Tuesday to Friday, for just £38.00 per person - optional Wine Flight £26.00 (an additional sixth course @ £6.00)

\*\*please mention 'Lunch Offer' when making your reservation\*\*  
The chef's tables in our Kitchen Dining Room are limited and are allocated on a first reserve basis - we do welcome guests to enjoy the Tasting Menus in all our Dining Rooms.

\*maximum of 6 guests per reservation\*



The Artichoke Restaurant is located at:  
9 Market Square  
Old Amersham HP7 0DF  
Telephone: 01494726611  
www.artichokerestaurant.co.uk



## RECIPE: SADDLE OF WILD SHOT VENISON, GLAZED PEARS, PONTACK AND BUTTERNUT SQUASH GNOCCHI

### Ingredients

*Serves 4*

- 4 x 150g wild shot venison steak cut from the saddle
- Approx 50g butter and olive oil for frying
- ½ a savoy cabbage cut very finely
- 2 large conference pears – peeled and cored

- 250g ripe elderberries (substitute fresh cranberries)
- 250ml cider vinegar
- 3 all spice berries
- 3 cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- 50 bruised ginger

### Gnocchi

*Serves 4*

- 200g cooked Desiree or Maris piper potatoes
- 100g cooked

- butternut squash
- 65g plain flour
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ tsp white pepper
- ½ an egg beaten
- 30g ricotta cheese
- 1 sprig of thyme
- Venison Jus
- 500ml chicken stock
- 150g roasted venison bones
- 2 carrots
- 1 stick celery
- 2 onions
- 2 cloves garlic
- 80ml red wine



### Pontack

*Makes 150ml*

1. Place the elderberries (or cranberries) and cider vinegar in a tray and cook at a low temperature (60°C) for 4 hours. Strain through a sieve and press to get out all excess juice
2. Put liquid back onto the heat, add all the other ingredients and reduce for 20 minutes. Strain, then pour into sterilised bottles and seal

### Butternut Squash Gnocchi

1. Mix all ingredients together
2. Pipe to shape into small pillows
3. Leave to set up for an hour
4. Boil in salted water until the gnocchi starts to float. Dry off with paper towel
5. Pan fry in butter
6. Poach the pears in a stock syrup until soft and cool
7. When cool, dry off and cut into quarters
8. To cook for this dish fry the pears in hot butter and sugar until caramelised and finish with a splash of pontack to glaze the pears

### Venison Jus

1. Roughly chop and sweat the vegetables until lightly

1. Place the elderberries (or cranberries) and cider vinegar in a tray and cook at a low temperature (60°C) for 4 hours. Strain through a sieve and press to get out all excess juice
2. Pour in the wine and reduce
3. Add the roasted venison bones, top up with chicken stock and simmer for 30 minutes
4. Take out the bones and pass through a muslin
5. Reduce by three quarters

### To Finish

1. Blanch the finely shredded savoy cabbage in boiling salted water for 2 minutes
2. Plunge into ice cold water
3. Drain and squeeze out the excess water
4. Re-heat in hot butter and season well
5. Pan fry the venison steaks in butter until caramelized all over, season and cook in the oven Gas 6 200 degrees C, for approx 12 minutes.
6. Rest for 8-10 minutes then slice and serve

### To serve

1. Place the buttered cabbage on the plate off centre, then on top put the sliced venison and fan, after place the caramelised pear glazed in pontack, butternut squash gnocchi, finally finish with the venison jus.