

Seasonal cook



Photo: Domino Postiglione

PRAWN CUTLETS WITH BROCCOLI AND CAPERS

- 500g broccoli
- 3 tbs extra virgin olive oil, plus 100ml for frying
- 1 medium onion, cut into small dice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper
- 1kg large king prawns, peeled, tails on and butterflied
- 80g plain flour
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 150g breadcrumbs
- 6 tbs salted capers, rinsed, dried

Cut broccoli from stem into small florets. Trim tougher part of stems and discard. Cut tender part of stem into small, bite-size pieces and keep separate from florets. Heat 3 tbs oil in a pan and gently fry onion, garlic and broccoli stem pieces for 2 minutes. Add florets and 3-4 tablespoons water and simmer until tender but still textured – about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, remove from heat and let cool. To crumb the prawn cutlets, set up three plates: flour, beaten eggs and breadcrumbs. Dust each cutlet in flour, then dip in egg, then in crumbs. Heat remaining oil in a frypan until it just starts to smoke. Fry cutlets a few at a time. Drain on absorbent kitchen paper. Strain hot oil into a bowl, removing any crumbs. Reheat in frypan and fry capers until crisp. Serve cutlets on broccoli and scatter capers on top.
Serves 6 as a first course (pictured)
Wine Chardonnay

BROCCOLI AND RICOTTA BAKE WITH GORGONZOLA SAUCE

- 200g broccoli florets
- 1 egg
- 200g fresh ricotta
- 30g grated parmesan
- Pinch nutmeg
- Salt and pepper
- 30g butter
- 50ml cream
- 100g gorgonzola or other blue cheese

Place broccoli florets in a steamer and steam until tender. Remove from steamer, place on a tray and cool, then chop finely. Take half the broccoli and mix in a bowl with egg, ricotta, grated parmesan and nutmeg. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Grease a small ovenproof casserole dish with butter and fill with broccoli and ricotta mixture. Bake in a pre-heated 160C oven for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, make the sauce by bringing cream to the boil, then turn down to a simmer, adding gorgonzola and remaining broccoli. Stir until cheese has totally melted and keep simmering gently for 1 minute. Season with a little pepper and serve with bake.
Serves 4
Wine Riesling with a little residual sugar

Off the boil

STEVE MANFREDI shares his secrets for getting the best out of vegetables.

Cooking meat to the correct “done-ness” can be a challenge for many cooks. The same applies to the correct preparation and cooking of vegetables.

I think that vegetables are often relegated to the role of garnish, just to fulfil the idea of having something green on the plate.

Broccoli, for example, suffers when boiled in water. Like a lot of vegetables, it leaches sugars, colour and nutrients when blanched. Better to steam the florets. Steaming takes only slightly longer than boiling and has the benefit of retaining more goodness.

Potatoes are the same. If they’re boiled, they lose some of their natural sugar. A good way to

stop this is to put one gram of sugar for every 100 millilitres of water. This creates a sort of sugar equilibrium between potatoes and water. But, once again, my preferred way of cooking potatoes is to steam them, in their jackets.

The tendency of vegetables to leach is useful at times. When making soup, we want the liquid to be a unified flavour made from a combination of all the ingredients. Braising is the same.

On the other hand, if we want to concentrate flavour in a vegetable, all we need do is fry it in butter or oil.

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Full bottle

TRYING

DOMAINE CHANDON PINOT NOIR ROSÉ 2011, \$25



There’s nothing better than a cheery rosé to enjoy outdoors, in the backyard or sitting back watching the city lights from a high-rise balcony. In the glass, Domaine Chandon’s pinot rosé has the right colour – a pale onion-skin hue. The palate is as it should be, finishing crisp and dry with a bit more in between. Expect lots of spice, strawberry and cherry fruit and a hint of sweetness with some tannic grip on the finish. This will go with a variety of foods, especially barbecued lamb cutlets.

QUAFFING

WICKHAMS ROAD SHIRAZ YARRA VALLEY 2011, \$17



Hoddles Creek winemaker Franco D’Anna buys fruit for his second label, Wickhams Road. For the 2011 shiraz, it’s all sourced from the Yarra Valley. Give this plenty of air because it’s such a young wine; it’s tightly coiled and reductive when first opened. On the lighter side of medium-bodied, it’s quite fragrant, with an enticing whole-bunch character. There’s a fair whiff of black pepper, too, yet the tannins are ripe and soft. Best enjoyed with hearty osso buco. As always, Wickhams Road represents great value.

CELEBRATING

R DE VEUVE FOURNY & FILS EXTRA BRUT, \$85



The R stands for Roger, the father of vignerons Charles and Emmanuel Fourny. The result is a complex champagne, with about 90 per cent chardonnay, aged in old oak. It’s gold-hued with lingering fine bead. The oak influence has had an enriching, harmonising effect, with lots of warm spice, such as cinnamon and ginger. There are also aged honeyed nuances and a creaminess on the palate. While super-dry with a long finish, this is an opulent style with loads of richness.
Jane Faulkner