

SEARED STRIPED BASS WITH SQUASH RISOTTO
CHEF GAVIN KAYSEN FOR WINE SPECTATOR**Cooking for Wine with Wine Spectator**

How can you improve your pairings? Learn to cook with wine in mind from Gavin Kaysen, executive chef at Café Boulud, as he prepares a 3-course meal in his home kitchen. The recipes are simplified versions of dishes on the restaurant menu. Start your dinner party with Escarole salad, followed by Sea Bass and a fool-proof Tarte Tatin. Each dish is then paired with wine. See all the videos at WineSpectator.com/video on the Food Pairing channel. (release dates 2009-10)

Makes 4 servings

Brown Butter Vinaigrette

1 teaspoon sherry vinegar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter

Risotto

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
12 ounces butternut squash peeled, seeded and cut into chunks
7 cups (approx) homemade unsalted vegetable or chicken stock or store-bought low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
1 small onion, peeled, trimmed and finely diced
2 cups Arborio rice
1/3 cup dry white wine
1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon crème fraîche

Striped Bass

4 portions striped bass filet (about 5-6 ounces each), trimmed, skin on
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon butter
Juice of 1/2 lemon

Garnish

6 ounces arugula leaves, rinsed and dried
4 ounces ricotta salata cheese, sliced

Salt and pepper

Make the Brown Butter Vinaigrette: Place the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat and cook until the foam subsides and the butter is browned and fragrant. In a small bowl whisk together the sherry vinegar, Dijon mustard and lemon juice. Stream in the brown butter while whisking, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Reserve, covered at room temperature.

Make the Risotto: Warm 2 tablespoons of the butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the squash, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring frequently, until it starts to soften but does not take on any color, approximately 5 minutes. Add 1/4 cup chicken stock, cover and lower the heat. Cook until the squash is very tender and falling apart and most of the liquid has evaporated, approximately 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and crush roughly with a fork; set aside. Pour the remaining stock into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Lower the heat so that the liquid simmers. Warm 3 tablespoons of the butter in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the onion, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion softens but does not take on any color, approximately 5 minutes. Add the rice, salt and pepper, and cook, still stirring, for about 5 minutes more. Pour in the wine, stir and scrape the bottom of the pan, and cook over medium heat, stirring from time to time, until the juice has almost completely evaporated, then add 1 cup of the hot stock. Cook, stirring often, until the rice absorbs most of the liquid. Add another cup of the hot stock and cook and stir as before. Continue cooking, stirring regularly and adding stock 1 cup at a time, until you've added 6 cups of stock. At this point, taste the rice. Usually, the rice will need another 1/2 to 1 cup stock and a few more minutes to cook. Stir in the remaining tablespoon of butter, Parmesan, crème fraîche and reserved crushed butternut squash. Add more salt and pepper if needed.

Cook the Bass: Season the striped bass on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add the fish skin side down and sear for two minutes, or until golden and crispy. Reduce the heat to low, add the butter, and flip the fish to cook on the other side until cooked through, basting occasionally (about 5 minutes depending on the thickness; the internal temperature should reach 135°F). Drizzle the fish with the lemon juice.

To Serve: Heat four dinner plates and divide the warm risotto in the middle of each plate; top with the cubed ricotta salata cheese. Top with the fish, skin side up. In a small bowl, season the arugula leaves with some of the brown butter vinaigrette and salt and pepper to taste, and use to garnish the top and around the fish.