

Food
Club
Event

Vibrant Vivaldi

Chef Daniele Bolognesi, the charismatic head chef of Vivaldi restaurant, Sheraton Dubai Creek taught our food club members to create three inspiring Italian dishes

While we often attempt to create Italian food in our own kitchens, with our storecupboards stocked with dried pasta, olive oil, tins of tomatoes and more, it is often difficult to capture the true essence of Italian food at home. Easy-to-make Italian dishes line the supermarket shelves, but how authentic is it? We find that it is often challenging to really get it right.

With this in mind, *BBC Good Food ME* invited chef Daniele Bolognesi to guide our Food Club members through three Italian dishes.

Chef Daniele is known for his passion for authentic Italian food in the kitchen, and is even known to break out in song when at the stove. While he might have refrained from singing at our recent event, his talent for Italian food shone through beautifully when he took to the culinary stage at the Mark Wilkinson Furniture Showroom.

From smoked duck breast and caramelised

pear starter, to a crispy pan-fried sea bass and potato gnocchi main, and a dessert of strawberries, ricotta cheese, and green peppers (a surprising mingling of flavours) – Daniele started and ended this event with a bang.

Chef Daniele has had a wide and varied career, which started in Los Angeles, US and continued through Italy, the United Kingdom and Spain. He spent many years in Valencia and opened a Mediterranean cuisine restaurant in the city before he eventually joined Hilton Valencia as the Italian chef at BiCE Ristorante. Some of the highlights of his career include working in the 2-Michelin star Etxanobe Bilbao Spain in winter 2003, and after enjoying a stint as guest chef at The Gulf Hotel Bahrain, he fell in love with the Middle Eastern culture and decided to stay, recently joining the Sheraton Dubai Creek.

A menu set to impress; be sure to try chef Daniele's recipes at home.



Photography CRIS MELJORADA

Black pepper, the final touch to his strawberry dessert

STARTER

Smoked duck breast with caramelised pear, organic rocket leaves and pecorino cheese

🍷 SERVES 4

400g fresh rocket salad
 320g smoked duck breast, sliced
 200g Pecorino Romano cheese
 220g fresh pear (or 2 pieces)
 90g sugar
 4 tsp balsamic vinegar (or 4 teaspoons)
 6 tsp olive oil
 4 tsp red wine
 salt to taste
 black pepper, to taste

- 1 Slice the smoked duck breast thinly, as desired, and set aside for later use.
- 2 Wash the rocket salad and dry it.
- 3 Wash and peel the pears. Then cut into equal parts, length wise.
- 4 Heat up a sauté pan to medium-high heat and place the sugar in the pan.
- 5 Let the sugar slowly caramelize in pan over medium high heat.
- 6 Add the pears and let it caramelize. Add some drops of red wine or water if needed to control the caramelising process.
- 7 When the pears are done, remove from pan and keep warm until further use.
- 8 Add some balsamic vinegar into the liquid remaining in the pan. Reduce to desired consistence.
- 9 Toss rocket lettuce with balsamic vinaigrette in medium sized mixing bowl.
- 10 Arrange salad, sliced duck breast and the Pecorino cheese as desired.
- 11 Add the warm pears and decorate with the caramel balsamic reduction from the pan.
- 12 Serve with nice farmer's bread on the side.



Smoked duck breast with caramelised pear, organic rocket leaves and pecorino cheese



Food Club members savoured canapés while watching the masterclass



Delicious mocktail refreshments



CHEF'S BITES



MAIN

Crispy pan fried sea bass with butter glazed garden fresh vegetables and potato gnocchi

SERVES 4

800g Chilean sea bass fillet
120g snow peas (blanched – cooking briefly in boiling water)
100g corn kernels (blanched)
200g jumbo green asparagus
40g sliced lemon
100g butter
40g fresh dill
10g fresh basil leaves
60g extra virgin olive oil
200g gnocchi (potatoes dumplings)
20 ltr fish stock
40g Red bell pepper coulis (a thick sauce)
0.040 ltr Pesto basil sauce
Salt to taste
Black pepper to taste

- 1 Prepare a basic gnocchi dough and pre-blanch 4 portions of potato gnocchi. Keep refrigerated until use.
- 2 Clean the vegetables and pre-blanch them. Keep refrigerated until use.
- 3 Have your favorite fish dealer pre-portioned the Sea Bass fillet in 4 equal portions.
- 4 Heat up 2 medium-sized frying pans

over medium-high heat and add in a small amount of olive oil.

- 5 As soon as the oil warms up, start pan-frying the fish fillet.
- 6 After 4-5 mins, flip the fish onto the other side and reduce the heat.
- 7 In the second pan, add some butter and allow it to melt.
- 8 Add in the gnocchi and toss them in the butter. Then season well with salt and pepper.
- 9 Add the prepared vegetables into the same pan and glaze them with the butter mixture.
- 10 Add the fish stock and more butter if desired.
- 11 Put some lemon juice into the pan with the vegetable and gnocchi. Add some dill leaves.
- 12 Keep heating until the liquid becomes thicker.
- 13 As soon as the fish is cooked, start plating the vegetables and gnocchi on the plate.
- 14 Use the fish-infused butter glaze from the pan as a sauce.
- 15 Place the pan-fried fish fillet on top of the vegetables and garnish with basil pesto and bell pepper coulis.

DESSERT

Strawberries don camillo e Peppone

400g strawberries
240g ricotta cheese
40g honey
lemon juice, to taste
20g green pepper
60g icing sugar
2 tsp balsamic reduction
mint, for decoration

- 1 Wash and slice strawberries, drain and set aside for later use.
- 2 Add half of the ricotta cheese to a mixing bowl and whisk in the honey.
- 3 Add some lemon juice to the Ricotta honey mixture, cover it and keep refrigerated until use.
- 4 Marinate half of the strawberries with icing sugar and fill into 4 Martini glasses.
- 5 Marinate the other half of the strawberries with icing sugar as well and add crushed green pepper corns and some balsamic reduction. Put this into a small glass or other decorative glass bowls.
- 6 Form with 2 tablespoons, a small egg-shape of the honey marinated Ricotta and add them on top of the strawberries in the Martini glasses.
- 7 Add some Ricotta on top of the balsamic marinated strawberries.
- 8 With the rest of the Ricotta, mould them into small balls and decorate with the balsamic reduction, green pepper corns and fresh mint.

