

By Tammy Buchanan



Chef Ralph Stöckle

RALPH STÖCKLE, CONTINENTAL AIRLINES' newest European guest celebrity chef, is owner and executive chef of Die Scheuer, an upscale gourmet restaurant in Hofheim am Taunus, Germany, that has established a culinary reputation far beyond its region. Occupying a half-timbered barn from the 1600s, it still retains its original cottage-style charm. A graduate of Heidelberg Hotel Management School, Stöckle is a certified master chef who strives to combine traditional cuisine with novel elements while providing a place for guests to immerse themselves in luxurious comfort with excellent service. The chef and his family also own a casual eatery in Hofheim am Taunus, Die Schmiede, which features regional cuisine, an extensive wine selection, and beer on tap that guests can enjoy in an outdoor beer garden. The quaint bistro offers a cozy atmosphere and the superb service Stöckle's patrons have come to recognize. Chef Stöckle recently opened his own culinary arts school, Kochschule Ralph Stöckle. We spoke with our chef and asked him to share a recipe.

Q: What inspired your decision to become a professional chef?

A: My father is also a chef, so the world of gastronomy has always been a big part of my life. I was drawn to the aroma of freshly prepared ingredients, and by the time I was nine I had already made my career choice.

Q: If you weren't a chef, what would you be?

A: I was never able to sit still. I needed an occupation with stress, a hectic pace, art, and craftsmanship. The only alternative would have been to become a stockbroker, because it also entails a hectic pace and a different type of creativity.

Q: What is your favorite food to make when you cook at home?

A: I love to cook with fresh seasonal products and to fuse local flavors with exotic touches.

Q: When you're not cooking, what is your favorite pastime?

A: The little free time I have is spent with my family, who are the most important thing to me. To relax and regain inner strength, I enjoy taking walks with my wife, our two sons, and two dogs.

Q: What is your favorite food indulgence?

A: Since I hail from Swabia, I must admit to a weakness for organ meats, like tripe, sweetbread, and calf's head.



Braised Beef with Pinot Noir Sauce and German-Style Potato Noodles

Ingredients

- 2 lb. beef chuck roast
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1½ cups pinot noir
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1½ cups beef broth
- 2 whole cloves
- 1 whole bay leaf
- 2 tsp. black peppercorns
- 2 tsp. rosemary, fresh
- 2 tsp. thyme, fresh
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 4 medium-size potatoes, boiled
- ⅓ cup flour
- 2 egg yolks, beaten
- ½ tsp. nutmeg, ground

Instructions

1. Season beef with pepper and salt; roast in a 350°F oven for 40 minutes. Remove beef, cover, and set aside.
2. In oven, roast carrots and onion for 15 minutes in same pan; add wine and tomato paste; reduce by half in oven.
3. Return beef to pan; add broth; heat until sauce bubbles.
4. Add cloves, bay leaf, peppercorns, rosemary, and thyme.
5. Cook until fork-tender; strain sauce; add ⅓ cup butter to thicken.
6. For potato noodles, push potatoes through a potato ricer. Add flour, egg yolks, and nutmeg; combine well.
7. Roll out dough and cut into thin, 4-inch strings; blanch in boiling salted water; cool in an ice water bath.
8. Fry potatoes in butter until golden.
9. Slice meat; serve with potatoes, vegetables, and sauce. Serves 4.

Did you know?

German White Riesling is a true rule-breaker and pairs nicely with braised meats.