

PÂTÉ'S RESURGENCE

ONCE CRITICIZED AS BEING OLD-FASHIONED AND PASSÉ, PÂTÉS ARE ENJOYING A RETURN TO THE LIMELIGHT.

BY DANIEL PLISKA

PHOTO CREDIT Madeline Stanley

CHICKEN AND APRICOT TERRINE

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YIELD: 3 TERRINES

6 (2½ lb.) whole chickens
1 qt. water
¾ cup kosher salt
¾ cup granulated sugar
1 T. crushed red pepper flakes
1 T. whole coriander seeds
1 T. whole fennel seeds
2 t. crushed star anise
6 bay leaves
1 T. cracked black pepper
10 sprigs fresh thyme
12 chicken thighs from whole chickens
Prosciutto, bacon or fatback to line
terrine molds, as needed
2 lbs. chicken breast from whole
chickens (reserve rest)
4 oz. brandy
¼ cup chopped shallots
1 T. fresh tarragon leaves
1 T. fresh thyme leaves
1 t. ground black pepper
1 egg white
1½ T. salt
2 cups heavy cream
2 cups diced dried apricots soaked
in ½ cup Grand Marnier
2 cups diced ham ½ inch x ½ inch
1 cup pistachio nuts
½ cup chopped parsley

1. Bone out chicken. Reserve wings, drumsticks and carcasses for future use.
2. Mix water, salt, sugar, red pepper flakes, coriander seeds, fennel seeds, star anise, bay leaves, cracked black pepper and thyme sprigs. Soak chicken thighs for 2 hours. Hot smoke to 145°F internal temperature.
3. Skin chicken breasts; cut into strips. Mix brandy, shallots, tarragon, thyme leaves and ground black pepper. Marinate chicken overnight.
4. Line terrine molds with prosciutto, bacon or fatback.
5. Grind marinated chicken breasts in chilled grinder. Process with egg white and salt in cold food processor to a smooth paste; pulse in cream.
6. Skin and debone chicken thighs; dice meat ½ inch x ½ inch.
7. Mix together mousseline, chicken thigh meat, apricots, ham, pistachios and parsley.
8. Cook a small amount of forcemeat. Taste; adjust seasoning.
9. Fill terrine molds. Bake in water bath at 300°F until internal temperature reaches 155°F.
10. Cool. Weigh down with 1 lb. weights. Cool overnight.
11. Slice; serve.

Pâtés and terrines are once again back in fashion. The classic French favorite, as well as the modern interpretation, is becoming one of the favorite items that test and showcase a chef's skills. Much to the delight of many a classically trained chef, pâté is once again returning to many menus, charcuteries and high-end butcher shops.

THE PROCESS

Traditionally, pâtés are based on one of the four types of forcemeat (*farce*): straight, country-style, gratin and mousseline-style. These forcemeats are garnished or inlayed with tender cuts of meat, nuts, dried fruits or liver, the most exclusive being foie gras.

Garnishes that are inlayed either randomly or in a precise manner are what makes many pâtés special and memorable. For example, a chicken and apricot terrine uses cured, smoked chicken thigh meat bound with a chicken breast mousseline, garnished with dried apricots, pistachios and diced ham.

Along with the type of forcemeat and inlayed garnishes, the general procedures for producing any good pâté are found in the techniques used to make it. These include marinating with quality liqueurs and spices, the use of high-quality meats, and the correct fat to meat ratio used to create an emulsion of the forcemeat. In some instances, pink salts, such as tinted curing mix, are used in small measurements to keep a pink color after the pâté is sliced.

Pâté en croûte is the most complicated type of pâté to create and requires the most technical skill. It is still being used in many competition displays on cold platters, and even has its own international competition that is based entirely on pâté en croûte.

ON THE MENU

Guillaume Ginther, executive chef at Le Coq Rico, New York, won this year's pâté en croûte competition using the recipe and technique that he learned from his mentor, Antoine Westermann, chef/owner of Le Coq Rico. At the restaurant, Westermann serves his specialty, a delicate pâté en croûte of duck foie gras with a special blend of 12 spices. He uses foie gras



OPPOSITE: Chicken and apricot terrine bound with a chicken mousseline.

ABOVE: Classic country-style pâté at Cured.



SPICY MOROCCAN LAMB TERRINE
with Roasted Red Peppers

Brian Polcyn, Chef Instructor/Author

- 1 lb. lean lamb shoulder or shank meat free of heavy sinew, diced 1-inch cubes
- 8 oz. pork fatback, diced 1-inch cubes
- 1½ T. kosher salt
- 2 t. ground black pepper
- ¼ t. pink salt (optional)
- 1 T. aleppo pepper (no substitute)
- 1 T. chopped fresh garlic
- 1 T. toasted coriander seeds
- 2 T. chopped fresh parsley
- 2 T. chopped fresh oregano
- 1 whole egg
- ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
- 3 T. flour
- 1 cup roasted red peppers, diced ¼ inch, drained well
- 12 oz. fully cooked and/or smoked lamb or pork tongue, peeled, diced ½ inch

1. Combine lamb, fatback, kosher salt, black pepper, pink salt, aleppo pepper, garlic, coriander seeds, parsley and oregano; toss well. Cover; refrigerate overnight.
2. The next day, in chilled grinder with ¾-inch plate, grind meat mixture into chilled bowl. Change grinder plate to ½-inch; regrind only ⅓ ground mixture. Combine grinds; set aside.
3. Whip together egg, cream and flour. Add to meat mixture; incorporate well with wooden spoon. Fold in garnish of roasted peppers and tongue. Do taste test.
4. Line 2-quart terrine mold with plastic wrap. Fill mold, packing tight. Cover with foil. Place in water bath; cook in preheated 325°F oven until internal temperature is 145°F. Remove from oven. Press and chill overnight.



from local Hudson Valley ducks for the dish, and says that to make the best pâté en croute, use the highest-quality European-style butter in the crust.

At Cured in San Antonio, chef/owner Steve McHugh says pâtés are a good middle ground between the choice cuts and the more undesirable portions. The restaurant uses lesser cuts, such as ears and offal, and enjoys healthy sales and good customer feedback.

“Today’s guests are so much smarter about what they are eating, and know a good pâté versus one that is broken or under-seasoned,” McHugh says. “For us, a pâté is an outlet for a restaurant that does whole-animal butchery. It’s what keeps the pork chops from being so expensive.”

Brian Polcyn, an instructor at Schoolcraft College, Livonia, Michigan, and co-author of *Charcuterie: The Craft of Salting, Curing and Smoking* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), believes in using the whole animal, as well. “Pâté is an excellent way to utilize trim and scrap, turning underutilized cuts into great-tasting, highly profitable food,” he says.

Publican in Chicago, where customers expect high-quality pâtés and charcuterie offerings, has also garnered praise with the nose-to-tail concept. Jacob Saben, chef de cuisine, is always looking to offer fresh, flavorful pâtés on the menu in new and interesting ways.

Publican receives pâtés from sister establishment Publican Quality Meats. Chef Joseph Fietze says there are always three types of pâté in the deli case—harissa, country and manhattan—and the team is encouraged to come up with new flavor profiles, shapes and textures. The pâtés range from fully emulsified to coarse-ground and from sous vide to baked, and can be round, square or oval. The manhattan pâté is loosely based on the flavor profile of the manhattan cocktail, and is garnished with cherries and pistachio. The harissa pâté has all the flavors of harissa sauce with the addition of apricots to give it some tang.

Pâtés are also being reengineered in modern ways and with unusual flavor combinations. On the menu at Kevin Taylor’s at the Opera House in Denver, Taylor serves a foie gras mousse dish with parsnip cake, hazelnuts, vanilla/thyme custard and cranberry coulis. He says it is a modern interpretation of a classic foie gras torchon preparation.

At Cured, McHugh has found success with lamb—not typically found in pâtés—in a lamb citrus pâté that has been on the menu since Cured opened. “A pâté doesn’t have to be something that just sits on a plate cold and lifeless,” he says. “I like making tea sandwiches filled with pâté

TOP LEFT: Spicy Moroccan lamb terrine features roasted red bell peppers and smoked lamb tongue and is seasoned with aleppo pepper.

ABOVE: The charcuterie platter served at the Publican always includes a signature pâté.

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: Foie gras mousse is a new interpretation of foie gras.

OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT: Foie gras pâté en croute is a classic pâté filled with a rich gelée.

PHOTO CREDIT Top right, Chloe List

CHEF ANTOINE WESTERMANN'S PÂTÉ EN CROÛTE

YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

2.9 lbs. foie gras
½ t. five-spice blend
4½ t. salt
2 cups flour
1 t. salt
⅓ lb. cold butter, cut in small pieces
1 egg yolk
2 chickens, cut in large pieces
4 chicken necks
4 chicken gizzards
1 carrot, peeled, cut in large pieces
⅔ cup celeriac, peeled, cut in large pieces
2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed
1 onion, peeled
1 clove
1 sprig thyme
1 T. powdered gelatin
3 T. sherry vinegar

1. Separate foie gras lobes; devein. Butterfly each lobe; devein accordingly.
2. Season foie gras with salt and five-spice; mix together. Place in loaf pan. Refrigerate for 24 hours.
3. Mix flour and salt; cut in cold butter. When resembles coarse crumbs, add egg yolk and water; knead until just combined. Cover with towel; set aside in cool place for 3 hours.
4. Preheat oven to 480°F. Roll dough into rectangle approximately ½ cm thick. Insert into loaf pan, leaving enough overhang to fold and cover filling. Add foie gras; cover with dough. Seal edges. Pierce two holes in crust; decorate with excess dough. Bake at 480°F for 15 minutes. Lower temperature to 430°F; continue to bake for another 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 350°F; bake for another 15 minutes. The final internal temperature should be 165°F. Cool for 8 hours.
5. Put chicken pieces, necks, gizzards, carrot, celeriac, garlic, onion, clove and thyme in large pot. Cover completely with water; bring to a boil. When water reaches a boil, reduce heat to a simmer; cook, uncovered, for 1 hour. Skim off foam; strain broth through fine-mesh sieve. Return to pot; bring to a boil. Season broth with salt and pepper; reduce heat, simmering until broth evaporates and measures 1¼ cups. Adjust seasoning, as needed (broth should be well-seasoned). Remove from heat. Soak gelatin in cold water and sherry vinegar. Mix gelatin into broth. Refrigerate.
6. Pour gelée into pâté en croûte via two holes in crust until full; chill. Once chilled, remove pâté; pour in remaining gelée to fill additional space. Remove from mold before serving.



and garnishing soups with pâté in the colder months. And I have even made a hot pâté sandwich called a pâté-melt.”

For the upcoming *Pâté, Terrines and Rillettes: A New Look at the Classics*, Polcyn uses lamb in the Spicy Moroccan Lamb Terrine recipe. In his terrine, he also uses aleppo pepper, roasted red peppers and smoked lamb tongue as a garnish, unusual ingredients not typically found in classic terrines.

Publican Quality Meats features modern flavor profiles, as well, with Lamb and Zatar Pâté, Pork and Prune, and Basque with capers and olives.

LOST ART?

In the Middle Ages, pâté was prepared wrapped in pastry and made with pork, game or poultry. Known as meat pie in England, it was served either hot or cold. This type of pâté, pâté en croûte, was distinguished from pâté that was not prepared en croûte and was typically considered a terrine, named after the clay container that it was baked in. Later pâtés were made with fish and vegetables, too, and in many different varieties.

Today, pâté is in danger of becoming a lost art. Taught as a segment in garde manger classes in culinary schools, many students don't feel that this classic technique for creating a cold spiced meatloaf is relevant. And, many culinary schools are redesigning their culinary programs because of a limited amount of lab time offered in the cold kitchen.

Westermann says that not only is pâté a tasty appetizer, it is also a somewhat difficult dish to master. “Learning how to make pâté ensures that culinary students acquire a certain amount of technical proficiency and precision.”

Many chefs believe that garde manger in general, with its use of scraps for many cold-food specialties, needs more attention. “If we are ever going to help our struggling farmers in this country, then we need to teach people how to cook the entire animal, not just the fun cuts,” McHugh says.

Fortunately, guests are becoming much more educated and interested in consuming the entire animal, not just the choice cuts. This mindset is driving menu options across the country with pâté and other charcuterie offerings.

“Diners all over Europe have been eating these dishes for decades,” Taylor says. “But I feel a lot of chefs around the world are doing an amazing job reinventing some of these dishes, especially in the U.S. Pâtés and charcuterie are definitely making a big comeback in America.” ■