CREAMY COWAL DEER VENISON

Mushroom & Spinach Orzo



SERVES	PREP	COOK	DIFFICULTY
4	15 min	30 min	2 / 5

Ingredients

FOR THE ORZO

- 500g Cowal Deer minced venison
- 250g dried orzo pasta
- 250g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 100g baby spinach
- 650ml beef stock, kept hot
- 100ml single cream
- 40g finely grated Parmesan or similar cheese

FOR THE FLAVOURING

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. Prepare everything Finely chop the onion and garlic, slice the mushrooms and measure the orzo. Heat the stock in a saucepan or kettle so it is ready to use.

2. Soften the vegetables Heat the olive oil and butter in a large, deep frying pan over medium heat. Add the onion and mushrooms and cook for 6–7 minutes, stirring, until softened and lightly golden. Add the garlic for the final minute.

3. Brown the venison Increase the heat slightly. Add the minced venison and cook for 6–8 minutes, breaking it into small pieces, until browned throughout.

4. Add the seasonings Stir in the tomato purée, dried thyme and smoked paprika. Cook for 1 minute so the flavours develop.

5. Simmer the orzo Stir the dried orzo into the pan, followed by 600ml of the hot stock. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 10–12 minutes, stirring frequently, until the orzo is tender. Add the reserved 50ml stock, or a little water, if the pan looks dry.

6. Make it creamy Reduce the heat. Stir in the cream, grated Parmesan and spinach. Cook for another 2–3 minutes, until the spinach wilts and the mixture is creamy.

7. Check and season Check that the minced venison is thoroughly cooked, with no pink remaining (75°C in the centre if using a thermometer). Stir in the lemon juice, then taste and season with salt and pepper.

8. Serve Spoon the creamy orzo into warm bowls. Scatter with chopped parsley and a little extra grated cheese, if liked. Serve immediately while the sauce is silky.

Susie’s Kitchen Tips

Stir the orzo regularly so it does not catch on the bottom of the pan. Keep a splash of hot stock nearby if it thickens too quickly. Venison mince is lean, so avoid unnecessary extra simmering once it is fully cooked.