Braised D'Anjou Pear with Whipped Mascarpone and Crispy Prosciutto paired with Davis Estates Chardonnay

INGREDIENTS:

SERVES: 4-6

Whipped Mascarpone
1 cup Mascarpone
¼ cup Heavy Cream
Pinch of Kosher Salt

Crispy Prosciutto
4 thin slices of prosciutto or jamon serrano
2 cups neutral cooking oil

Rosemary Gastrique
½ cup white sugar
½ cup sherry vinegar
¼ cup champagne vinegar
3 sprigs rosemary
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper

Braised D'Anjou Pears
4 D'Anjou Pears
1 tablespoon neutral cooking oil
3 tablespoon butter
½ cup white wine (chardonnay is a good pick here)
2 sprigs thyme
1 teaspoon fresh cracked black pepper
1 ½ teaspoon salt

Spiced Walnuts
2 cups
2 egg whites
⅛ cup brown sugar
⅛ cup white sugar
1 tablespoon smoked paprika
1 tablespoon chile powder
½ tsp cayenne pepper
2 tablespoons kosher salt

METHOD:

Whipped Mascarpone

- Shelf life is 1 week in a airtight container in the fridge.
- In a small mixing bowl combine all the ingredients and mix with a rubber spatula until creamy and smooth.

Braised D'Anjou Pears

- *A note from Chef*: D'Anjou pears are one of the best pears for roasting or braising and are the best varietal for this recipe. A bosc pear will work in a pinch but the texture of the D'Anjou can't be beat.
- First peel the pears, remove the top and bottom ¼ inch, and cut them into quarters lengthwise.
- Using your chef's knife, remove the core and seeds. Set the pears aside.
- In a heavy bottomed stainless-steel skillet (a nonstick pan will also work) heat the cooking oil over medium heat until it begins to shimmer.
- Add the pears to the pan and cook them for 3-4 minutes on each side until they start to brown.
- Add the butter and cook for an additional 2 minutes.
- Add the white wine, it might ignite if you are using a gas burner, not a problem. Once the wine has reduced by half, drop the temperature to low and add the thyme sprigs, and sprinkle on the salt and black pepper.
- Simmer the pears on the stovetop for another 5 minutes or so until they are tender but not mushy. This will depend on the ripeness of the pears.

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Crispy Prosciutto

- In a medium saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat until it reaches 340°F.
- Carefully add the slices of prosciutto to the oil and let them fry for 90 seconds.
- After 90 seconds, use a fork to flip the pieces of prosciutto over in the oil.
- Fry for another 2 minutes or until they are very crispy and dark red in color.
- Remove the prosciutto from the oil and place it on a plate or tray lined with paper towels to soak up any excess oil.
- Once the prosciutto is cool, break each piece into 5-7 smaller pieces.

Spiced Walnuts

- Shelf life 1 week.
- Preheat your oven to 350°F.
- In a small bowl combine the sugars, paprika, chile powder, cayenne and kosher salt and mix.
- In a medium bowl, whisk the egg whites until they form soft peaks (if you have a hand mixer this is a great time to break it out).
- Add the walnut pieces to the bowl with the whipped egg whites and toss them until they are completely coated.
- Add the spice mix and toss again until the walnuts are coated evenly.
- Spread the walnuts on a baking sheet lined with a silicon baking mat (Silpat is the brand I prefer, $16 for a set of two on amazon) and bake in the oven for 6 minutes.
- After 6 minutes pull the sheet out of the oven and use a rubber spatula to stir the nuts around.
- Return to the oven for an additional 6 minutes or until the nuts are evenly browned.
- Remove from the oven and let them cool for at least 20 minutes before serving.

Rosemary Gastrique

- Add the sugar to a medium, stainless steel saucepan, and place over high heat. Stir the sugar occasionally as it begins to melt into caramel. Once the sugar is completely melted, drop the heat to medium and continue to cook the caramel until it becomes golden/ light brown.
- Add the vinegars. The sugar will immediately become hard and candy-like. This is what we're after. Continue cooking over medium heat, stirring occasionally until the sugar has all dissolved.
- Add the salt and continue to reduce the gastrique until it thickens slightly and becomes syrupy. It should coat a spoon.
- Remove from the heat and add the rosemary and black pepper.
- Let the rosemary steep in the gastrique for 30 minutes and then remove it.

To Finish

On a serving platter, spread a generous amount of Whipped Mascarpone. Place the Braised D'Anjou Pears on top. Garnish with a spoonful of Rosemary Gastrique and sprinkle the spiced walnuts and crispy prosciutto. Serve immediately with a glass of Chardonnay.