Lovereading.co.uk

Rick Stein's Coast to Coast

Rick Stein

Published by BBC Books,
an imprint of The Random House Group Ltd

Extract

All text is copyright © Rick Stein 2008

This opening extract is exclusive to Love**reading**.
Please print off and read at your leisure.

Chorizo and butter bean stew with garlic and thyme

I buy the chorizos and butter beans for this from a company called Brindisa *(see page 283), which specialises in Spanish produce, but I know that you can get both at many supermarkets, too. The quality of the chorizo is all-important and I would recommend* Brindisa's *parrilla chorizo picante. The butter beans I use, called judiónes de La Granja, are also sensational.*

SERVES 4

350 g (12 oz) dried judión butter beans, soaked overnight
225 g (8 oz) hot chorizo for cooking, such as parrilla chorizo picante
50 ml (2 fl oz) olive oil
5 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
½ medium onion, finely chopped
175 ml (6 fl oz) red wine
400 g (14 oz) can of chopped tomatoes
1 tablespoon thyme leaves
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
Sea salt

Put the butter beans into a large pan with lots of water, bring to the boil and simmer for 1 hour or until tender. Drain and set aside.

Cut the chorizo sausages into thin slices. Put the olive oil and garlic into a pan and heat over a medium-high heat until the garlic begins to sizzle. Add the chorizo and cook until the slices are lightly browned on both sides, then add the onion and continue to cook until it has softened.

Add the red wine and cook until it has reduced to almost nothing. Add the canned chopped tomatoes, thyme, butter beans and ½ a teaspoon of salt and simmer for 15 minutes.

Scatter over the parsley, spoon the stew into deep, warmed bowls and serve with some crusty fresh bread.



Wild mushroom risotto

I recently stayed at an agriturismo hotel, high up in the hills just outside Assisi in Umbria. I asked the waitress what was in the risotto for dinner that night, and she just said it was made with some very good stock; brodo *was the word she used. And it was just that: rice, shallots, a very good broth, some parmesan and butter, and maybe there was a sprinkling of parsley. But that was it. It was soft, with a little residual hardness left in the rice, moist, almost runny, and satisfying, with a great depth of flavour and definitely not needing anything else. So the important point to remember when making this recipe is to use the best-flavoured beef stock you can get – preferably home-made. And if using ceps, they should be young and firmly fresh. They are fried separately in butter, then scattered over the top of the risotto rather than mixed into it. This risotto is almost as good made with mixed wild mushrooms or even chestnut or the larger portabello mushrooms.*

SERVES 4

About 1 litre (1¾ pints) light *beef stock* (page 278)
225 g (8 oz) ceps, mixed wild or chestnut mushrooms, wiped clean
60 g (2½ oz) unsalted butter
2 large shallots, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
250 g (9 oz) risotto rice, such as Carnaroli or Arborio
15 g (½ oz) parmesan cheese, freshly grated, plus extra to serve (optional)
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Bring the beef stock to the boil and keep it hot over a low heat.

Trim away half the stalks of the ceps, mixed wild or chestnut mushrooms and finely chop them. Thinly slice the remainder and set aside.

Melt 40 g (1½ oz) of the butter in a pan, add the chopped mushroom stalks, shallots and garlic and cook gently for 3–4 minutes, until soft but not browned. Add the rice and turn it over for a couple of minutes until all the grains are coated in the butter. Add a ladleful of the hot stock and stir over a medium heat until it has all been absorbed before adding another. Continue like this for about 20 minutes, stirring constantly, until you have added most or all of the stock and the rice is tender but still a little *al dente*. The risotto should still be quite moist.

About 5 minutes before the risotto is ready, heat another 15 g (½ oz) of the butter in a large frying pan, add the sliced mushrooms and some salt and pepper and fry quickly until soft and lightly browned.

To serve, stir the rest of the butter and the parmesan into the risotto and season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon on to 4 warmed plates – it should run out to cover the base of the plate in an even layer – and then spread the mushrooms out over the top. Grind over a little black pepper and serve with extra parmesan, if you wish.



Red chilli mackerel with fresh onion chutney

This dish is part of my continuing obsession with oily fish and the curry pastes of southern India. They go together so well that I just don't think it's true that all that spice ruins the taste of a perfectly fresh fish. Pilau rice is a great accompaniment (see page 280).

SERVES 4

8 x 225–275 g (8–10 oz) mackerel, cleaned and fins trimmed
6–8 tablespoons sunflower oil
Sea salt
Lime wedges, to garnish

FOR THE MASALA PASTE:

20 g (¾ oz) dried guajillo (little gourd) chillies or Kashmiri chillies (page 283)
1 teaspoon black peppercorns
1 teaspoon cloves
1 tablespoon light muscovado sugar
6 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
4 cm (1½ inch) piece of fresh ginger, roughly chopped
4 tablespoons red wine vinegar

FOR THE FRESH ONION CHUTNEY:

1 medium-hot red chilli, seeded and thinly sliced
4 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 red onion, quartered and sliced
Juice of ½ a lime
A handful of coriander, roughly chopped

For the masala paste, slit open the dried chillies and remove the stalks and seeds. Cover with hot water and leave to soak for 20 minutes.

For the onion chutney, cover the red chilli with the vinegar and set aside.

Drain the soaked dried chillies, reserving the soaking liquor. Grind the peppercorns and cloves and put them into a food processor with the soaked chillies, sugar, garlic, ginger, vinegar and ½ teaspoon of salt. Blend, adding a little of the chilli-soaking liquor if necessary, to make a smooth paste.

Make 3 deep, diagonal slashes on each side of the mackerel. Season inside the cuts and the gut cavities with salt and then spread plenty of the masala paste inside the cavities and into the cuts with a palette knife.

When cooking 8 mackerel for 4 people, I would use 2 frying pans rather than cook them in batches. Heat 3–4 tablespoons of sunflower oil in each large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the fish and fry them for 6–7 minutes on each side until cooked through. Meanwhile, drain the vinegar off the red chilli and mix with the rest of the ingredients for the fresh onion chutney, with some salt to taste. Serve the fish with the chutney, garnished with a wedge or two of lime.

