



Pancetta-Wrapped Salmon with Pesto Whipped Potatoes

Recipe courtesy Chef John Adamson

Friend of the winery and well-known Napa Valley chef John Adamson developed this recipe specifically to pair with Amici Cellars Pinot Noir. The smoky richness of pancetta and salmon balanced by the bright fruit flavors in the Pinot Noir makes it an exquisite pairing. The basil pesto adds an additional layer of complexity that makes this dish one to serve when you need to impress your guests!

Recipe serves 4 (with enough pesto leftover to freeze)

For the Basil Pesto:

2 bunches fresh picked Basil leaves
1 bunch Italian Parsley
1 each medium Garlic Clove
1 ¼ cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
¼ cup toasted Pine Nuts
½ Cup Parmesan Cheese, finely grated
Salt and Pepper to taste

Method

In a large pot bring 4 quarts of salted water to a rolling boil. Fill a medium sized bowl with ice water and set aside. Plunge the basil and parsley into the boiling water, stir once, making sure the all of the basil and parsley leaves are blanched and the pour into a colander to drain. Immediately plunge the leaves into the ice bath and cool completely. With a lint free cloth, squeeze the basil and parsley of as much water as possible, making sure that they are very dry. Roughly chop the herbs and place into a blender with the olive oil and salt and pepper. Add the garlic and pine nuts. Pulse the blender three to four times. If the pesto is not blending easily, add additional olive oil. Run the blender for about twenty seconds, or until all ingredients are well blended. When the pesto is combined, remove it from the blender to a bowl and fold in the Parmesan cheese. Cover the pesto tightly with plastic wrap and keep refrigerated.

Note: commercially produced pesto can also be used, but the salt content of the pesto will likely be higher so adjust the seasoning of the potatoes and salmon accordingly.

For the Salmon:

4 Salmon Fillet (5-6 oz. each), skinned and pin boned
8 slices Pancetta, sliced 1/16" thick
3 Tbsp Olive Oil
Salt and Pepper to taste
4 each medium Russet Potatoes (approx 8 oz. each), peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
1 cup Heavy Cream
1 cup Pesto



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Method

Lightly salt and pepper the salmon. Carefully wrap the pancetta around the salmon fillets. Place a stainless steel or non-stick sauté pan over medium-high heat. When the pan has been heated, add the olive oil and wait for a slight smoky haze to rise from the pan. Immediately add the salmon. Cook the salmon for approximately three to four minutes on each side or until the pancetta has crisped. Continue to cook the salmon, turning to crisp all four sides.

Place the peeled and cut potatoes in a small stainless steel pot and completely cover with salted, cold water. Bring to a simmer and cook uncovered for about 15 minutes, or until tender. In a separate saucepan, bring the heavy cream to a simmer. Drain the potatoes and add them to the scalded heavy cream. With a potato masher, combine the potatoes with the cream and continue to mash until smooth. Add the salt and white pepper. Add the pesto, about a cup, folding it in until it is well blended. Place the pesto whipped potatoes on a warmed plate and top with the pancetta wrapped salmon.

Serve with Amici Cellars Pinot Noir and enjoy!