



Cook with... Chris Lee, The Bildeston Crown

In season: celeriac

It may appear to be just an ugly, uninteresting, knobbly root but celeriac has inner beauty. The flesh – crispy when raw, silky smooth when cooked – has a delicate taste, which suggests the flavours of celery and parsley with a slight nuttiness.

At The Bildeston Crown, we like to use celeriac as a star ingredient and not just as a vegetable side as for example in our featured celeriac and apple lasagne recipe.

In addition we like to use it for velouté to enhance flavours and as a warm and velvety soup. Classically it is used in celeriac remoulade, or try it mashed with potatoes and garlic.

Celeriac is derived from wild celery, which has a small, edible root and has been used in Europe since ancient times (it's called selinon in Homer's Odyssey).

It is unclear when celeriac was first cultivated, but references to it date back to the 17th century.

When buying celeriac, choose a medium-sized celeriac that is firm and free from soft spots or damage. Allow for around a quarter of the weight to be discarded during preparation. To store, refrigerate in an unsealed plastic bag for two to three weeks.

When preparing it, peel it like a potato, rinse it and keep it in water



with some lemon juice until ready to use to prevent it from discolouring.

It is a staple for any kitchen as it can be roasted, boiled and mashed, steamed, made into soup or used to flavour stocks.

Tip of the week



NEXT WEEK:
Cook with Alan Paton, Stoke by Nayland Hotel

When making hollandaise sauce, instead of whisking constantly over a bain marie when adding your clarified butter, a simpler way is to bring your clarified butter to a temperature of 65C and then pour over your egg yolk and vinegar reduction, using a hand blender to mix. This will result in a smooth, velvety hollandaise without the constant whisking over a bain marie.

This week I am cooking Celeriac and apple lasagne, winter truffle, king oysters and Parmesan

INGREDIENTS

- 1 head of celeriac, peeled and sliced to 1cm thick
- 1 Braeburn apple
- Caster sugar and vanilla pod, for stock syrup
- 100g fresh pasta sheets
- Butter and olive oil, for cooking
- 500g milk
- Roasted veg garnish – baby parsnips, leek, banana shallots (enough for four)
- 400g wild mushrooms – king oyster or any wild are fine
- Parmesan, to make Parmesan crisps
- Sliced truffle, to serve (optional)

METHOD

Cut each slice of celeriac into a round (6cm) and reserve the trimmings.

Poach rounds of celeriac in boiling salted water until tender (approximately two minutes), drain and keep warm.

Repeat the process with the Braeburn apple but poach in stock syrup (a quarter amount of sugar to water and a snip of vanilla pod). Drain when tender – after approximately



two minutes.

Blanch pasta sheets in boiling salted water, then drain.

Next make the celeriac velouté: Using the trimmings from the celeriac rounds, sauté in a knob of butter over a low heat for 10 minutes without colouring, until tender. Add milk and simmer for two minutes.

Blitz in a food processor and then

pass through a very fine sieve. Season to taste.

For the garnish, cut all of the roasting vegetables into equal size pieces and roast in the oven with a little olive oil and seasoning for 20 minutes at 180C.

Sauté the mushrooms in butter until tender, then keep warm.

For the Parmesan crisps, grate the Parmesan and lay a thin layer in discs onto a non-stick baking sheet. Bake at 180C for five to six minutes until melted. Remove and cool and they will crisp up. Break them up into a rustic style for plating up.

To assemble the lasagne, take a deep round bowl and add the velouté to the base. Add a layer of pasta, the cooked celeriac rounds, the apple rounds and then another layer of pasta. Repeat the process, finishing with a layer of pasta.

To complete, serve the lasagne with the roasted vegetables and mushrooms around the outside with sliced truffle, if using, and the Parmesan crisps.

How to master



The best roast chicken

Leave your chicken uncovered in the fridge for 12 hours or overnight before cooking – this will ensure the skin dries out.

Before cooking, take the chicken out of the fridge and bring to room temperature, then rub olive oil and salt on to the skin.

Once cooked, remove the chicken from the oven and rest upside down on its breasts for 20 minutes – this will ensure the meat stays moist.

“Less waste, love food”

Do you have a foody question for our chefs? Or do you want to share your photos of the recipes they've provided?
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