
RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Mozzarella Stuffed Chicken in Parma Ham

If you reckon simplicity and good preparation will show your mum that you care then this recipe is hard to beat even if it's a bit '80s (probably suits Mummy!) It's also a colourful recipe you can prepare a day or so in advance and pop in the oven on the day so you can concentrate on thanking Mummy for a great job well done!



4 top quality Fosse Meadows free range chicken breasts or large thighs, skinned
3 balls of mozzarella
1 bunch fresh basil
12 slices Parma Ham or smoked ham (Speck)
olive oil and a pinch of chilli flakes (optional)
freshly ground pepper to season

For the roasted red pepper sauce
2 or 3 large red peppers, riper the better
1 tbs olive oil
3 garlic cloves, crushed
2 x 400g tins chopped plum or cherry tomatoes
½ tsp crushed red chilli flakes

Remove the skins and lay out your chilled chicken breasts. Cover with cling film then gently flatten with a rolling pin. Remove the cling film and repeat one by one. Set aside then lay out the two overlapping slices of parma ham and top each with one of the chicken breasts lightly wiped with olive oil. Dot with a few basil leaves then top with slices of mozzarella dusted with the lightest screw of black pepper (no salt as the Parma Ham or Speck will add that). Carefully roll the breasts so that they are wrapped in the ham and secure with a cocktail stick if necessary. Set out in a ceramic or enamel oven dish, cling film and refrigerate overnight (and pop a bottle of sparkling and a few glasses in there whilst you are at it).

Next make the roasted pepper sauce: Preheat your oven to 220°C approx. Prepare the peppers by halving and removing the seeds then rub your hands with olive oil then the peppers in turn.

Season lightly with sea salt and pepper then roast on a baking tray for 30-40mins until soft and slightly blackened round the edges. Pop the peppers in a bag to cool then peel the skin off with your fingers. Chop with a chefs knife then set aside in a bowl.

Crush 2 or 3 cloves of garlic into a pan with a pinch of chilli flakes and sauté gently without burning then pop in the chopped peppers and simmer lidded on a very low heat for 15mins or so until the flavours are harmonious. Add a little splash of white wine and reduce temperature if the sauce begins to stick. Blend with a hand blender or sieve with the back of a spoon and pick out any unsightly burnt bits of skin. Adjust seasoning if necessary then refrigerate until use.

On the day get the oven dish with the chicken out of the fridge a few hours beforehand to get up to room temperature. Preheat your oven to 180°C or so and bake for 20-25 mins in middle of the oven until 74°C with a temperature probe, checking after 15mins to make sure the ham is not burning (in which case cover with foil). Put the sauce in a covered oven dish underneath until ready to serve.

Serve with steamed green beans or purple sprouting and potatoes or on top of fazzoltetti (lasagne sheets) with your vegetables served separately.

To download this recipe go to www.squisito-deli.co.uk
