
RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Pappardelle with Venison Sausage & Pear Ragu

Hunting is next to religion in northern Italy. If it's not wild boar that excites it's *cervo* or venison which you will often find in a comforting sauce served with thick ribbons of *pappardelle* pasta or *pinci* which are handmade twists like a seashell which is good for thick sauces to cling to. Venison offers an alternative to other game since it goes well with fruit because it is so richly

game. If it's a fruit that goes with cheese it'll work with game.

500g venison sausages
olive oil
a few rinds of Grana Padano or Parmigiano Reggiano
red wine like Ghemme, Valpolicella Ripasso, Primitivo or port
2 or 3 Doyenne d Comice or other desert pears (you could try figs , ripe quinces or fresh prunes)
black pepper

Put a splash of olive oil in the pan and crumble in the sausage meat then sauté gently for 5 mins but no more. You are only trying to seal the meat not brown it. Add a glass of wine or port and deglaze the pan then simmer for 5 or 10 minutes until the wine has reduced by half.

At this point add the rind of three or four 50mm square sections of Grana Padano plus a little water to half cover the meat. This will season the meat so you don't need salt which will toughen it.

Transfer to the bottom oven or slow cooker for 60-90 minutes or a bit longer if your Slow Cooker has a low setting. Add the odd splash of wine if it starts to dry.

When your ragu has thickened (you can make it a few days ahead and reheat) get your pasta on and cook for a minute to a minute and a half if fresh or 4 to 5 minutes if dried. Meanwhile, core and slice the pears, leaving the skin on for rustic charm, and sauté the pears in olive oil until they start to soften. Season then add to the ragu with a splash of the pasta water to thicken. Add the drained pasta to the sauce (with a knob of butter which you added as you drained the pasta), grate in some Grana Padano and chopped fresh rosemary then work with a spoon over a medium heat in a large pan adding some

more pasta water to lubricate if it sticks rather than melts. Plate up and serve.

Serves 6.



flavoured. Here we make venison sausages with a bit of pepper, garlic, mustard and ginger infused and red wine to flavour the meat for a few days before making the sauce.

Only at the final stage do we pair the fresh fruit with the ragu for the classic contrast of fruit and

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