

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Richard Sandoval – The celeb chef adds some colour to dinner with beetroot

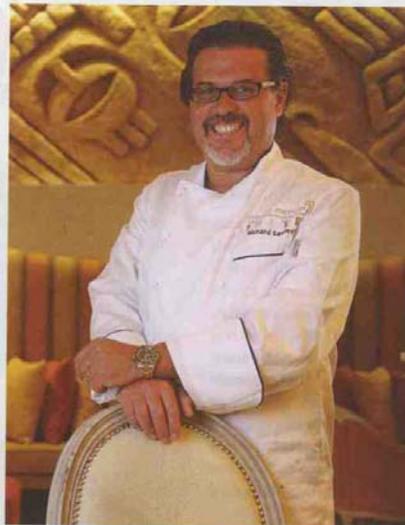
ASK THE CHEF

Richard Sandoval

The celeb chef adds some colour to dinner with beetroot

TEXT BEVERLEY ANN D'CRUZ

Say Richard Sandoval to any food-lover in Dubai and they'll point you towards his haute cuisine Mexican restaurant Maya at Le Royal Méridien Beach Resort+Spa. Serving the fresh flavours of his home country with a contemporary twist, this chef has earned the repute of having revolutionised the cuisine in the United States through his Modern Mexican restaurant empire. This month he shares a recipe for a light salad that celebrates Spinneys FOOD's cover star and brings the flavours of Mexico to our homes.



Q What recipe would you suggest to showcase beetroot's flavour?

A Beetroot tossed with fresh citrus flavours is part of the repertoire of home cooks throughout Mexico. It was also a favourite of my grandmother when she cooked for our large family gatherings every weekend. The combination of crisp watercress, candied walnuts and earthy beets is my colourful adaptation of this classic *ensalada de betabel* (red beet salad) with a chile ancho-piloncillo glaze.

The vibrant citrus and tangy goat's milk cheese are the perfect balance to the natural sugars in the red and yellow beets. For the best flavour, slow roast the beets in the oven at 425°C for an hour and a half or until tender.

For the goat's milk cheese vinaigrette: put 150g goat's milk cheese, 50ml red vinegar, 50ml white vinegar, 70ml honey, 20g roasted garlic, 40g caramelised white onions and salt to taste in a mixer and blend. When finished, add 80ml olive oil very slowly with the mixer still going and when finished, do the same with 130ml

corn oil until it is emulsified so as to get the appropriate texture for the dressing.

To make the chile ancho-piloncillo glaze: soak 1kg brown sugar in a pot with 1ltr red vinegar and 500ml white vinegar for about one hour. Then put in a blender and mix well. Heat the mixture and add the dry ancho chile, breaking up the chiles as you add them to the sauce. Reduce to a light syrup and strain. Finally, cool it down and refrigerate.

Place 300g walnuts in a mixing bowl. Simmer 50g sugar and 100ml water until you get a syrup. Add the syrup to the walnuts making sure they are evenly coated with the

mixture. Place on a baking tray and spread evenly. Pre-heat the oven to about 160°C and place the sheet of walnuts in the oven for approximately 30 minutes, or until lightly golden.

Now arrange the salad. Cut 100g each of red and yellow beets in a thin circle like carpaccio and place them in the middle of the plate. Toss 500g watercress in a bowl with 70g of the goat's cheese vinaigrette and put it in the middle of the beets. Then, place 250g orange segments around the watercress along with 150g candied walnuts and drizzle with 100ml chile ancho-piloncillo glaze. If you prefer, add crushed black pepper on top. This recipe serves four. ■

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To sample some of Richard Sandoval's unique flavours, visit Maya at Le Royal Méridien Beach Resort+Spa. For restaurant reservations call (04) 3165550.

Send in your cooking queries to spinneysfoodletters@spinneys-dubai.com