

Early excellence

Ross Golden-Bannon discovers that our culinary future is secure, as Ireland's young chefs prove at the Euro-toques Young Chef of the Year Awards

Back row: Seamus Commons, Cathal Leonard, Mickael Viljanen, Kieran Glennon, Frank O'Connor. Front row: Keelan Higgs, Mary Ryan, Una Donohue, Margaret Roche and Pauli Vantilla



Mary Ryan's teal & foie gras terrine

Serves 4

50ml game stock
½ leaf gelatine
20ml cold water
seasoning

1 Place gelatine in cold water until soft. Place 10ml of game stock in a pot and warm. Take the gelatine from the cold water and place in the warm stock. Once the gelatine has dissolved in the 10ml of stock, add this back into the remaining 40ml of stock. Season to taste. Leave to one side.

1 small turnip, peeled
200g clarified butter
1 sprig thyme, leaves only
1 clove garlic, finely chopped

1 Melt butter in a pan with thyme and garlic. Thinly slice turnip and place in melted butter. Cook in a preheated oven 100°C for five minutes. Remove turnip from the butter and set aside.

1 teal crown
1 orange, zest only
1 sprig thyme
½ clove garlic
seasoning

1 Pre-heat oven to 170°C / gas mark 3.

2 Check teal for shot wounds and remove any feathers on the bird and in the shot wound if any.

Ireland has some astonishing culinary talent and, although it may seem that we have just a sprinkling of Michelin stars, in fact we boast nearly more per capita than our neighbours in England. But all the talent and skill in the world is fairly transitory unless it is shared with others. The Euro-toque awards deliver just that as each restaurant chef mentors their entrant along the process of interviews and test meals and finally to the decision day, which took place in Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud where four young chefs battled it out for the big prize. It should be said that there were just shades of excellence between the competitors but in the end the talented Mary Ryan, mentored by executive chef Seamus Commons from Knockranny House Hotel, won the 2010 Young Chef of the Year Award. She gets to spend a paid stage in London at The Ledbury, the renowned two Michelin starred restaurant headed by Brett Graham. We've reproduced an edited version of her presentation starter here.

THE JUDGES

Neil McFadden, Euro-toques chef; special guest judge Brett Graham from The Ledbury London; Neven Maguire, MacNean Bistro Cavan; Guillaume Le Brun, Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud and Marc Amand, La Rousse Foods

The event is supported by La Rousse Foods, Bord Bia, Fáilte Ireland and the Findlater Wine & Spirit Group.

EURO-TOQUES IRELAND – a non-profit organisation established in 1986 by Myrtle Allen of Ballymaloe House, is made up of about 180 chef and producer members all working hard to protect Irish culinary heritage and promote top quality local and seasonal sourcing. www.euro-toques.ie



Teal and foie gras terrine

3 Place in a bowl with garlic, thyme and orange zest. Marinade for an hour. Season teal and seal the crown on a hot pan for two minutes on either breast. Place in pre-heated oven for two minutes (cooked medium). Leave to cool down. Once cool, remove the breasts from the bone. Leave to one side.

150g foie gras, de veined
pinch salt, Sel Rose if available
10ml Madeira
seasoning

1 Marinade foie gras in salt and madeira for an hour. Place in pre-heated oven 100°C / gas mark 1 (any higher and the foie gras wouldn't survive) for five minutes. Remove from the oven and place on cling film. Roll into a cylinder shape 1 cm in diameter, knot and tie both ends of cling film. Place in the fridge for three hours.

2 Once set, remove from fridge, cut into two cylinders to fit the terrine mould (lengthways). Remove the cling film and set to one side.

3 To assemble terrine, line the mould with cling film (size of mould required, 4 inch long, 2 inch wide). Line mould with cooked turnip. Place a breast of teal to the right of the mould and cover with stock. Leave in fridge for six minutes. Place a foie gras cylinder to the left of the teal in the mould, cover in stock and place in the fridge to set. Repeat the same process until all the teal, foie gras and stock are used. Place more turnip on top and leave to set in the fridge overnight. Once set, remove from the terrine mould, peel off the cling film and slice into four portions.