

CATIE
AWARDS
2020



BEST APPETIZER
EARTH

SYNOPSIS

The Jaguar I-Pace is Jaguar's first all-electric performance SUV. It, like all the vehicles produced by Jaguar, represent precision and incredible design.

The media launch dinner which would run for 5 nights, hosting a plethora of car enthusiasts, media and influencers, had to be a six course menu of experiential fine dining. The menu had to serve as an extension of this incredible car/brand and fit seamlessly into the overall purpose of the event.

We decided to take this idea one step further and build on the unique selling point of the car, which was that it was all-electric, which means cleaner air and contributor to a healthier Earth.

"Going green never tasted so good" is how we opened our clients tasting menu...it was a hit from the start and we rolled with it beautifully!



EARTH

Mushroom Dumpling, Seared King Oyster Mushroom, Textures of Enoki, Porcini Soil and Shiitake Terrine

BEST APPETIZER

CONCEPT, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES, INCLUDING QUALITIES OF THE DISH THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE EVENT

As this was to be the opening course, we decided to highlight the main feature of our menu, which was all about going green. We decided on the name of the course before we knew what we would serve. EARTH. That said it all, but now to present it in impeccable style with flavours that would unmistakably represent EARTH.

Mushrooms were at the forefront of our minds and we brainstormed various preparations and combinations. Ever mindful of the fact that this was an experiential dining experience, we needed drama, we needed it to be memorable.

Being a six course menu, we would need to start light and fresh. We settled on a mushroom consommé, complimented with textures/components of mushroom. Our big idea came through when we decided to dehydrate the consommé into a stock cube and coat it in gold leaf. This would then be served to the table first along with glass kettles bellowing a soft pine infused smoke created with dry ice.







BEST APPETIZER

Waiters would then move around the table with jugs of hot water to fill the kettles, upon which the guests were instructed to place their gold tea bags into the hot kettles and watch their mushroom consommé infuse as the delicate gold flecks dissipate into the brew. In the meantime, the beautifully presented textures/components of mushroom were served to the table. The mushroom dumpling, seared king oyster mushroom, porcini soil and textures of enoki were plated on the rim of the bowl, while the Shiitake terrine was placed inside the bowl. This was done so that the rich Shiitake flavour would immediately infuse into the consommé, while the other accompaniments along the side the plate could be 'adventured' into by the guest.

Waiters then took the guests mushroom 'tea' infusion and poured it gently into the soup bowl.

The dish was a sensational ice breaker even the stern car critics were blown away and soon the table of strangers were buzzing with amazement. One talks about creating #instamoments - and that is exactly what this was. Immediately social media was lit up with photos of the soup, all the while carrying the #jaguar hash tag. Our client was thrilled, our objectives had been achieved from the out set. This was a brand to be reckoned with. It was fresh, innovative and going green!



PRODUCTION AT THE EVENT

Many components of the dish were made at our production kitchen. Having to assemble and serve a six course menu in three hours allowed no room for error or delay.

Our main preparation onsite included the various textures/components of mushroom. These all required various preparation styles which needed to come together at once. Chefs were grouped together to take care of each individual item and then coordinated by the head function chef so as to come together at service.

The kettles only required hot water which would be poured from silver jugs which were filled at the urn and the gold tea bags were plated in advance.

At service time we created an assembly line for the mushroom components while the front of house manager coordinated the waiters with tea bags, kettles and jugs of hot water. It was imperative that the service moved seamlessly as we could not allow guests to be left wondering how it all works.

Pine essence together with dry ice was placed under the kettles to one side of the kitchen. Next to it, silver jugs were filled with the hot water. Immediately following the tea bags, chefs poured hot water onto the dry ice and placed a kettle on top. This flowed into the dining room while the appetiser chefs came together and ran with plating of the various mushroom components.

The service was well ordered and executed to perfection.

OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES

One of the greatest challenges we faced was in the development of this dish . We relentlessly worked on getting the strength of the stock cube correct so that when it was added to the pre measured water in the kettle, it would create a rich and intensely flavoured soup. We can only say that pure determination to see this dish come to life drove the chefs to get it perfect!

The other obstacle we encountered during the event was with the shiitake terrines. Made from a very delicately set broth they struggled to cope in the heat of the kitchen and made plating very tricky. Luckily, as this was a cold prepared item, it was recognised before service, whereupon the terrines were chilled down again and plated first in room alongside the kitchen.

Service was a challenge and required precision timing from both us and the event manager. Each course had to be executed perfectly and to a rhythm. We understood that the only unforeseen delay could come from the dining guests. We could not force them to eat faster, however we were under strict instructions to end at a certain time as guests were being transferred back their hotels. Both front and back of house teams were briefed in detail beforehand so that everyone was aware of the 'clock work' motion we had to move in. This helped all the teams to understand their role, and aside from a few delays from the guests, we moved swiftly and efficiently through the menu.

MUSHROOM TEA BAGS

INGREDIENTS

1 cup Dried Porcini Mushrooms
 2 cups Boiling Water
 120g Button Mushrooms (cleaned)
 1 Litre Vegetable Stock
 2 Large Garlic Cloves (thinly sliced)
 1 Tablespoon Soy Sauce
 Salt and Freshly Ground Pepper

METHOD

Place the dried porcinis in a glass bowl and cover with 2 cups boiling water. Let sit for 30 minutes.
 Meanwhile, wipe the fresh mushrooms, trim away the bottoms if they are sandy, break off the stems and set them aside. Slice the mushroom caps.
 Line a strainer with cheesecloth and set it over a bowl. Drain the porcinis through the cheesecloth-lined strainer. Squeeze over the strainer to extract as much flavourful liquid as possible and set aside the broth.
 Rinse the reconstituted mushrooms in several changes of water. Measure the mushroom soaking water and add enough water to make 4 cups.
 In a soup pot or a large saucepan, combine the mushroom soaking liquid, the vegetable stock, the soaked porcinis, fresh mushroom stems and sliced mushrooms, garlic, and salt to taste, and bring to a simmer.
 Cover and simmer over very low heat for 30 minutes. Strain the soup and return to the saucepan.
 Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste, and the soy sauce. Now over a very low heat allow the consommé to reduce to a quarter of the pot.
 Drizzle the broth on non-stick sheets for your dehydrator. Set to the highest temperature and dehydrate until completely dry. It will easily snap into pieces once dry.
 Break into pieces and place in a coffee grinder. Grind until powdery.
 Add a few drops of water and sunflower oil or any neutral oil to the stock powder in order to create a loose paste.
 In a suitably sized silicon mould press the paste into the moulds with an organic cotton string securely placed within the paste. Allow to dry over night at room temperature.
 Once dried, gently remove the moulded stock cubes from the silicon mould and place on parchment paper.
 Now place one sheet of gold leaf on a separate working counter top. Gently place the stock cube in the centre of the gold leaf and using a small soft paint brush, fold the gold leaf around the stock cube.
 Once all the cubes have been covered, place in a line with their string neatly laid out. Mix a little gold lustre with some vodka and paint the strings.
 To finish off, use small stickers with your brand or an emblem and secure to the end of the tea bag string.

MUSHROOM DUMPLINGS

Makes 40 dumplings

INGREDIENTS

30g dried shitake mushrooms
300g portobello mushrooms
1 cup spring onion, finely sliced
¼ cup chives finely slices
2 Tbs coriander root, finely diced
1 Tbs freshly grated ginger
a few drops of sesame oil
2 tsp chilli flakes
2 tsp Chinese Cooking Wine
2 Tsp soy sauce
½ tsp white pepper

40 Dumpling wrapper
1 Tbs Rice bran oil or similar to pan fry

METHOD

Preheat oven to 180 degrees celsius. Soak shitake in hot water to rehydrate.

Spread the portobello mushrooms in a single layer on a tray, season and roast for 20 minutes.

Finely chop shitake and roasted mushrooms and combine with all other filling ingredients in a bowl. Stir well.

Place a teaspoon of mixture in the centre of each dumpling, brush the edge of the dumpling wrapper with water, fold in half and pinch and fold the edge of the dumpling to seal. Place on baking paper or a tray, with the folded edge facing up, to flatten the bottom.

Heat the oil in a large heavy based fry pan. Once hot, add the dumplings flat side down. You do not want them to be touching. Fry for a few minutes until the base of the dumplings is golden and crisp and then add enough hot water to come 2cm up the side of the pan. Place a lid on the pan and steam/ boil until the water has evaporated. Remove the lid and continue to fry until the bottoms are crisp again.

PORCINI SOIL

INGREDIENTS

300g Flour
80g Confectioner Sugar
180g Dried Porcini (Ground)
1/4 tsp Salt
40g Butter (Softened)

METHOD

Sift together all ingredients, except for the butter.
Slowly fold in the butter by hand, forming a dough.
Portion in 4 equal dough logs.
Freeze over night or until frozen solid.
Using a grater, grate the logs on the finest side over a baking tray covered in parchment paper.
Bake at 90°C for 20 minutes or until dry and crumbly.

