



Seasonal Taste

María José Sevilla

More than ever before, Spring, Primavera in Spanish, means Hope. In both languages it also means light, revival, flowers and gardening, long walks and positive thoughts, writes an expert in Hispanic gastronomy and viticulture.

In the kitchen, it means mushrooms, asparagus, and an array of the greenest of very colourful vegetables and fruits available during the Spring months. Delicious young lamb is in season and fish counters are looking better and better. This is also the time to taste cider and the white wines of the last vintage in particular. With all of this in mind, I have prepared, for La Revista readers, a menu dedicated to Spring 2021 which I hope will please most palates, whether you are in The British Isles or in Spain:

Asparagus with Vinaigrette

Serves 4

4 to 6 Asparagus per person depending on size; A bowl of vinaigrette made with finely chopped carrot, spring onion, garlic, rainbow beetroot, juice of beetroot, Sherry vinegar, sweet oloroso Sherry, olive oil, salt and a dash of water if needed.

Cut off the asparagus ends. Fill a large, deep frying pan with water in order to cook all the asparagus at the same time. Season with salt and bring to the boil. Then add the asparagus and cook until they begin to soften. They should be slightly 'al dente'. Remove and refresh



under the tap. Pat dry and serve with some of the vinaigrette on top.

To make the vinaigrette, first blend the olive oil, the Sherry vinegar and the sweet oloroso Sherry which balances the acidity of the sauce. Remember that Sherry vinegar is stronger than a normal wine vinegar and therefore you will have to alter to your taste, the traditional ratio olive oil/vinegar which normally is three parts olive oil and one part vinegar. Then add the rest of the ingredients, blend well adding a little water if needed. Adjust the seasoning before serving.



Roast rack of lamb with parsley, garlic and olive oil 'Aderezo'

Serves 4

Rack of lamb, 8 ribs cut into 4 pieces.
Salt, pepper and Olive oil.

For the 'aderezo': A small bunch parsley, chopped; 1 or 2 garlic cloves, peeled and blanched. A little sugar; salt; 3 tablespoons olive oil; lemon juice to taste

Heat the oven to fan 200 C. Make the 'aderezo' by pounding all the ingredients in a pestle and mortar. Reserve.

Season the lamb with salt and pepper. Heat a little olive oil in an oven proof pan and seal the lamb for 3 to 4 minutes to take some colour . Transfer to the oven. Cook for about 12 to 15 minutes, add the 'aderezo' and cook for another 2 to 3 more minutes. Remove from the oven, Cover with foil and let it rest for a few minutes more. Serve with roasted peppers and a few sauteed potatoes or just with a fresh salad.



Strawberries with brown sugar, Muscatel wine and mint

Serves 4

500g fresh strawberries thinly sliced;
2 to 3 tablespoons brown sugar;
Moscatel wine to cover; a few leaves mint

Place the sliced strawberries in a serving dish. Add the sugar and blend, cover with cling film and let it rest for a couple of hours in the fridge . Add the wine and a few small mint leaves. Let it infuse for another hour and serve. You can add a little single cream on top before serving but I prefer them as they come. Serve with a chilled glass of the same wine.

And to accompany: A lovely chilled 'copita' of Manzanilla from Sanlúcar de Barrameda followed by a good glass of Ribera del Duero to do justice to the lamb. A sweet Muscatel wine from Navarra or from Málaga will bring a very lovely end to the meal. ENJOY!

Note on the author:

María José Sevilla's latest book is *Delicioso, A History of Food in Spain* (Reaktion Books)