



Super Chef

Chef Klimé Kovaceski, the owner of the Crystal Cafe in Miami Beach, has made a name for himself with his cooking and attention to service. A native of Macedonia, Kovaceski honed his culinary skills there and in Amsterdam before arriving in south Florida in 1984.

menu and deciding on each night's specials.

Crystal Cafe's sous chef, a young man from Colombia whom Kovaceski is training, prepares the meals. But Kovaceski — unlike executive chefs at larger fine-dining restaurants, who rarely visit the kitchen during dinner preparation — is never far from the action, helping assemble appetizers as well as entrees when things get busy. He also spends a good deal of his time

creating new dishes.

One of Kovaceski's biggest concerns: The quality of his service staff, some of whom hail from Russia, Romania and Macedonia. "I'm old-school European," he says. "Service is the most important part of fine dining. A rude waiter can ruin the best meal." Kovaceski has been well-served by his nature: Ever gregarious, he delights in befriending patrons, vendors and restaurant reviewers.



Seafood Osso Buco

The recipe for Kovaceski's favorite dish serves 4.

Lobster sauce

1½ pounds fresh Maine lobster (body only)
1 cup (total, not each) chopped carrot, celery and onion
1 tablespoon tomato paste
½ cup white wine
2 cups water
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon dry oregano, thyme and basil
1 tablespoon corn starch dissolved in 3 tablespoons water
¼ cup heavy cream
4 tablespoons butter — melted
salt and pepper to taste

Cut the lobster into 6-8 pieces. Heat oil in a skillet until a haze appears. Add lobster, vegetables, tomato paste, wine and water. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer for 1 hour. Cool. Using a heavy-duty food processor, process lobster with shell until smooth. Strain through a fine strainer. Process again and strain again. Add cream, butter, salt and pepper and other seasonings. Add dissolved cornstarch. Blend well. Set aside.

Risotto

1 cup Arborio rice
½ cup diced onion
3 cups chicken stock (more or less as needed)
¼ cup Regiano Parmesano cheese
4 ounces butter

Heat oil in skillet. Add onion and rice and cook 3-4 minutes, stirring. Add chicken stock, stirring constantly. Cook 10 minutes, add cheese and butter and cook until rice is al dente. Add salt and pepper.

1 pound center-cut salmon fillet
12 ounces sea bass
1 cup water
4-5 Portabello mushrooms
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Divide salmon fillet and sea bass into 4 portions. Wrap salmon fillet around sea bass. Add salt and pepper. Put into a baking dish with water and bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes. Place mushrooms into baking pan, season with salt and pepper and drizzle olive oil over them. Bake for 15 minutes.

To assemble:

Puddle lobster sauce in the middle of a serving plate and add a quarter of the rice. Set a Portabello on the center of the plate. Place the fish on top of the Portabello and garnish with fresh parsley.