



Steak Tartare

As a reformed vegetarian, it's odd that my favourite way to eat meat is raw ... but I can rarely resist this dish when I see it on a menu. I love the theatre of it being mixed tableside by an experienced waiter and the traditional crinkly pommes gaufrettes with it ... but crisped baguette slices work pretty well too. It's an impressive dish to serve at home and, although there's a bit of chopping involved, it can all be done ahead of time and just plated at the last minute. My version sticks to the traditional seasonings (except I prefer chives to parsley), though some people like a dash of tomato ketchup, Dijon mustard and/or brandy, so feel free to experiment. The key is to hand cut the meat rather than use a mincer, which gives a pasty texture. With this I like a soft chilled red, such as Pat Sullivan's crazy Jumpin' Juice blend of possibly malbec, shiraz, pinot, moscato and sauv blanc (the exact combo's a secret).

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

- 250g eye fillet
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 golden shallot
- 6 cornichons
- 6 anchovy fillets
- 2 tablespoons salted capers, rinsed and dried
- ½ bunch chives
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 egg yolks (see below)
- Worcestershire sauce, for serving
- Tabasco sauce, for serving
- Salt flakes, to taste

Croutons

- ½ baguette, thinly sliced
- Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Salt flakes, to taste

Freeze the egg whites to make Pavlova.

METHOD

1. Trim any sinew or discoloured bits from the beef and discard.
2. Dice the beef finely, toss with oil, place in a small bowl and cover with plastic wrap, pressing it onto the surface of the meat. Refrigerate until well chilled.
3. Place 2 serving plates in the fridge to chill as well.
4. Finely dice the shallot, cornichons, anchovies and capers and finely slice the chives, keeping each one separate. Cover and refrigerate until needed.
5. Make croutons: preheat oven to 180°C. Place baguette slices in a large bowl, drizzle generously with oil and sprinkle with salt. Bake for about 15 minutes, until golden.
6. Just before serving, mix beef with salt and pepper.
7. Shape into a mound on each of the chilled plates, making a small indentation in the top.
8. Slide the egg yolks into the indentations.
9. Arrange shallot, cornichon, anchovy, capers and chives in little mounds around the meat.
10. Serve with the croutons, Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco sauce, salt and pepper on the side.