



Artisan Chef, Food Writer & Teacher

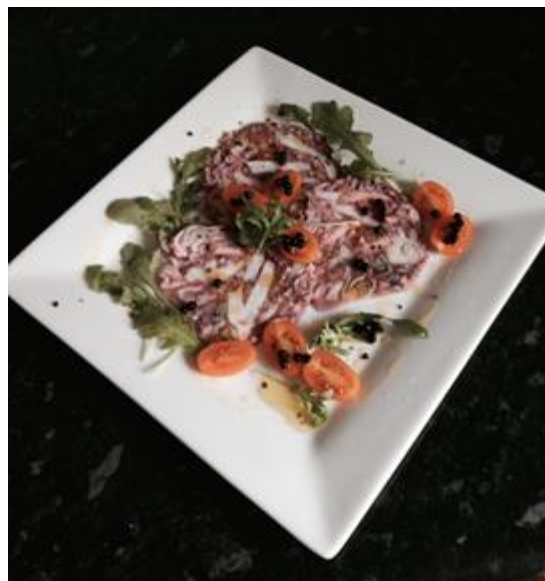
## CARPACCIO OF OCTOPUS

I discovered this dish when on holiday on Sardinia. A lovely little family run restaurant by the beach. So much fabulous seafood on the menu and this one really appealed to me for a starter! It was brilliant. I tried to replicate this for my cookery spot on the BBC Radio Oxford Afternoon show, when back from holiday. It was enjoyed by presenter Alex Lester and wine expert Alistair Cooper.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2.5 Kg Fresh octopus
- 1 red onion, peeled, quartered
- 1 carrot, cut into 3 pieces
- 2 celery stalks, each cut into 3 pieces
- 1 medium fennel bulb, cut into lengthwise quarters
- 1 lemon, zest removed with vegetable peeler in wide strips, and lemon quartered
- 250ml Sherry vinegar
- 250ml Dry sherry
- 250ml red wine vinegar
- 2 litre of water
- 10 unpeeled garlic cloves
- 5 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon of whole black peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon juniper berries
- 2 sheets of gelatine

Serve with lemon juice, extra-virgin olive oil, Plum tomatoes, Rocket leaves and balsamic vinegar berries  
There are videos available on the internet showing the method so have a look and give this recipe a go!





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## **METHOD**

You could use frozen Octopus for this. Ask your fishmonger to clean the fresh octopus for you i.e. removing the inside, the eyes and the beak.

To create your mold, get a large (2lt) plastic water/fizzy drink bottle. Cut off the head of the bottle and poke holes in the base of the bottle.

When you fill the mold with the cooked octopus cut down the top of the bottle to the top level of the octopus. Make several similar cuts then remove any extra length on these strips as you will use these to cover the top of the octopus.

In a large pan, put the onion, carrot, celery, fennel, lemon zest, quartered lemon, vinegar/sherry, water, garlic, bay leaves, juniper berries and peppercorns. Bring to boil on high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until octopus is tender, about 2 -3 hours. Remove octopus from stock and set aside until cool enough to handle.

Reduce stock by 3/4 in volume, boiling it on high heat. Cut tentacles into large pieces and place the head and tentacles into cylindrical mold. Remove reduced stock from heat; strain through sieve and set aside to cool to warm. Discard debris in strainer.

Take about 300ml of the liquid and put in a smaller pan. Soak the gelatine sheets in cold water until soft/soaked (about 5 to 10 minutes). Remove gelatine from the water and gently drain off the water. Add it to the warm reduced stock in the smaller pan and dissolve it, cool to room temperature.

Place mold upright in a dish/bowl. Cut the octopus into head and tentacles. Cut the head in half and the tentacles (long ways) into quarters. Push the Octopus bit by bit into the bottle and push down, each time adding a bit of the reduced stock. Once you have filled the bottle/mold then close the top with the strips of the bottle as described above. Use a heavy weight (such as large can) to compress; refrigerate until thoroughly chilled.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

Serves 6-8

Preparation time – 30 minutes

Cooking time – 3 hours