

FRIED RABBIT WITH SEMOLINA AND HERBS

by Christopher Lee

Even with increasing popularity on the American table, rabbit is more common in Europe than here in the United States, and I think we're missing out on something. It is extraordinarily good deep-fried, when its lean, delicate flavor and tender texture are showcased in a savory, crisp panure. Rabbit's elegance is enhanced by fresh herbs, which feature prominently in this recipe. It's the perfect dish for the lovely reds of August Rouge.

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| One 3-pound fresh rabbit, cut into 8 pieces (2 shoulders, legs separated into 4 pieces, loin split—use the ribs in stock) | 1 cup crème fraîche |
| 2 tablespoons kosher salt | 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard |
| 1 tablespoon fresh thyme | 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary |
| 2 teaspoons cracked black pepper | 1 cup all-purpose flour |
| 1 strip lemon zest, cut into slivers | 1 cup fine semolina flour |
| 2 cups dry white wine | 1 tablespoon chopped parsley |
| 1 garlic clove, crushed | 1 teaspoon crushed fennel seeds |
| 1 bay leaf | 1 teaspoon crushed coriander seeds |
| | $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper |
| | 2 quarts vegetable oil (for frying) |
| | Drizzle of wildflower honey, warmed |

Rub rabbit with 2 teaspoons salt, thyme, 1 teaspoon pepper, and lemon zest. Refrigerate overnight. Next day, simmer rabbit with white wine, 2 teaspoons salt, garlic clove, and bay leaf. Add water to cover, if needed. Cook for 20–25 minutes to internal temperature of 140° F. Allow rabbit to cool to room temperature in the cooking liquid. Drain and discard cooking liquid.

Combine crème fraîche, Dijon mustard, and chopped rosemary. Coat rabbit with crème fraîche mixture. Cover rabbit and chill for 4–6 hours.

Mix both flours, chopped parsley, fennel seed, coriander seed, cayenne pepper, remaining teaspoon of black pepper, and remaining 2 teaspoons of salt. Remove rabbit from the fridge. Toss rabbit pieces in the flour mixture, shake off excess, and place them on a parchment-lined sheet pan.

Pour oil 4 inches deep in a heavy skillet or cast-iron pot. Heat oil to 325° F, using a fry thermometer to measure. Working in two batches, carefully add rabbit piece by piece to hot oil. Fry rabbit to internal temperature of 165° F, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a cooling rack set in a sheet pan and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Serve rabbit on a warm platter and drizzle with warmed honey.

Serves 4–6



Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo restaurants in Berkeley and co-founder of Pop-Up General Store in Oakland. Visit his website: oldfashionedbutcher.com.

AUGUST 2022

ROUGE



2020 SAVOIE CHIGNIN MONDEUSE







“VIEILLES VIGNES”

ANDRÉ & MICHEL QUENARD

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OSTLY KNOWN and beloved for its white wines, the Savoie is also home to a noteworthy red grape called Mondeuse. Likely a relative of Syrah, Mondeuse thrives along the impossibly steep and scree-laden slopes of the pre-Alps, just down the road from France’s renowned ski mountains. For seventy years, the Quenards’ vines for this cuvée have clung to this stony rubble, enjoying great health and complete ripening courtesy of the slope’s quick draining, sunny southern exposure, and cool Alpine air currents. Looking up at the sharp incline and the rocky soil, you might wonder how third-generation Guillaume Quenard is able to harvest grapes here, much less tend to them all summer. Somehow, he manages to do so, all manually, before aging the wine for a year in old, neutral *foudres* before bottling. The resulting fine-grained *rouge* shows some northern Rhône Syrah qualities—an irresistibly savory, peppery hint and note of black olive—but it also delivers a tart brightness and impressive acidity that make it extremely versatile at table. Pour this beautiful Mondeuse alongside a tender steak, pasta topped with grilled mushrooms, or your favorite Alpine cheese dish for a wonderful late-summer or early-fall feast. —Tom Wolf

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE \$345.60 PER CASE

					
2020 Savoie Chignin Mondeuse “Vieilles Vignes” André & Michel Quenard	Mondeuse	70-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>cool</i> 56–60° F Decant optional	Blackberries, cranberries, violets Savory, stony, elegant	Drink now through 2030
2020 Bourgogne Rouge “Champs Cadet” Domaine de la Cadette	Pinot Noir	22-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>cool</i> 56–60° F Decant optional	Red fruit, blood oranges, tea Fresh, aromatic, pretty	Drink now

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2020 BOURGOGNE ROUGE

“CHAMPS CADET”

DOMAINE DE LA CADETTE

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HEN YOU TASTE a bottle of red Burgundy made by Valentin Montanet, the first thing you sense is a heightened freshness as well as an unshackled *joie de vivre* that we’ve come to associate more with reds from the Beaujolais than from this often meditative and noble region. Is this because, without any *premier* or *grand cru* Pinot Noir vineyards in his corner of Burgundy, Valentin is unburdened by the Côte d’Or’s pressures of seriousness? Or is it because Valentin’s father, Jean, who founded the domaine in the late ’80s, was mentored in the joyousness of well-executed natural wine by Morgon legend Marcel Lapierre? Maybe it comes down to the terroir and climate around Vézelay, which is cooler than the Côte, and produces Pinot Noir that is, above all, incredibly fresh. Whatever the reason is—and I suspect it’s a combination of these three and more—it makes for a gorgeous, exuberant, and versatile introduction to red Burgundy, evoking red berries, a hint of black tea, and spices. Pair it with roast chicken or Chris Lee’s recipe for fried rabbit for a match made in heaven. —Tom Wolf

\$42.00 PER BOTTLE \$453.60 PER CASE



RIGHT
Vines at Domaine de la Cadette, with Vézelay in the distance.
© Joanie Bonfiglio

COVER
Quenard’s vineyards.

