



RECIPES **ELISE PASCOE**
FOOD STYLED BY **MAREE CAMILLERI**
PHOTOGRAPHY **NICKY GORDON**

A COUNTRY *Christmas* LUNCH

Plan ahead and make life simple for yourself and your family with this refreshingly different take on the traditional Christmas dinner.

This is a very attractive menu for Christmas in the country. With careful planning it can be prepared in stages ensuring you do not need to spend hours in a hot kitchen when everyone else is enjoying themselves. Prepare the spatchcocks to the oven-ready stage the day before, keeping them covered and refrigerated overnight. Do bring to room temperature before roasting. They are excellent cold so you could roast a day ahead.

The rhubarb in the salad is served raw. It must be very finely shaved or it will not be pleasant. Note that rhubarb leaves are poisonous and must not be eaten, even cooked. Some of the salad steps can be made a day ahead. Only the greens and rhubarb must be done just before service.

Make the dessert at least one day ahead, but two is okay too. I used gelatine leaves for setting the dessert because they give a lovely silken texture. They are available at up market delis and supermarkets. I have given the equivalent gelatine granule measure.

Roasted Spatchcock with Orange, Quince and Rosemary

Can be served hot, room temperature or cold

6 x 500 g spatchcock	12 rashers streaky bacon,
Salt and pepper	rinds removed or prosciutto
6 tablespoons quince jelly	Skewers or round,
1 large orange cut into sixths	wooden cocktail picks
6 small sprigs fresh rosemary	1 orange extra
Olive oil for roasting	

Remove the fat from the back of each bird. Wash inside and out under running cold water. Drain in a colander. Pat dry inside and out with paper towels.

Season the cavities well. Put the quince jelly inside each along with a piece of orange and rosemary. Rub all over with oil and season the skin liberally with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Wrap 2 rashers of bacon or prosciutto around each bird, protecting the breast meat in particular. Secure with skewers or cocktail toothpicks.

Line a large roasting pan with foil and spray with canola oil to prevent serious sticking. Sit the birds breast side down in the pan with room between each to allow the oven heat to circulate evenly.

Roast at 200 C for 20 minutes. Turn the birds breast side up reduce the heat to 180 C and cook 30 – 40 minutes longer, until just done. If the leg is loose in its socket, the bird is done. Rest birds in a warm spot for 10 minutes with a sheet of foil on top, but not tucked around them or they will sweat.

When rested, remove the orange and rosemary from the cavities. Lift the birds onto a serving platter. Spoon the fat off the top of the pan juices. If serving hot or warm tip the juices into a saucepan, heat gently and add the juice of an orange. Bring to the boil and cook until syrupy. Adjust the seasoning. If serving the birds cold, tip the juices into a bowl and leave to cool. Refrigerate the birds and juices overnight. Serve; either whole or in halves.

Rocket, Macadamia, Currant and Raw Rhubarb Salad

3 rhubarb stalks	2 bunches rocket
2 small Lebanese cucumbers	Salt flakes and freshly ground
2 tablespoons rock salt	black pepper
1/3 cup currants	4 tablespoon extra virgin
Red wine vinegar	olive oil
200 g macadamias	1 tablespoon freshly squeezed
1 bunch spearmint	lemon juice
(summer mint)	

Shave the rhubarb stalks very finely on the cross, using a mandolin or a very sharp knife. Peel the cucumbers, halve lengthwise and scrape out the seeds using a spoon. Cut across the cucumbers into 1 cm slices. Put the rhubarb, cucumbers and salt into a bowl, mix well and leave for 20 minutes. Rinse in cold water and drain very well. Spin dry or use paper towels.

Bring the currants and just enough vinegar to cover slowly to simmering point. Set aside to cool completely. Drain currants. Roast the macadamias on a sheet tray lined with baking paper in a 180 C oven for 10 – 12 minutes or until crisp but not coloured. Cool and chop coarsely.

Trim the stems of the rocket, wash and spin dry. Pick the mint leaves off the stems. Wisk the seasonings, oil and lemon juice to make a dressing.

Arrange the rocket leaves on the base of a platter. Scatter with salad ingredients over the top and drizzle with the dressing just a few minutes before serving.

With careful planning it can be prepared in stages ensuring you do not need to spend hours in a hot kitchen

Glasses of Raspberry Jelly, Panna Cotta and Berries

To make this easy, make both the jelly and panna cotta 1–2 days before you intend to serve the dessert. I prepared a sink of very cold water for setting both desserts quickly and a warm water bath for keeping the next layer of mixture liquid until I was ready to chill it ready for the next layer. You will need 125 ml of jelly and the same of panna cotta for each layer.

Raspberry Jelly:

750 g raspberries	1½ cups caster sugar
(frozen is more economical)	6 gelatine leaves (2 sachets)

Panna Cotta:

280 ml whole milk	Vanilla to taste
450 ml cream	6 gelatine leaves (2 sachets)
150 g pure icing sugar	

Berries:

6 sprigs spearmint	Castor sugar, for dipping
1 egg white	250 g mixed fresh berries

To make the jelly; defrost the raspberries if frozen. Blend the raspberries in a food processor with 1 cup water. Strain the juice through a very fine sieve, (coffee sieve) without pushing down on the pulp into a measuring jug. Measure the liquid and add enough water to make up to 3 cups. (Use the berries to top breakfast cereal or make an icecream).

Put the sugar and raspberry flavoured water into a saucepan and bring to the boil while stirring until the sugar dissolves. Simmer for 5 minutes.

To make the jelly; soak the gelatine leaves in cold water to cover until softened. Wring the water out of the gelatine by hand and drop into the hot raspberry water. Stir until the gelatine dissolves. Stand the pot in cold water and leave until syrupy. Pour half the mixture into 6 x 250 ml straight sided glasses, stand them on a small tray and refrigerate until the jelly sets.

Now make the panna cotta; put the milk, cream and sugar into a saucepan and heat gently. Soak the gelatine leaves in cold water to cover. When softened, wring the water out by hand and drop into the heating milk mixture. Stir until the gelatine dissolves. Remove from the heat, add the vanilla and stand the pan in a sink of cold water until the mixture is syrupy. Remove from the sink.

When the first layer of jelly is set, very carefully pour 150 ml of panna cotta over the top of the jelly, using a spoon in the glass to break the fall of the panna cotta so it does not disturb the surface of the jelly.

Repeat the layers once more, only adding the next one when the previous one is fully set. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

On the day of serving, choose the best pairs of mint leaves. Beat the egg white with a fork until light and frothy. Pour some sugar onto a plate. Dip the mint leaves into the egg white allowing any excess to run off. Plunge the leaves into the sugar so it adheres on both sides. Dry the leaves on a lightly oiled plate.

To serve; spoon fresh berries on top of the glasses and tuck a crystallised mint sprig into the top of each. ■



The Wine

Fern Gully Rosé

This rosé for our Christmas menu marries perfectly with both the spatchcock and the dessert. A perfect choice for the festive season, the Fern Gully Rosé has a fresh palate, gorgeous pale pink colour and light berry flavours and should be drunk now during the spring and summer months, while it is young and fresh. Made from 50/50 shiraz and cabernet sauvignon, it is low in tannin and has just a hint of sweetness which is balanced with acidity and good length.

For a wine which is grown, hand made and bottled at the Fern Gully estate, this rosé is well priced at \$20 a bottle. Available only (and while stocks last) at Fern Gully Winery:

Open 11am – 5.30pm Weekends and School Holidays, September to May.
63 Princes Highway, Termeil (between Ulladulla and Batemans Bay). Tel: (02) 4457 1124

