



Chapter Five

CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS



Gordon Ramsay Teaches Cooking II: Restaurant Recipes at Home

CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS

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This is bringing cauliflower into the 21st century. Gone is that cauliflower mornay, gone is that gray, boiled cauliflower. This is a welcome return for the humble cauliflower.

Chapter Review

Gordon created this dish for his daughters, who demanded vegetables instead of meat. It works as a stunning dish with great depth of flavor, but it is also satisfying and beautiful enough to stand as a vegetarian main course.

To prep the cauliflower, break off the thick leaves and slice off the stem so that the bottom of cauliflower is flat and stable on the cutting board. This technique is useful for safely cutting through any large-scale wobbly veggies like winter squash. Slicing into thick “steaks” ensures that the cauliflower doesn’t break down into florets while cooking, and slicing into equal sizes allows for even cooking—a rule that works across the board with all veggies and proteins.

Brown the butter in the pan and baste the cauliflower steaks with it just like you would a rib eye. Gordon refers to the browned butter by its French name, “beurre noisette,” which translates to hazelnut butter. The nutty flavor of the milk solids in the gently cooked butter is how it got its name.

Gordon plates this dish so that it evokes a feeling of being in a garden. Chive flowers nestled into the olive pistou visually remind the diner of a garden and bright, fresh lemon transports them through aroma. While plating throughout the class, think not only about how a dish looks, but how presentation can transport people to a different place or mood.

RECIPE TIMELINE



CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS



Prep

- All of the vegetables in this dish can be cleaned and cut up to three days ahead. Cover tightly with plastic wrap or store in airtight plastic containers.
- Green olives discolor within a day when cut unless held in olive oil. The pistou can be made ahead of time and stored in glass jars and refrigerated for up to a month.
- The cauliflower steaks can be marinated in olive oil, harissa, and seasoning a day ahead and stored in ziplock bags.

Ingredient Notes

- Harissa is a North African blend of spices and chilis. Gordon uses the dried version and it further toasts as it hits the pan. It's common to find it in a paste, or you can make your own. It can vary from place to place with some versions using smoked chilis, sun-dried tomatoes, or even rose petals. If you used the paste instead of the powder, spread a light layer over the cauliflower steaks after the initial searing or right before it goes into the oven to prevent it from burning.
- Fresh porcinis ("ceps" in the UK) are sometimes hard to find. Shiitake mushrooms have the same meaty, umami flavor and are more affordable. King trumpet mushrooms (also used in Chapter Two) are another good substitute for their similar size and texture to porcinis and are also more affordable.
- Meyer lemons have a unique perfumed, floral aroma but regular lemons are fine.
- Chive blossoms: research what edible flowers might be growing in your region. Herb flowers like fennel and basil, squash blossoms, and nasturtiums are all common edible flowers.

Dietary Restrictions

- This dish is gluten-free and vegetarian. To make this dish vegan, replace the butter with olive oil.

Charred Cauliflower Steak With Olive Pistou and Porcini Mushrooms

Serves 4 as a main, 8 as an appetizer

Charred Cauliflower

2 medium heads of cauliflower (each should be large enough to produce 2 "steaks")

5½ ounces (or 11 tablespoons) olive oil

4 tablespoons harissa powder

1 lemon for juice and zest

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed

½ cup vegetable stock

Preheat oven to 325°F. Peel the leaves off the cauliflower and cut the stem leaving 1 inch or enough for the florets to stay intact. This will leave the base flat and stable on the cutting board and make it easier to cut into the cauliflower evenly. Wet your chef's knife liberally before cutting the steaks to make the knife slick and nonstick when making contact with the vegetable. Cut 1 inch off the left and right edges of the cauliflower leaving about 2 inches of the center intact. Then slice the remaining portion in half, resulting in two 1-inch steaks from each head of cauliflower. The more even the steaks, the more evenly they will cook.

Drizzle a sheet tray or glass baking pan with 4 ounces (or 8 tablespoons) of olive oil. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons harissa powder and 2 pinches of Maldon salt over the oil. Rub one side of the steaks in the olive oil/harissa mix and pour 1 ounce of olive oil and the remaining harissa powder over the other sides. Finish with another 2 pinches of Maldon salt.

Heat two large cast-iron skillets on medium-high heat with 1 tablespoon of olive oil in each. Once the pans are smoking, place the steaks in the hot pan and let brown on one side for 90 seconds or until the edges begin to char. Turn the steaks over gently, add 2 tablespoons of butter to each pan, melt, and brown to give the steaks a nutty flavor. Baste the steaks with the browned butter. When the butter is frothy, split vegetable stock into the pans and let it come to a boil. Remove from the stovetop and place side by side on the middle rack of the oven. Roast for 8 to 10 minutes. Use a paring knife to test the doneness of the cauliflower. If you feel resistance, continue cooking; if it pushes into the flesh easily, it is finished cooking. Transfer to a platter to rest.

Charred Cauliflower Steak With Olive Pistou and Porcini Mushrooms

Serves 4 as a main, 8 as an appetizer

Olive Pistou

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 navel orange for juice and zest
1 lemon for juice and zest
1 cup Castelvetrano green olives, pitted and quartered
1 cup Niçoise olives or Kalamata olives, pitted and quartered
2 tablespoons flat leaf parsley, rough chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

In a medium bowl mix the quartered olives with olive oil, orange juice, orange zest, lemon juice, lemon zest, and parsley. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Porcini Mushrooms

8 porcini mushrooms
4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
2 shallots
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Zest of 1 lemon
8 mint leaves
3 tablespoons nonpareil capers
Maldon salt or kosher salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Heat a large sauté pan on medium-high heat with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Cut the porcinis in ¼-inch slices lengthwise and move to the side of the cutting board. Cut the shallots in half lengthwise then turn them onto the cut side for stability to thinly slice.

Add the porcinis to the pan and cook for 3 to 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add the shallots and garlic into the pan and continue to cook, stirring occasionally for 5 minutes, or until the shallots and garlic are translucent. Zest lemon into the pan and add the olive pistou. Stir together.

Lower the heat to medium-low. Chiffonade the mint and sprinkle over the mushrooms. Add the capers and stir in to incorporate. Turn off heat and season to taste with more salt and pepper if needed.

Plate + Garnish

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 packs garlic or chive blossoms
1 Meyer lemon for zest and juice

Plate 2 steaks with the cores facing each other. Spoon the olive pistou/mushroom mixture over the steaks. Finish with a drizzle olive oil, lemon zest, and lemon juice and tuck the garlic or chive blossoms into the mixture atop the steaks. Plate cauliflower steaks individually if serving as a main.

CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS

**INGREDIENTS**

6 ounces vodka
1 dash dry vermouth
1 ounce brine from olive jar
4 stuffed green olives

METHOD

1. In a mixing glass, combine vodka, dry vermouth, brine, and olives. Pour into a glass over ice. Either drink on the rocks, or strain into a chilled cocktail glass

Take It Further

- Gordon never wastes a scrap in his kitchen and mentions that the leftover cauliflower can be made into a soup or salad. Try his recipes for cauliflower soup and cauliflower salad on the following pages.
- Gordon uses red harissa in this dish, but you can use any harissa variation. Make green harissa using Gordon's recipe on the following page, and note how it changes the dish.

Beverage Pairing

- Gordon recommends you pair this dish with a dirty martini, a spirituous cocktail of gin (or vodka), vermouth, and olive brine following the recipe on the left.

CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS

CAULIFLOWER SOUP + HAM CHEESE TOASTIE

Additional recipe / Courtesy of Gordonramsayrestaurants.com

Serves 6

Soup

1 head cauliflower
 2¼ cups milk
 1¼ cups chicken stock
 1 sprig thyme
 Salt and pepper for the toastie
 Butter, for spreading and frying
 8 slices white bread
 12 slices Bayonne or Parma ham
 1.4 ounces Montgomery cheddar or other strong traditional cheddar cheese, for the garnish

1. Remove almost all the leaves from the cauliflower and cut it into even-sized pieces, including the stem.
2. Put it in a large saucepan and cover with the milk and stock. Add the thyme and some seasoning and bring to a boil over a medium-high heat. Simmer steadily until the cauliflower is soft.
3. Strain the cauliflower, reserving the cooking liquid.
4. Tip the cauliflower into a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Carefully add the cooking liquid, adjusting the consistency to your preference.
5. Taste and add more salt and pepper as necessary, then pass the soup through a sieve into a saucepan and keep warm until ready to serve.

Toastie

Butter, for spreading and frying
 8 slices white bread
 12 slices Bayonne or Parma ham
 1.4 ounces Montgomery cheddar or other strong traditional cheddar cheese

1. Butter each slice of bread on both sides. Lay 3 slices of the ham on each of 4 pieces of bread. Grate the cheese and sprinkle it evenly over the ham. Sandwich with the remaining bread.
2. Heat some butter in a heavy frying pan and, once melted, lay 1 sandwich in the pan. Cook until golden on each side, pressing gently to help the layers stick together.
3. Remove the toastie from the pan, press gently together once more and keep warm in a low oven while you cook the remaining sandwiches, using extra butter as necessary.

Garnish + Serve

About 2.6 to 3.2 ounces ceps, or 4 chestnut mushrooms
 2 tablespoons butter, for frying

1. Cut the ceps into bite-sized pieces. Melt a knob of butter in a small frying pan and cook the ceps, stirring occasionally, for a few minutes, until browned.
2. Divide the soup between 4 bowls. Top each with a spoonful of the ceps. Cut up the toasties as preferred then put them on base plates or side plates and serve.

CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS

CAULIFLOWER SALAD*Additional recipe / Courtesy of Gordonramsayrestaurants.com**Serves 4***Caramelized Almonds**

7 ounces almonds
4 teaspoons sugar
1 egg white
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon cajun spice mix

1. Mix the almond with sugar, egg white, pinch of salt and cajun spicemix.
2. Put the mixture on a baking tray and into the oven, pre-heated to 180C, for 5 minutes.
3. Mix the almonds again and cook 5 more minutes, then cool before roughly chopping.

Vinaigrette

6¾ ounces olive pomace oil
3½ ounces olive oil
3½ ounces apple cider vinegar
1 garlic clove (blanched 3 times to remove the acidity)
½ shallot
1 tablespoon honey
1 branch of thyme
Couple of black pepper corns and coriander seeds

1. Mix together all the ingredients except the honey.
2. Tightly seal with cling film and let the mixture mature for 3 days at room temperature.
3. After 3 days, pour the vinaigrette through a sieve, and mix the honey in.
4. Using a hand blender, blend together until it emulsifies.

Cauliflower Purée

1 head of shredded cauliflower
3½ ounces (or 7 tablespoons) unsalted butter
3½ ounces milk
Pinch salt
Juice of 1 lemon

1. Put the butter in a large pan and melt slowly without burning.
2. Add the shredded cauliflower, season with salt, mix it well, and cover the pan.
3. Cook the cauliflower for 5 minutes at a low heat, moving the pan constantly so that it doesn't get color.
4. After 5 minutes, take off heat and allow to cool slightly.
5. Put the cooked cauliflower in a blender with lemon juice and blend for 20 minutes or until it becomes very smooth.
6. Taste for seasoning. Add more lemon juice or salt if needed.

CAULIFLOWER STEAK, OLIVES, AND MUSHROOMS

CAULIFLOWER SALAD CONTINUED

*Additional recipe / Courtesy of Gordonramsayrestaurants.com**Serves 4***Salad**

1 head cauliflower

Zest of 2 lemons

3½ tablespoons chopped caramelized
almonds

2 teaspoons chives

2 teaspoons dill

Maldon salt, to taste

Vinaigrette

1. Put the cauliflower purée in the bottom of the serving plate.
2. In a mixing bowl, mix together the shredded cauliflower, chopped chives and dill, lemon zest, and chopped almonds.
3. Season with vinaigrette and Maldon salt, if needed.
4. Serve salad on the top of the purée.
5. Finish the salad with grated Parmesan cheese and few chopped almonds.

GREEN HARISSA PASTE

*Additional recipe / Courtesy of gordonramsayrestaurants.com***Green Harissa Paste**

5.3 ounces (or 10½ tablespoons) deseeded jalapeños

3.5 ounces (or 7 tablespoons) coriander leaves

2.8 ounces or 5½ tablespoons parsley leaves

2 garlic cloves, peeled

1 tablespoon spring onions, chopped

2 teaspoons cumin seeds, toasted

1 tablespoon ground cumin

Zest and juice of 1 lemon

3½ ounces olive oil

3½ ounces grapeseed oil

Food processor / pestle and mortar

1. Either place everything in a food processor and blitz until smooth or finely chop everything by hand and mix together. After, season with salt to taste.