**Hay smoked Mereworth Farm deer with red fruits, vegetables and leaves**

**Ingredients**

**Smoked roe deer**

1 roe deer loin, cut into 4

2 handfuls of hay, dried

2 sprigs of thyme

1 bay leaf

50g of butter

olive oil

**Red cabbage gel and powder**

1 red cabbage, juiced to yield 500g juice (pulp reserved for the red cabbage powder)

6g of gellan gum

50ml of red wine vinegar

50ml of apple juice

1/2 tsp mixed spice

**Sauce**

8 shallots, sliced

8 black peppercorns, crushed

5 juniper berries, crushed

2 sprigs of thyme

1 bay leaf

50ml of red wine vinegar

250ml of port

500ml of red wine

1.5l brown chicken stock

1 tsp oil

**Baby beetroots**

500g of baby beetroot

sea salt

**Macerated blackberries**

1 punnet of blackberries

100ml of water

100g of sugar

25ml of port

1 sprig of thyme

**Pickled beetroots**

500g of Cheltenham beetroot

100ml of white wine

100ml of port

100ml of raspberry vinegar

100g of brown sugar

2 sprigs of thyme

3 bay leaves

**Salsify**

2 sticks of salsify root

100ml of port

125ml of red wine

100ml of chicken stock

thyme

salt

pepper

**To plate**

beetroot leaves

puffed barley

**Method :**

1. To make the red cabbage gel, bring all of the ingredients to the boil in a medium-sized saucepan and allow to set on a tray in the fridge. Once set, blend the jelly into a liquid gel, season and set aside until ready to plate
2. Spread the pulp reserved from juicing the red cabbage onto a mat in a dehydrator. Leave to

dehydrate overnight until crisp, then blitz to form a powder for garnishing

1. Trim the deer loin of any sinew. Place 2 handfuls of dried hay in a deep tray and light with a match. Once burnt out, place the loin on top, cover with cling film and leave in the fridge for minimum of 2 hours
2. Preheat the water bath to 57°C
3. Remove the deer from the fridge and roll the loin in the burnt hay powder. Roll tightly in cling film and cook in the water bath for 20 minutes. Once cooked, remove from the water bath and remove the cling film
4. To make the sauce, caramelise the shallots in the oil in a medium-sized saucepan. When golden, add the pepper, juniper and herbs, then deglaze with the vinegar. Reduce until the pan is almost dry, then add the port and reduce by a third
5. Add the wine, reduce by half, then add the chicken stock and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover with cling film and leave to infuse for a further 20 minutes

After this time, pass through a fine sieve into a clean saucepan. Return to the heat and reduce until a sauce consistency is achieved. Season to taste and set aside

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 4
2. Wash and trim the baby beetroot then season and wrap in a single layer of foil. Bake for 30–45 minutes until tender. Leave to cool slightly and peel
3. For the macerated blackberries, bring the water, sugar, port and thyme to the boil in a saucepan and pour over the blackberries. Reserve
4. For the pickled beetroot, peel the beetroot and slice to a thickness of 2mm. Bring the pickling ingredients to the boil, then remove from the heat and chill. Pour the liquid over the beetroot and place in the fridge to pickle
5. Now prepare the salsify. Add the port, red wine and chicken stock to a saucepan and place over a medium heat with a pinch of thyme. Peel the salsify and poach in the liquid until tender. Remove the salsify and reduce the liquor by half to create the glaze. When ready to serve, pour the glaze over the salsify
6. Just before serving, heat a frying pan over a high heat with the butter and a dash of oil. Once hot, sear the loin on all sides until caramelised
7. Finish the sauce with the a dash of liquor from the blackberries just before serving and heat
8. To plate, slice the deer and give 3 slices per plate. Arrange the beetroot, salsify and pickled beetroot around the deer. Pipe dots of the cabbage gel and arrange pickled blackberries around the plate. Sprinkle the cabbage powder over the top and garnish with the beetroot leaves and puffed brown rice. Serve the warmed sauce on the side