

Welcome to the Cluver Club

The Paul Cluver experience is often described as 'unpretentious', the wines as 'focussed and elegant' and the family as 'warm and charming' – descriptions that all apply equally well to the Reuben Riffel experience – making the match between Paul Cluver Pinot noir with a dish by this magnanimous chef quite natural, and we are pleased to make it the feature of The Cluver Club this July.

Reuben is one of those people that light up the room, first with his presence and then with his food. And if he isn't in the room, his menu inspires. Lunchtime and dinnertime menus change daily. For a seven-day-a-week operation, serving lunch and dinner, that takes some doing.



Franschhoek is Reuben's home town and the place he started his career as chef. Initially, under the guidance of Chef Richard Carsons at Franschhoek Country House and later as head Chef there. Within three years Reuben made it onto the IETA Restaurant Guide's Top 100, then the Top 10 list.

His obvious talent, combined with his success and ambition, translated into numerous job offers – one lured him to Cambridge for two years. After this stint abroad, he returned home town to open 'Reuben's Restaurant & Bar'. Within the first year he was declared Chef- Of-The-Year and his restaurant was declared Restaurant-Of-The-Year.

The quintessential characteristics of this quail recipe works so well with the Paul Cluver Pinot noir 2008 that a visit to this establishment is a must. For those of you unable to get to Reuben's, try this recipe at home, matched with the latest Paul Cluver release of Pinot noir of course.

Thyme-roast quail with prosciutto and red wine lentils

Serves 4

Cooking Time Prep time 20 mins, cook 45 mins

1 carrot, coarsely chopped
1/2 celery stalk, coarsely chopped
1/4 Spanish onion, coarsely chopped
1/4 leek, coarsely chopped
2 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
70gm butter, coarsely chopped
75ml olive oil
6 thin prosciutto slices
1/3 cup thyme sprigs
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
1 lemon, finely grated rind & juice only
4 jumbo quail (about 200gm each)

Red wine lentils

30 ml olive oil
1/2 Spanish onion, finely chopped
1/2 carrot, finely chopped
1/2 celery stalk, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
6 cherry tomatoes, quartered
650ml beef stock
400gm small green lentils
400ml red wine
1 radicchio leaves separated, coarsely torn
1/2 cup coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley

Pinot noir's excellent natural acidity makes it a perfect partner for a diversity of dishes. Chilled slightly (13 - 14°C), it is brilliant with seafood – shellfish, crayfish and game fish. Served at room temperature (17-18°C), it's good with almost anything from grilled beef and game to roasted vegetables. With cheese, especially strong hard cheese, it's a real winner.



1. Process carrot, celery, onion, leek and garlic in a food processor until finely chopped. Heat butter and 25ml olive oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat until foaming, add vegetable mixture and stir occasionally until very soft and sweet (8-10 minutes). Finely chop 2 prosciutto slices, add to pan and sauté until crisp (1-2 minutes), remove from heat, add half the thyme, season to taste and cool completely.

2. Meanwhile, for red wine lentils, heat oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat, add onion, carrot, celery and garlic and stir occasionally until tender (8-10 minutes). Add tomato, stock, lentils and wine, simmer until lentils are just tender (12-15 minutes), then add radicchio and cook until just wilted (2-3 minutes). Season to taste, stir through parsley and keep warm.

3. Preheat oven to 180°C. Combine red wine vinegar, lemon rind and juice, remaining olive oil and remaining thyme in a bowl, season to taste and set aside.

4. Rinse quail inside and out under cold running water, then pat dry with absorbent paper. Season to taste, then stuff each cavity with vegetable mixture, truss legs with kitchen twine and wrap each in a prosciutto slice. Place in a small roasting pan, drizzle with thyme mixture and roast until golden and just cooked through (12-15 minutes), cover with foil and rest for 5 minutes then serve with pan juices and red wine lentils.

Wine: (Paul Cluver Pinot noir 2008)

The essence of a great Pinot noir is the purity of the fruit and structure of the wine. The **2008 Paul Cluver Pinot noir** has this essence. The colour has luminosity, reminiscent of ripe cherries. The nose is a combination of red berry with hints of spice, mushrooms and dark chocolate. The palate is packed with all the flavours detected on the nose - red berry fruit, hints of spice, and a touch of wood. The palate has an alluring, fine, mineral core. 'Very well balanced, structured and poised'. 'As elegant as great Pinot noirs ought to be'.

