

Welcome to the Cluver Club

Sebastian Kai cut his teeth on good food. Having a chef father helped. Although Sebastian didn't initially see food as his career, a shot at studying marketing made him reassess his options – and he was offered a job at the Olympia Café in Kalk Bay.

It was at the Olympia that he learnt the kitchen routine from the bottom before venturing abroad to London where he worked in several top restaurants and was exposed to truly great dishes. He returned home to join the Empire Café, also in Kalk Bay, where he says he found his culinary feet. In 2007, when Caveau opened its second restaurant, the owners were happy to have him join the team under chef Charl Coetzee whom Sebastian credits for fully refining and honing his skills. When Charl left last year to join a game lodge, Sebastian was ready for the top job.

Caveau Restaurant opened in the historic cellars of Heritage Square, Cape Town, in 2004. The passion for quality food and interesting wines has seen the restaurant become a firmly entrenched favourite. The second restaurant is housed within Josephine Mill, a national landmark in Newlands. Between them, the restaurants have won much acclaim and numerous awards, including Diner's Club Awards, American Express Platinum listings, places on the Travel + Leisure Magazine 'Go List 2008' and the Condé Nast 'Top 35 International Night Spots' list. Sebastian was delighted to develop the Beef Fillet with Red Wine Jus and Calves' Liver to complement the **Paul Cluver Cabernet sauvignon**, 'since it combines classic beef flavours with the extra rich and intense flavour of liver, which itself has a 'gamey' character that marries well with the toasty oak and fine tannins in the wine,' he says.



Beef Fillet with Red Wine Jus and Calves' Liver

'Although it involves several kinds of preparation, this is quite a simple recipe and the final result is well worth the effort,' Sebastian says.

Serves 2

400g beef fillet, cut into four medallions
60g English spinach, washed
150 gr butter

160g calves' liver
8 large black mushrooms
6 cocktail tomatoes, halved
50ml brandy
1/2 onion, diced

100g butter
olive oil
oil for cooking
salt
black pepper
brown sugar
pinch of thyme
1 clove garlic

Jus:

1 litre beef stock
500ml Paul Cluver
Cabernet sauvignon

Potato fondant:

2 large potatoes
100g butter
10g thyme
1 tsp Lemon juice
200ml chicken
stock

Garnish:

10 pea shoots
20g chives,
chopped

Method

Red Wine Jus:
Combine stock with the wine in a saucepan over medium heat until reduced by half. Set aside.

Potato fondant:

Preheat oven to 180°C. Peel potatoes and cut into medallion-shaped discs. Braise in pot on medium heat with butter, 50ml chicken stock, lemon juice and thyme for 10mins each side, until browned nicely.

Add remaining stock and braise in roasting tray in oven for 40mins. Once done, fry in pan with some of the butter until crust formed on each side (3 mins a side).

Tomatoes, mushrooms & calves' liver:

Place tomatoes on tray. Splash with olive oil, black pepper and pinch of thyme, then sprinkle with brown sugar. Roast in oven for 12 minutes on 180°C. Wipe mushrooms clean. Place in roasting tray and roast with the garlic clove, olive oil, salt and pepper for 15 mins on 250°C. Salt and pepper calves' livers, then place in saucepan with a splash cooking oil on high heat for 2mins. Turn livers and reduce heat to medium, add diced onions and 50g butter. Add brandy to pan and flambé until flames burn out – be careful of flames! Add red wine jus, roasted tomatoes and roasted mushrooms and 50g butter to pan.

Beef fillet:

Ensure oven is at 180°C. Season with salt and pepper, then pan fry medallions in saucepan on high heat (2 mins each side). Add knob of butter on top and place in oven. Remove when done to desired temperature (medium approximately 3-4 minutes).

Fry spinach in 10g butter until wilted; about 30 seconds.

To Serve:

Divide calves' liver and sauce into two wide bowls. Add spinach straight from pan, then place potato fondant, and beef medallions on plate (one next to fondant, one balancing on top). Sprinkle chives and pea shoots as garnish.

The **Paul Cluver Cabernet Sauvignon** tastes like silk, says winemaker Andries Burger. It is a wine full of rich berry and black plum aromas, hints of mocha, cigar box and cedar wood. Its classic structure was established during 18 months in French oak, nearly half of it new and another year of bottle aging, which produced an impressive smooth palate with smooth tannins underpinning delicious blackberry fruits. The wine achieves a constant four stars in Platter and awards include a top 100 in the SA Trophy Wine show and a Michelangelo gold.

Burger says that while this wine is superb with roasted red meat and game, and that it loves the company of rosemary, thyme and fennel, you can cellar it for another five or six years – or enjoy it now.

