

The Dish

Transatlantic tuck Celebrate Independence Day with a British twist on American classics

GIZZI ERSKINE



For years, Britain's main experience of dirty American food came via the TV. Fortunately, an influx of burgers, soul food, fried chicken and barbecue dishes has more recently journeyed across the Atlantic and reached our tables.

It's food that's attractive to us because it's colourful, simple, affordable and tastes great, but rather than straightforwardly assimilating America's recipes and tastes, the best chefs and restaurateurs over here have made these dishes their own, using quality, local ingredients and British cuts. Tom Adam's Pitt Cue Co, which specialises in "low and slow", smoked southern American barbecue meat, served with sides of 'slaw, and Nuno Mendes's Chiltern Firehouse, with its crab doughnuts and possibly the most vaunted Caesar salad in the country, are great examples of Britain's appropriation of American food. Festivals, such as Manchester and Bristol's Grillstock, which pay homage to the Stateside tradition of big, social barbecues with great hunks of meat, are also taking off.

MEATliquor was one of the first to introduce the American burger trend and, with Independence Day falling on Friday, I've teamed up with Yianni Papoutsis and Scott Collins, who started the business four years ago; their first book comes out in September. America is at the heart of their food, but they inject a British ethos and culture into many of their trademark dishes. Take their roast-beef sundae, which is a mix of British beef and American garbage — fries, mac'n'cheese and chilli — all piled high

For this Independence Day column, we've selected three of the heartiest American dishes ■



Meatloaf

Yianni Papoutsis's meatloaf is an ode to America. You can serve it in a toasted sandwich with Swiss cheese, pickles and mustard.

SERVES: 4

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES

COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

1. Preheat the oven to 180C. Heat the oil in a frying pan and sweat the red pepper, onion, carrot and celery on a low heat until the onions are translucent. Add the garlic and fry for another 2 minutes, then leave to cool in a bowl. Meanwhile, add the eggs, breadcrumbs, Worcestershire sauce and spices to the minced beef, mix well and season with plenty of sea salt. Form the mixture into a loaf shape, place on a greased baking tray and cook in the oven for 30 minutes.

2. Make the glaze by mixing all the ingredients together in a bowl. Spread the mix over the meatloaf using a pastry brush and cook for another 20-30 minutes, until cooked through.

3. Remove from the oven and leave to rest for 10 minutes before carving. Serve with mashed potato and gravy.

- 2 *tbsp* olive oil
- 1 *red* pepper, finely chopped
- 1 *onion*, finely chopped
- 1 *carrot*, finely chopped
- 1 *stick* of celery, finely chopped
- 4 *cloves* of garlic, crushed
- 2 *eggs*
- 100g *breadcrumbs*
- 2 *tbsp* Worcestershire sauce
- 1 *tsp* ground cloves
- 2 *tsp* ground black pepper
- ½ *tsp* cayenne pepper
- ½ *tsp* chilli powder
- 1 *tbsp* chopped parsley, rosemary and thyme
- 1kg *minced* chuck steak
- 1 *tsp* butter, for greasing
- FOR THE GLAZE**
- 1 *tbsp* ketchup
- 1 *tbsp* Dijon mustard
- 1 *tbsp* brown sugar

300g white haricot beans
 1 tbsp olive oil
 2 onions, finely chopped
 1 garlic bulb, halved
 8 pig cheeks, cut into chunks
 250ml white wine
 250ml Boston beer
 1 litre of chicken or beef stock
 2 tbsp soft brown sugar
 1 tsp black treacle
 1 tbsp English mustard
 1 tbsp fennel seeds, toasted
 4 cloves
 A few sprigs of thyme
 Plenty of salt and pepper

CRACKLING GREMOLATA

200g pork skin, roughly chopped
 2 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
 Zest of 1 lemon

RANCH DRESSING

150ml buttermilk
 2 tbsp mayonnaise
 2 tbsp sour cream
 1 tbsp white-wine vinegar
 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
 2 tbsp chives
 ¼ iceberg lettuce
 50g smoked bacon, chopped
 4 cherry tomatoes, halved



Pig-cheek Boston baked beans with crackling gremolata

One of the best American dishes, this is unjustly overlooked in Britain. I've made it with pig cheeks, a Brit favourite, and finished it with an extra porky dusting of crackling gremolata.

SERVES: 6
PREPARATION TIME: 25 MINUTES,
PLUS OVERNIGHT SOAKING
COOKING TIME: 6½ HOURS

1. Soak the beans overnight in plenty of cold water. The following day, preheat the oven to 140C. Drain and rinse the beans, then place in a heavy ovenproof pan or casserole dish and cover with fresh water by about 5cm. Boil for 10-15 minutes, then turn the heat down and simmer for 1 hour until the beans are tender but not completely soft.

2. Heat 1 tbsp of oil, brown the onions and garlic, then set aside.

Fry the pig cheeks until they are nice and brown, then add the garlic, onions, white wine, beer and stock, and bring to the boil. Mix in the brown sugar, black treacle, mustard, toasted fennel seeds, cloves, thyme, salt and black pepper.

3. Place the lid on the dish, then bake in the oven for 3 hours. Remove the lid, drag the pork chunks to the top, then return to the oven and bake for another hour without the lid. Season with salt and pepper. Before serving, break up the pig cheeks.

4. To make the crackling gremolata, heat the oven to 180C and roast the pork skin on a tray for 2½ hours. Remove and leave to cool on one side. In a bowl, mix the parsley and lemon zest, then add the chopped crackling once it is cold.

5. For the ranch dressing, mix together the buttermilk, mayonnaise, sour cream, white-wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, chives and plenty of salt and pepper. Fry the bacon. Pour over a wedge of iceberg lettuce and add the bacon and cherry tomatoes.



I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

KENWOOD MG510 MEAT GRINDER

£100
 (kenwoodworld.com/uk)



For the control freaks who like their meat perfectly minced, this is one of the speediest grinders and has settings for fine, medium and coarse mince

Reuben burger

MEATliquor's cross between a New York Reuben sandwich and a classic burger.

MAKES: 4 BURGERS
PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES

1. Beat together the egg yolks, mustard, vinegar and some seasoning. Trickle in half the vegetable and olive oils, beating slowly until the sauce has thickened. Whisk the second half all in one go, beating hard. Add the remaining ingredients and season with salt and black pepper.

2. For the onions, add the vinegar, water, sugar and salt to a small saucepan and heat until the sugar has dissolved. Pour the liquid over the onion and leave for 25 minutes, then drain and place the onion on the side.

3. Heat 1 tbsp of vegetable oil in a frying pan until it's very hot, add the pastrami slices in batches and fry until crisp on one side, then flip over. Remove and leave to one side.

4. Heat 1 tbsp of vegetable oil in a large frying pan. Form the meat into four patties and season heavily. Fry for 4 minutes on each side. Add the cheese slices to the top of the burger and place a cloche over it to melt the cheese. Toast the bun, squirt on the dressing, and add the lettuce and pickle. Add the pastrami and top bun to the burger for the last minute of cooking, and cover with a cloche or large metal bowl. Put the burger on the salad, top with the bun and extra mustard if desired.

FOR THE RUSSIAN DRESSING

2 egg yolks
 1 tbsp English mustard
 1 tsp white-wine vinegar
 150ml vegetable oil
 100ml olive oil
 2 tbsp ketchup
 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp prepared horseradish sauce
 A good squeeze of lemon juice
 2 tsp chives, finely chopped

FOR THE SOUSED ONIONS

50ml white-wine vinegar
 50ml water
 50g caster sugar
 1 tbsp salt
 1 onion, very thinly sliced

FOR THE BURGER MIX

2 tbsp vegetable oil
 100g thin slices of pastrami
 200g each of chuck steak, feather blade and beef rib, all aged with 20% fat and minced together
 4 slices emmenthal
 4 great-quality white burger buns
 ¼ iceberg lettuce, shredded
 2 dill pickles, sliced into 8 longways (Vadasz Deli's are the best)
 Mustard, according to taste



On the bottle Amid the anguish, Alsations with bite

BOB TYRER



THREE
 OF THE
 BEST

B lundering into family grief is something I've tried to avoid since my death-knock duties as a teenage reporter. But it still happens in the most unpredictable circumstances, even at a *millésime* tasting in Alsace.

Alsation wine wears its Franco-German heritage in its geography — Schlossberg, Altenbourg, Clos des Capucins — and its surnames. Nearly 100 producers were showing their wares this month in Colmar. I tracked down Marcel Deiss, who has a reputation for bloody-mindedly doing things his own way. He was small, grandfatherly and rather shy. His wife did the talking, explaining that their vine varieties are all jumbled together and that their wines express the soil and location rather than the 13 types of grapes they are made from. I also sought out Olivier Humbrecht, the intellectual giant of Alsation wine. He was delivering a nonstop lecture to the admirers at his stall, so I didn't get much out of him.

I moved on to Domaine Weinbach, run by a widow, Colette Faller, and her daughters, Catherine and Laurence. A striking woman poured me a minerally riesling and fell into a hug with a man who'd appeared from behind me. It went on. Long-lost boyfriend, perhaps? Now there were other huggers. Recovering, she apologised and said she was feeling emotional. Was she one of the Faller sisters, I asked. "Yes, I am Catherine... but my sister, she has passed."

I was the fool in the room who didn't know that Laurence Faller, one of France's most talented winemakers, had died last month of a heart attack, aged 47. A big photo of her — a chic blonde — stood among the bottles. Although in distress, Catherine made sure I tasted everything on show, plus two specials from under the table. Weinbachs are expensive, but I'll buy some to remind myself of Laurence's skill and Catherine's courage. The Wine Society, Justerini & Brooks and The Sampler sell them ■



RIESLING CUVÉE SAINTE CATHERINE, DOMAINE WEINBACH 2011

Citrus, yellow plums and steel in one of the cheaper (but still highly impressive) bottlings (£30, *The Wine Society*)



DOMAINE MARCEL DEISS PINOT GRIS 2010

Bloody-mindedness doesn't come cheap either — but it brings exotic hints of ginger and orange peel to this blend, dominated by pinot gris (£20.75, *Lea & Sandeman*)



CAVE DE BEBLENHEIM GRAFENREBEN RIESLING 2011

Given the high Alsation prices, this is good value for a correct, fragrant example with depth and nuance (£10.49, *Waitrose*)