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RESTAURANT + BAR

Island Creek Oysters with Sunchokes

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This is a recipe for cold weather oyster eating. I combine contrasting temperatures, textures and flavors for perfect comfort food...cold, briny lean oysters, with warm, rich creamy sunchoke puree. The addictive chips provide a nice crispiness.

2 egg whites

1 cup kosher salt

72 Island Creek oysters

1 cup sunchoke puree...recipe below

Sunchoke chips...recipe below

2 tablespoons harissa, or other spicy pepper sauce

½ cup coarsely chopped chervil

Put the sunchoke puree in a pot on low heat to heat through.

Whip the egg whites until they have soft peaks. Fold in the salt.

Use the mixture to make 72 small mounds on platters to hold the oysters.

Open the oysters and set them on the mounds. Put half a teaspoon of puree on each oyster and then a small drop of harissa. Garnish with chervil and sunchoke chips. Serve immediately so the puree is warm and the chips don't become soggy.

Sunchoke puree

Yield: about 1 cup

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
¼ cup thinly sliced leek, white only
Kosher salt and pepper
¾ cups peeled and thinly sliced Jerusalem artichokes
3 tablespoons heavy cream
½ teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

Melt the butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the leeks, season with salt and pepper, cover with parchment and cook 5 minutes, or until tender.

Add the Jerusalem artichokes and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the cream, cover again with parchment and cook 10 minutes, or until the artichokes are tender.

Puree in a blender with the lemon juice until very smooth. Adjust seasonings.

Sunchoke chips

¼ pound Jerusalem artichokes
2 cups vegetable frying oil
Kosher salt

Heat the oil in a deep sided pot to 300°F.

Scrub the artichokes and slice paper thin on a mandolin.

Add the artichoke slices and cook 4 to 5 minutes or until golden brown and crisp, stirring occasionally. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

When cool, season with salt.