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WINE ENTHUSIAST

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HOT
NEW
TRENDS IN
SCOTCH

RARE TUNA AND WATERMELON SALAD

WITH ARANITAS (PLANTAIN FRITTERS) AND JALAPEÑO EMULSION

This fresh and lively dish from Alain Ducasse's miX Restaurant, located at the W Resort and Spa on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, is perfect for a light lunch or dinner any time of the year, evoking warm and exotic scenes while winter rages outside.

—MIKE DESIMONE AND JEFF JENSSEN

Prepare the tuna and watermelon: season tuna with salt, pepper and paprika. Drizzle with olive oil. Grill each side for three minutes. Remove. Let stand for 5 minutes. When rested, cut into ¼-inch slices. Seed watermelon and slice into 1 inch by ¼-inch strips. It is important to make the watermelon and tuna slices the same size. Set aside.

Make the julienne salad: seed cucumber and slice into small strips. Slice onion into small strips as well. Quarter tomato, remove seeds and pulp, and slice flesh into strips. Cut avocado into ¼-inch cubes. Place all into a mixing bowl and season with salt, pepper, Sherry vinegar and olive oil. Toss gently. Set aside.

Make the jalapeño emulsion: seed jalapeño peppers and combine

with parsley and rice wine vinegar in a blender or food processor. Add salt and pepper to taste. Slowly drizzle in extra-virgin olive oil. Set aside.

Make the aranitas: peel and grate plantain. Let soak in salted water for 5 minutes. Form into small "spiders" approximately 1 inch each. Deep fry for 2 minutes. Drain and set aside.

To serve: Place 3 or 4 tablespoons of the cucumber salad in the center of a plate. Alternately arrange slices of tuna and watermelon on top of the salad. Drizzle jalapeño emulsion around perimeter of plate. Garnish with 2 aranitas. Serves 4.

For more recipes, visit: winemag.com/foodrecipes

For the Grilled Tuna and Watermelon

- 1 pound sushi-quality tuna (1 inch thick)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 pound watermelon

For the Julienne Salad

- 1 cucumber
- 1 avocado
- 1 red onion
- 1 plum tomato
- 1 teaspoon Sherry vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

For the Jalapeño Emulsion

- 5 jalapeño peppers
- 6 sprigs parsley
- 2 ounces rice wine vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

For the Aranitas

- 1 green plantain
- 1 cup salted water

WINE RECOMMENDATIONS: *The Tuna and Watermelon Salad pairs perfectly with a lightly citric and refreshing Santiago Ruiz 2008 Albariño or a crisp fruit and mineral-driven J. Drouhin 2008 Appellation Chablis.*



From right to left: Alain Ducasse, Sous Chef Javier Carlos Melendez, Pastry Chef Stephen Rangom, miX on the beach Executive Sous Chef Sebastian Rondier, W Retreat & Spa—Vieques Island Executive Chef Dagan Lynn.

miX at the W Resort and Spa, Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

Under the direction of executive chef Dagan Lynn and executive sous chef Sebastien Rondier, Alain Ducasse's miX offers local Caribbean ingredients combined with traditional French technique. Lightly broiled lobster is served in curried basmati rice with coconut milk, and locally caught whole fish with mango and tomato is Chef Rondier's island interpretation of a classic Provençal dish. His training at Louis XV in Monte Carlo shines through in the menu's varied choices. The hotel's specialties can be enjoyed in a variety of settings, including gourmet lunch by the pool, private dinner on the beach, in your room, or a takeaway picnic across the island. Charming and knowledgeable beverage director Raul Gonzalez is happy to make wine pairing suggestions from the restaurant's 177-bottle list. He will also guide you through a fun tour of Puerto Rican rums and rum cocktails.

Although there is plenty to do at the resort, the concierge is happy to organize a Jeep rental complete with picnic basket and beach chairs, umbrella and snorkel equipment. On-site Blackbeard Sports specializes in mountain biking tours and scuba trips (blackbeardsports.com). Leave one evening free for a glass-bottomed canoe paddle across the island's bioluminescent bay—it's one of the few left in the world. Garry Lowe of Vieques Adventure Tours (viequesadventures.com) is on speed dial at the Insider's Desk.

—M.D. & J.J.