

Alpaca by a long neck



Can I interest you in a nice plate of raw alpaca meat? Mmmm, we thought not. How about some moist, tender La Viande carpaccio? Ok, that's two carpaccio entrees...

We're still coming to terms with eating kangaroo meat, (Oh no, not Skippy!) and Steve and Sue Ridout from La Viande were very aware that their concept of preparing and selling meat from those strange and beautiful, long necked animals known as alpaca would have similar resistance.

Food Companion International ran a story following a competition that they ran to find a more palatable culinary name for kangaroo meat (Summer issue 2006, New name cooked up for kangaroo meat) but the recognised need for culling wild kangaroos is a long way from the mostly small, farm-raised alpaca.

They are grown in Australia exclusively for their fine wool but in any herd there will be animals that are unwanted or unsuitable for breeding and growers face the time when they need to be killed.

Steve Ridout, a West Australian, met his wife Sue at an Alpaca Association meeting. They now live at Sue's farm in Moriac, 25km west of Geelong in Victoria.

The Ridouts knew there was widespread acceptance in South America of alpaca meat, and as stud breeders they could see that there would be growing supply as the Australian industry developed.

Ian M. Davidson, chairman of Australian Alpaca Association, says that until now, Australian alpaca farmers have concentrated on breeding for wool and stud sales. He calls this the establishment phase and now believes there is increasing emphasis on production traits as the industry moves towards commerciality. Ultimately, as in their native home of Peru, alpacas will be bred for fleece, meat and skins.

Steve and Sue at first found resistance to the idea, and realised they would

need to just do it before the rest of the industry would be comfortable with it. They found an abattoir and boning room that understood the smaller animals, created a brand name for it and then went looking for a distributor and buyers.

One of Food Companion's Chefs Tables seemed like an ideal way to give the Ridouts the restaurant feedback they needed. So we had an evening at Sydney's Meat & Wine Co. where chef Farzan Contractor prepared the alpaca meat in ways that showed its characteristics and versatility. Key to the courses Farzan assembled was the high moisture content of the meat. He was assisted by assistant Chef Erick Guerrero, a South American with hands-on knowledge of the cuisines that use the alpaca meat.

At 71 per cent water, the meat is traditionally used in casseroles and stews, and Farzan stretched this to grills by using marinades and coatings that kept the moisture in. The meat is pale, and much like soft veal in texture but not as muscled and springy to the touch.

There was enthusiastic and valuable feedback from the chefs present, and a successful outcome for the Ridouts when the Game Farm agreed to distribute the La Viande product. Since the night, the Ridouts have received assistance from RIRDC to create a brochure of the meat cuts that are available. There's a lot of neck on an alpaca!



Meat and Wine chef's Farzan Contractor and Anthony Sahyoun cooking up alpaca ribs at the chef's table

Enjoy the taste sensation!

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"The secret alpaca society" for chefs that represent current innovative culinary choices and flavours from around the world. It was a perfect opportunity to talk about cuts, trends and themes that involve injecting, grilling, smoking and roasting.

the real alpaca

Alpaca is suited to the Australian climate and environment, arguably much more so than the sheep. It is a very efficient browser and grazer, estimated to be 30% more efficient than sheep in feed conversion and does well on native grasses and unimproved pasture. Like its cousin, the camel, it can tolerate drier climates better than most livestock and its soft padded foot produces minimal compression and compaction on Australia's fragile soils.

For these and many other reasons, alpacas have come to known as The Designer Green solution for sustainable farming practices.

what is LaViande™?

Naturally tender is a premium farmed Alpaca. Each and every producer is committed to the upkeep of their land through sustainable farming methods and humane treatment of their animals.

They are proud to raise alpaca that meet the very high quality standards and requirements to be called LaViande™.

The name reaches back to the Alpaca origins combining La (for Latin) and Viande (meat) hence LaViande™ meaning Latin or South American meat.

Herbs and spices are derived from every part of a plant: root, stem, leaf, seed, bark, pods, stamens and fruits. There are no set of rules for accompaniments' but there are some like; **FRESH SAGE, CHILI, GARLIC, FENNEL, LEMON MYRTLE, CORIANDER, PINE NUTS, QUINOA, CINNAMON and PERUVIAN PEPPER** that are delicious served with ALPACA.



Journey menu

LaViande ravioli with a warm oxtail broth and chive oil

•
Shredded LaViande ribs cooked in a apple teriyaki glaze and served inrocket and apple balsamic rice paper rolls

•
LaViande with chimichuri sauce and fresh garden vegetables

•
pisco shots

•
LaViande shanks braised in a warm mushroom and brandy broth

•
LaViande spaghetti - Alpaca engulfed in transperent spaghetti casing with King Brown mushroom consomme, finishes of julienne potato





Char gilled Alpaca sirloin with Bolivian quinoa and chimichurri sauce

To prepare quinoa is to cook it much as you would rice. Just put a cup of the de-coated grain in a saucepan and pour two cups of water over it. Bring the pan to a boil, cover, and turn down the heat to a low simmer. Let it cook for 15 minutes, then remove from heat. Mix sautéed garlic, onions and add parmesan cheese (Optional).

To cook black rice, cook it like risotto. Do not add parmesan cheese as this rice contain high amount of starch.

Peeled and cut sweet

potato into batons, roast them for 9 minutes in the oven. Dust them with cinnamon powder and salt.

Dry tress tomato in the oven at 100 degree Celsius for 2 hrs cut asparagus and blanch in salted water refresh then in iced water.

Preheat the grill or grill pan to very hot and cook the alpaca for 2 minutes on each side for medium-rare or medium. Brush chimichurri on sirloin while it's cooking.

This recipe is kindly provided by Chef Ariel Funes.

Ingredients

- 85g alpaca sirloin
- 20g quinoa
- 40g black rice
- 35g roast sweet potato
- 15g asparagus spears
- 20g confit baby tress tomato
- 7mls chimichurri sauce

Traditional Version

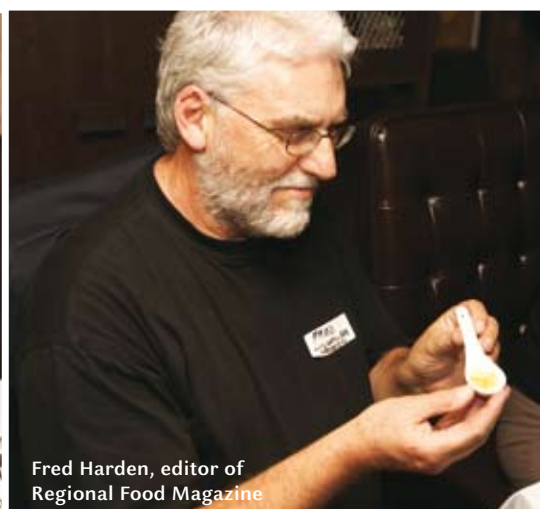
- 62mls olive oil
 - 187g fresh parsley, chopped
 - 30g fresh oregano, chopped
 - 45mls fresh lemon juice
 - 6 large cloves garlic, chopped
 - Salt & freshly ground pepper
- Blend ingredients by hand or use a food processor.



chef John Lanzafame



Head chef of The Tilbury, Craig McFarland



Fred Harden, editor of Regional Food Magazine

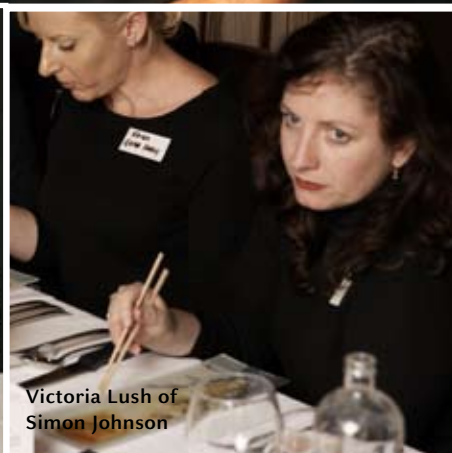


Mel Nathan, editor of Food Companion International Magazine

From the fresh, open farmlands of the ADELAIDE HILLS comes a MEAT so TENDER, so DELICIOUS we gave it its own name LAVIANDE™.



Australian native chef Jean-Paul Bruneteau



Victoria Lush of Simon Johnson



Chef/owner of Alchemy 731, Derek Baker

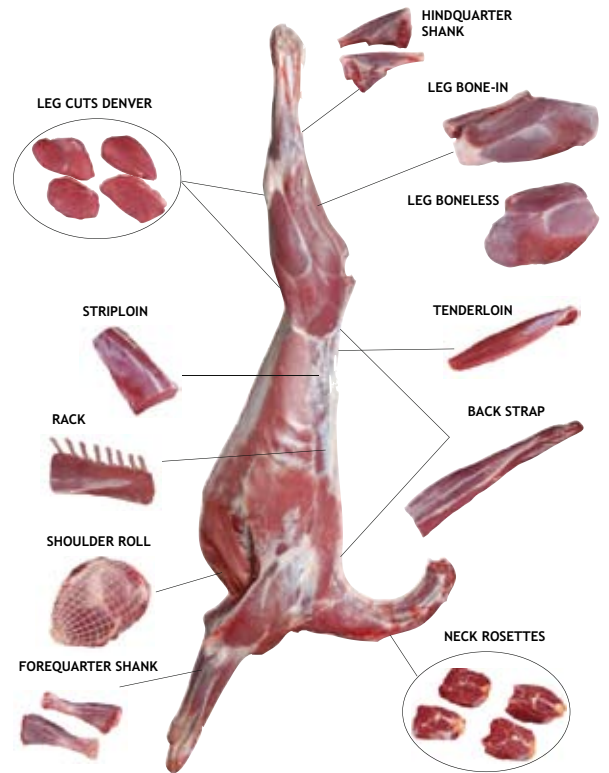


“The chefs table gave me a clear understanding of alpaca and the preparation and ways of cooking of it. Having now cooked and prepared the meat, I would recommend it to others that are looking to put something alternative to a game menu or add to their grill selection of meats. Alpaca is a very versatile product that can be simply prepared as for carpaccio or, if you allow it to marinate, it gives the meat a chance to take on other full flavours, when cooking with the alpaca its best to treat it like deer, kangaroo and lamb making sure you have a medium rare finish for the prime cuts, giving you the full flavour of the product.” **Chef Edward Rose**



“Like the land friendly grazing properties of the animal, I think its a good idea marketing an alternative name to this product. The prime cuts were great, low fat on the finish of palate, smooth almost buttery texture, cooked rare the moisture content was good, flavour was great. I had a small concern with the lingering aftertaste I will put this down to our palate being unfamiliar with the flavour. I did put some with some fennel, some with lemon myrtle, both produced a cleaner end note and palate. I liked the effect! It requires very little seasoning. It has a good natural flavour rather like salt bush lamb, which requires only light seasoning. Overall I would try and sell this in a restaurant if it was commercially available, good luck and keep at it.” **Simon Bryant, exective chef, Hilton Adelaide, Australia**

ALPACA selected meat CUTS chart



- SHOULDER ROLL AL - 030**
The Shoulder is removed from a side by a straight cut between the 5th and 6th ribs. Prepare the shoulder by the removal of bones and sinew. The shank is not included. The Shoulder is rolled and netted or tied.
- FOREQUARTER SHANK AL - 031**
The Foreshank is removed from the forequarter by a cut through the joint of the radius and humerus bones. The shank tip is removed approximately at the level of shank meat on the radius bone.
- NECK ROSETTES AL - 032**
Neck Rosettes are sliced portion of the neck and are cut to a specified thickness.
- MINCE AL - 040**
Mince Alpaca meat is prepared from specified off cuts of boneless trim or primals as specified.
- SAUSAGES AL - 041**
Sausages are prepared to the manufactures formula.
- KIDNEY AL - 045**
Kidney is prepared with the capsule and connective tissue removed.
- LIVER AL - 046**
Liver is prepared with the blood vessels and connective tissue removed.

