

# ST. HELENA FARMERS' MARKET

## **Aaron Meneghelli, Executive Chef of Luxury Estates**

E&J Gallo | Louis M Martini Winery | J. Vineyards & Winery

### **3 Zucchini Preparations**

All these items can come together in a pasta or gnocchi dish allowing the squash puree to act as a sauce on the bottom of the plate. The roasted squash can add into the gnocchi, while the marinated squash is a great garnish adding brightness, sweetness and acidity. Finding squash blossoms or basil leaves, among other fresh garnishes allow you to turn this into a great vegetarian dish.

#### **Equipment**

- Cutting board
- Blender
- Small mixing bowl
- 2 lrg sauté pan
- Induction burner or gas burner
- Mandolin
- Box grater/cheese grate
- Small plate or bowl for the guest food

#### **Ingredients**

- 3 to 5lb of green zucchini
- 6 garlic cloves
- 1 bunch of basil
- Kosher salt as needed
- EVOO champagne or rice wine vinegar

#### **Process:**

- Marinated raw zucchini
- Cleaning 2 zucchini, washing with cold water and wiping dry with a towel.
- Shave the zucchini thinly using a sharp knife or a mandolin to achieve a consistent size.
- Once the zucchini is sliced place in a mixing bowl to season and marinate.
- Season by sprinkling with kosher salt and a small drizzle of the champagne vinegar and gently mix together allowing the salt to be evenly distributed. This is not always an exact amount due to the size of the squash and desired seasoning.
- Taste the squash and you should find a subtle sharpness from the vinegar but looks for the salt level to be present. Not salty, but tasting a bit sweeter, do not season to achieve saltiness.
- Add more vinegar and/or salt as needed and allow to sit in the bowl at room temperature. The salt will pull the natural moisture from the squash and you will end up with a sweet and acidic raw squash ribbon.

## **Squash Puree**

- With 3 clean zucchinis, start by grating the squash through the large holes of the cheese grater.
- Heat a large sauté pan on a high heat and add enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan and allow the oil to heat until it just begins to smoke.
- Sprinkle a little kosher salt over the oil and add in the grated squash. Immediately begin to sauté and continue to move the squash in the pan to prevent any color forming on the zucchini and keep the heat on med/high temperature to encourage a fast cook of the squash.
- Once the squash is tender, add in 3 cloves of garlic that have been passed through a micro-plain. Continue to sauté another 30 sec to 1 min and remove.
- Place the cooked zucchini in a blender immediately and begin to puree on a low speed to incorporate all the squash. This will need a minute to come together, add in 3 T of olive oil and increase the speed on the blender and this will emulsify.
- Check salt level and season accordingly. Once smooth and seasoned, remove from blender and cover with plastic wrap and cool in the refrigerator.

## **Roasted Squash**

- Cut 2 zucchini in half, length wise.
- Cut these halves again length wise so you have 4 quarters from each squash.
- With a sharp knife, cut on a bias in a 1in length, giving the squash a quarter role with each cut. This will allow you to have an obtuse shape and gives you a nice texture difference when eating.
- Once all the squash is done, begin to heat the sauté pan on medium heat and add in olive oil, to lightly coat the pan.
- When the oil is hot, add in the squash and season with salt. Allow the squash to sit in than for 30 seconds at a time to allow a small amount of color to form before shaking the pan to continue the cooking. Add in sliced garlic from 2 cloves and continue to sauté.
- Once the squash is tender, add in torn basil leaves from 1 bunch and check seasoning.
- Remove and let cool.

## **Add to Pasta**

Plate roasted squash together with the gnocchi.

Add the squash puree to the plate.

Garnish with the marinated zucchini ribbons.