

Chefs A' Field

Culinary Adventures That Begin on the Farm



CHILLED OLYMPIA OYSTERS WITH FROZEN RHUBARB MIGNONETTE

BY GREG ATKINSON

INGREDIENTS

- 4 dozen Olympia Oysters – or other fresh, local favorite
- 3/4 cup fresh rhubarb juice
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallots
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper

Storing & Prepping The Oysters

As soon as the oysters come into the kitchen, arrange them in a single layer in a baking dish, taking care to make sure that the oysters are right side up -- that is, the bowl shape should be down and the flat "lid" should be up. Cover them with damp paper towels and put the pan in the refrigerator until serving time. Stored this way, fresh, live oysters are usually good for three days.

For the Rhubarb Mignonette

To make the Rhubarb mignonette, combine the juice, shallots and pepper and put the mixture in a small ice cream maker such as a "Donvier." If no ice cream maker is available, put the mixture in an ice cube tray. If you are using an ice cream maker simply stir or crank until the mixture is uniformly soft-frozen. If you're using an ice cube tray, freeze the mixture undisturbed for half an hour, then stir to break up any crystals. Then freeze again, stirring every fifteen minutes until the mixture is smooth. Stored in the freezer, the mixture will become hard-frozen, but it may be broken up and stirred to make it soft frozen once again.

How to Shuck an Oyster

Carefully shuck the oysters, one at a time. Using a towel to protect your hand from the sharp edges of the shell, hold the oyster firmly in one hand while you insert an oyster knife with the other. Push the knife in a short way and slide it under the top shell to cut the abductor muscle that holds the shell shut. Remove the top shell and slide the knife under the meat of the oyster to free it from the bottom shell.

On the Plate

Serve the shucked oysters, one dozen per serving, on a bed of ice with a spoonful of the mignonette on top of each one. Garnish, if desired with fresh rhubarb leaves.

Kitchen Tip

The Mignonette will keep well in the freezer for several months. You may also substitute other tart, seasonal ingredients, such as cranberries or cherries for the rhubarb.

Courtesy of Chefs A' Field.