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Cooking with L'atelier des Chefs

www.atelierdeschefs.co.uk

A lunchtime cooking class at L'atelier des Chefs brings a whole new dimension to lunch on the run. When invited by Tom McNelle, the MD, to sample one of its 30 minutes courses, I knew immediately that it would be something I'd enjoy. I'm a keen cook and so I did wonder what new tricks I might learn. I wasn't disappointed.

WIGMORE STREET, LONDON

Arriving at L'atelier's school and store in Wigmore Street, given that every minute counts, our group of about twelve quickly donned aprons and were ushered into the kitchen. You know in advance what you're going to cook so it's going to be something that appeals. Honey glazed duck with stir-fried Chinese cabbage and spiced plum sauce was on the menu on my day.

PREP

First off, we gathered around our chef and were shown the first stages of how to prepare the duck and chop like a pro (they make it look so easy) before trying it ourselves. Presented with different equipment, knives that have been sharpened into a millimeter of their lives, it's extraordinary how clumsy you become in alien surroundings. But it doesn't matter as everyone else is the same. The atmosphere is fun and we all have a good laugh.

You do watch the clock but this keeps the tempo up and for a nanna second, you could almost believe that you're working in a restaurant kitchen with chef willing you to get on to the next stage. There's no shouting in this kitchen, I might add. There is help if needed and you can ask questions whilst you're working.

COOK

Once we'd done the prep, it was time to get cooking, watching chef first, frying the duck hot and fast, followed by the cabbage. Back to our prepping tables to plate up, we learnt how to do it restaurant style.

EAT & RUN

And then to the best bit, sitting down and enjoying our handiwork, with a glass of wine, talking to fellow students. The duck was delicious, you'd be delighted to eat it in a restaurant but knowing that you'd cooked it yourself, well, that's even better. Amongst the crowd, there were quite a few who had just about mastered beans on toast and they were thrilled with their efforts and just how easy it is to cook good food.

The recipes are available online as well as videos. Do try this recipe for [duck](#) and watch the video of how to chop garlic L'atelier way.

TAKE AWAY

So what did I take away, apart from a great recipe for duck which takes no time at all to cook? I learnt two new tricks. When preparing chillies, just chop off the stalk and then roll the chilli in your hand with the open end facing downwards. Miraculously all the seeds drop out. All that needs to be done once you've cut it open is to scrape some of the fibres out. Secondly, when preparing garlic, chop it up but it doesn't have to be too fine. Sprinkle some salt over the chopped garlic and then press the flat edge of a knife over it, working in a circular movement. The salt brings the water out of the garlic so you'll quickly have a paste.

COOK EAT & RUN

For the price of a restaurant lunch, Cook, Eat & Run is £15 (exc wine and pudding), this has to be a really good alternative if you want to try something different. Great for giving as presents and quite a few in my class were there for that very reason. Not surprisingly they all saw themselves going back to try another class. I can see myself meeting up with a few friends here for a session or even bringing the GWG team for a bonding session over chopped onions.

This is most definitely a formula that work as L'atelier des Chefs is opening up a new school in St. Paul's early next year.

INFORMATION

L'atelier des Chefs offers a new generation of cookery classes ranging from quick fire courses of thirty minutes to a full four hour masterclass. L'atelier is listed on The Good Web Guide [Cookery Schools Directory](#).

L'atelier des Chefs, 19 Wigmore Street, London W1U 1PH 0207 499 6580

Arabella Dymoka

October 2011

Arabella Dymoka cooks lunch in thirty minutes trying out Cook, Eat & Run.

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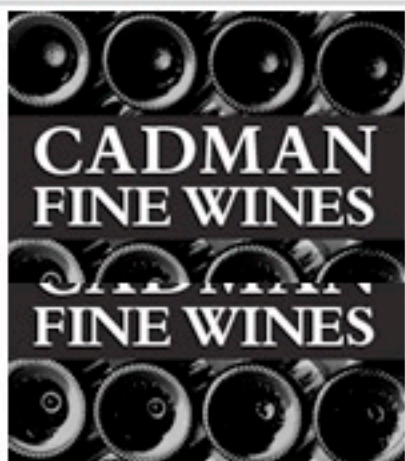


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