RANDOM HOUSE eBOOKS

Wild Food from Land and Sea

Marco Pierre White

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About the Book

Almost as famous for his tempers, celebrity arguments and his fast-living as he is for food, Marco Pierre White is the original celebrity chef. Since he opened Harvey's in 1987, the Canteen in 1992, The Restaurant in the Hyde Park Hotel in 1993, and the Oak Room in Piccadilly in 1997, Marco Pierre White has become the most talked-about cook in Britain. His restaurant empire includes some of London's finest eateries, including the Critereon, Mirabelle, L'Escargot and Quo Vadis. His other books include *The Mirabelle Cookbook* (Ebury, 1999) and *White Heat*.

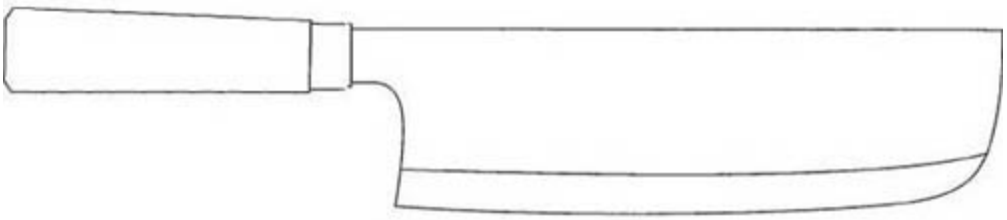
Wild Food from Land and Sea contains over eighty main recipes, plus sauces, vegetables and garnishes, many of which can be made in advance. Marco's innumerable tips on adapting recipes to suit your ingredients, and his secrets of life in a professional kitchen, ensure that even amateurs will be able to serve delicious food with style and entertain with confidence.

About the Author

Marco Pierre White learned his skills as the protégé of Albert Roux at the famous Gavroche restaurant, before opening his own, Harvey's, in Wandsworth, south-west London, in 1987. At 25 years old he became the youngest chef ever to win two Michelin stars for Harvey's. In 1992 he opened The Canteen, and in 1993 his latest venture, The Restaurant in the Hyde Park Hotel, was launched and immediately gained two Michelin stars. He is now the only restaurateur in Britain to have two restaurants with these coveted awards. His previous book, *White Heat*, was published in 1990.

wild food
from land and sea

marco pierre white



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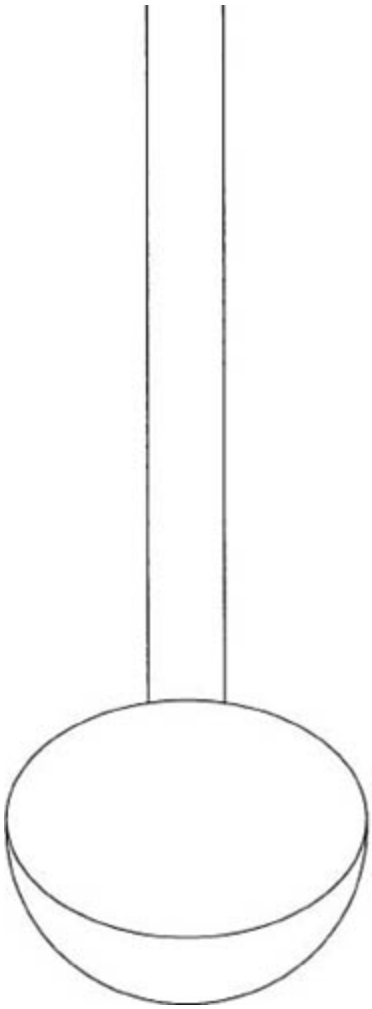
For Mati:
also for my daughter Leticia, my son Luciano, and the grandmother they never knew.

introduction



Six years ago my first cookery book, *White Heat*, was published. Since then I've left one restaurant and have started three more, I've gained three stars and a son, and I think I've calmed down somewhat!

My cooking has probably mellowed too, and this second book of recipes reflects this. It actually amazes me sometimes that people want to buy cookery books written by chefs, because there is such a gulf between what we do in the professional kitchen and what can be done at home. No domestic cook can ever achieve what we can because they lack the hands, the time, the facilities, the finance – so they're starting 50 yards behind. But people still seem to want to know what goes on behind the swing doors of our kitchens, they still want to know our 'secrets'.

What we are giving in our cookery books is a distillation of knowledge. No one buying this or any other chef's book is going to become a great cook overnight. They need to learn the craft of cooking, the basic essentials, before they can start to be really creative. Once that foundation has been established, then they can start to build on it. There's nothing really all that new in cooking – you can't reinvent the wheel, after all – but once you know your onions, so to speak, you can create away to your heart's content. It's enlightening to look back at some of my early menus at Harvey's, for instance; there are some very simple combinations there, classics, which I obviously relied on while I was perfecting my craft.

What someone buying this book will get, though, are a few of the ideas and concepts I have learned, created, borrowed or adapted during those years of acquiring

knowledge. There are the old favourites here, which appear in almost every cookery book – the stocks without which a sauce would not taste right, and the sauces which are the making of any dish, whether simple or elaborate. There are also some more creative ideas, combinations which have worked well for me, and which I hope will do the same for you.

People should use recipes as a guideline only (which I'm sure most do anyway). Timings can vary considerably, depending on ovens, pans, cuts of meat or whatever. The way I present things – with a cornucopia of garnishes – may not be so easy in the domestic kitchen, but I'm only recording what we do. If you want to do something different, you are of course perfectly free to do so (which is why I've got a whole section of basic recipes which, in many cases, are virtually interchangeable). Two or three garnishes may be putting you under too much pressure, so cut it down to one. So long as the main element of the dish – the meat or fish – is perfectly cooked, it should all work. For instance, you might like to roast your normal cut of beef in your usual way, but accompany it with a wonderful red wine sauce from the book instead of a gravy. If it is easier for you to poach a whole salmon instead of cutting it into escalopes or steaks, do so; served with my hollandaise, nothing could be more delicious. By making a mayonnaise to accompany a crab, and doing that well, you're already on the right road.

You could forget all the extraneous detail in individual recipes, and just serve a piece of perfectly cooked red mullet with a sauce vierge. You don't even have to take the fish off the bone, but could grill it whole on the barbecue and serve a pot of the sauce at the side. It's a case of creative thinking, and by taking it slowly, adapting and borrowing from individual recipes, you'll get lots of ideas,

lots of practice, and will, I hope, find it all interesting and enlightening.

None of the recipes here are, in essence, very difficult. Very few restaurant recipes are, really. What makes restaurant dishes look impressive, and makes some domestic cooks think they're beyond their scope, is what we do with them, how we present them, and how we put it all together in different concepts and combinations. One element in the book may help you in this respect. Many of the basic recipes – for sauces or for accompanying vegetables or garnishes – can be made in advance and chilled or frozen. With those out of the way, so to speak, you can then concentrate on the parts of the dish that need to be achieved at the last minute. Similarly, I've presented a few recipes as we would approach them in the restaurant kitchen, with instructions on how to cook a dish for one person only. This has a sort of dual purpose: there are a lot of single people out there who are put off by recipes for four or six; and I also think it highlights what is actually happening behind those swing doors. As I said, I can be grilling a perfect piece of fish, while someone else is doing the potatoes, yet another the sauce and the garnish. At home this could be less easy, but it's not entirely insurmountable. And to serve for more than one, simply multiply the quantities.

In France, because of the different food ethos or culture, the great chefs can get away with offering a simple roast chicken, grilled sea bream with a red wine sauce, or salmon with a sorrel sauce. That cutting right through to the essentials is something I'd like to do as well, but nine out of ten of my customers wouldn't understand it. There is a different mentality in Britain, and thus I have to give them more to look at on the plate, and more to actually eat. Because gastronomy is an industry in France, French chefs

can present food much more simply than we can here. I'd prefer not to serve anything with my salmon and tapenade, for instance, but I'm in a service industry and, to a certain extent, what the customer wants and expects, I have to respect. Chefs should not really be telling people how to eat. We've got to compromise to be commercial.

A young female food writer recently asked why chefs couldn't cook a nice plain piece of grilled fish. Well, we can and we do, but we have to dress it up for our customers. No one would be happy to pay up to £60 per head for something that could easily be cooked at home. People come to restaurants like mine for precisely the foods and dishes they can't easily get in their local shops, or are reluctant to cook themselves – like lobster, langoustines, foie gras. There's absolutely nothing wrong with a nice piece of grilled fish, but most diners want something more exciting when they're out to have a good time.

That's what I dislike about food critics, whether in magazines, newspapers or food guides, this lack of true insight into what we do, their blinkered attitude. Very few of them have undergone the long, exhaustive and exhausting years of training we have, yet they feel licensed to pontificate about restaurants, food, chefs and their cooking, sometimes destroying a hard-won reputation overnight. Far too often their reviews reveal to us chefs just how little they actually know about food.

There are only a handful of critics whose opinions I respect – they have been around a long time, they have eaten in enough establishments, and are good cooks themselves. But sadly there are many more who lack style (would you come to a two-star restaurant wearing a cricket sweater, or bicycle clips?), who lack knowledge (one revered critic's last job was on the sports pages!), who are envious of

others' success, and who are therefore lacking considerably in good judgement. I think it totally irrelevant to criticise the decor of a restaurant – all such things are personal, and what does it matter anyway? – or to elaborate for half the review on the designer clothing worn by the restaurant's clientele, male and female. Eating out can be an all-round experience, encompassing surroundings and fellow eaters, but it's the food that matters ultimately. When they home in on all these other things, it really makes me wonder if they can write at all about food. And in all honesty, I don't think someone who runs sausage-cooking competitions in a newspaper should be allowed within a mile of a top-class restaurant …

And their methods of judging chefs and restaurants are, I think, little short of immoral on occasion. A top chef can be hauled over the coals because of one less than totally successful dish, because of, say, a wait of a little longer than expected, or for cold bread. Nick Faldo doesn't hit the green every time, Bjorn Borg didn't serve an ace every service game, Sebastian Coe didn't win gold every time he ran, so we are allowed to get it wrong every now and again as well. No top chef is ever going to serve bad food, and it certainly could never be so bad that it's worthy of total condemnation. I have to admit that I think food critics in Britain should not, on the whole, be taken seriously.

The Guide Michelin, on the other hand, judges you entirely on what you put on the plate and on the service. They don't criticise anybody, they don't make facetious comments, they don't run people down, they don't tell people how to run their businesses, so it's a guide in the true meaning of the word. When I had long hair, when I was renowned for asking people to leave, when I had a bad press, Michelin were never influenced by that. (Most of my reputation is a product of exaggeration and ignorance anyway.)

I honestly think the most rewarding thing in my career has been the support I've had from Michelin. The French guide has been published every year since 1900; the British one has existed for much less long, but it's now the guide to the best restaurants and hotels in the country. Its ratings are regarded as the most objective and impartial, and its judgements are awaited in January every year with bated breath by all of us in the restaurant world.

The Michelin good food stars are awarded as follows:

A Very good restaurant in its category	*
Excellent cooking, worth a detour	**
Exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey	***

The other amenities – such as decor etc – are measured separately, with the crossed spoon and fork symbol, and range from 'plain but good' with one symbol, to 'luxury' with five.

Michelin make their awards on the basis of reports from a team of full-time inspectors, as well as letters from the public. The inspectors are recruited from the hotel and restaurant industry, and are highly knowledgeable about every aspect of management, as well as how every classic dish should be prepared. How many food critics can boast that sort of background, and that sort of expertise?

Every listed restaurant is rechecked annually, starred ones more often, and we never know when an inspector will call. He (or she) reserves a table like any member of the public, without revealing his purpose until after the bill is paid. He then explains who he is and asks to see the kitchen and cellar. He will report on all the things that any discriminating customer would look for – the quality of the

food, the service, the ambience, the inventiveness of the dishes, the range of the wine list.

At the top level, promotions and demotions are very carefully considered – particularly demotions, since Michelin are well aware of the effect the removal of stars can have on a restaurant's business. I wish food critics would think similarly before letting fly with their unconsidered brickbats.

Many food critics in Britain are actually critical of Michelin. Maybe they object to a foreign tyre company wielding so much power over the restaurant business here, or to its perhaps old-fashioned insistence on continuity and maintaining the highest possible standards. This necessarily precludes them from judging or responding to the new fashions and trends of the moment – the latest restaurant to serve bastardised Italian or sagebrush chicken with sun-dried tomatillos…. I actually think that the food critics here are jealous of Michelin, of the credibility Michelin gets from chefs. The Guide Michelin is reliable, objective, and in my opinion has done more for gastronomy in this country than anything or anybody else.

I firmly believe that if it weren't for Michelin I wouldn't be where I am today, but other people's support has been vital as well. The food business is essentially a small one, we all know each other – there is a fraternity of chefs, if you like – and we all influence each other as well as compete with each other. Some become closer in friendship, some don't, but I've included here recipes given by those who are and have been closest to me. These are the people who have encouraged me, inspired me, contributed to my style and way of cooking, who have helped me and defended me over the years. They have shared in what I have achieved, and so I'm sharing their talents with you.

As they helped me in the past, so I’m now in the lucky position of being able to help others. A lot of people have accused me of an unlikely number of sins, including that I’m bad for the catering industry, but I am contributing, not least in furthering the cause of top-class English cooking. My kitchens are packed with potential talent, young commis and sous chefs whom I train, and who will one day take over their own restaurants and carry the message even further. It’s very exciting for me to think of my kitchens as a ‘nursery’ for the future, just as those of chefs like Albert Roux or Raymond Blanc have been.

That’s perhaps how one should look at this book too. If even one of my recipes inspires you to greater things, then my effort has paid off, and the price you paid for the book was worth it!

MARCO PIERRE WHITE

starter dishes

vichyssoise of oyster, caviar chantilly

The fish stock can be made in advance and frozen, and the soup a few hours in advance.

Cook and add the oysters at the last moment.

portions
00 g (14 oz) leeks, finely sliced
75 g (6 oz) onions, finely sliced
0 g (2 oz) unsalted butter
75 g (6 oz) potatoes, sliced paper thin
50 ml (15 fl oz) Fish Stock (basic 7)
50 ml (15 fl oz) water
00 ml (3 1/2 fl oz) double cream
alt and freshly ground white pepper

arnishes
2 oysters
tablespoons *oscietra* caviar
tablespoons whipped double cream
tablespoons chopped chives

Sweat together the leek and onion in the butter in a large pan without colouring. Add the potatoes.

Meanwhile bring the fish stock and water up to the boil. Add to the leek and onion pan, and cook rapidly for 8 minutes.

Add the cream and cook for a further 2 minutes.

Place in a processor or blender and purée, then pass through a fine sieve. Season to taste.

Open the oysters, saving their juices. Pass the juices through a fine sieve into a small pan and poach the oysters in this for 30 seconds on each side. Do not boil.

Mix the caviar into the whipped cream.

Place three oysters in the bottom of each warm soup bowl, then cover with hot soup.

Sprinkle with chives, and then place a quenelle of Chantilly cream (the cream and caviar) on top.

soup of red mullet with saffron

Make the fish stock well in advance and freeze.

Start the soup the day before, by marinating the mullet.

portions
0 red mullet
00 ml (3 1/2 fl oz) olive oil
pinch saffron strands
pinch cayenne pepper
onion
/2 head of celery
/2 fennel bulb
/2 head of garlic
50 g (9 oz) fresh tomatoes
bout 450 g (1 lb) tomato purée
75 ml (6 fl oz) each of Pernod and Cognac
litres (3 1/2 pints) Fish Stock (basic 7)
/2 large potato, thinly sliced

arnishes
ouille 2 (basic 25)
ruyère cheese, grated
mall crisp croûtons

Scale the mullet, and cut off the heads. Remove and discard the innards, plus the gills and eyes. Wash all the pieces thoroughly in cold water. Cut the bodies up into three equal-sized pieces. Place, heads and all, in a dish.

Mix the oil with the saffron and cayenne, and add to the fish. Mix and leave to marinate in a cold place for 24 hours.

Peel and trim the onion, celery, fennel and garlic as appropriate. Cut into small dice (*mirepoix*). Dice the tomatoes.

Roast the vegetable *mirepoix* in a large saucepan in a little of the marinade oil until golden. Add the tomato dice and when the tomato liquid has disappeared, add the tomato purée. Cook slowly for about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, remove the mullet pieces from their marinade and pan-fry separately until golden brown, a few minutes on each side.

Pour the Pernod and Cognac into the *mirepoix* pan and set alight. Reduce over heat until the alcohol has cooked out, then add the mullet.

Cover the fish and vegetables with the fish stock, adding some water if necessary. Add the potato and simmer for 1 1/2 hours.

Blend in a food processor, bones and all, then pass through a fine sieve – up to six times for the finest texture.

Serve in hot soup plates, with bowls of rouille, grated Gruyère and croûtons offered separately.

pistou de saint-jacques

The soup base – the vegetables and stock, etc – can be prepared in advance, and reheated briefly at the last moment.

The pistou can be made in advance and chilled.

Do not add the pistou or scallops until the very end.

portions
0 g (1 1/4 oz) each of prepared and finely diced onion, carrot, celeriac, turnip, swede, potato, green beans and courgette
live oil
litre (1 3/4 pints) Clam, Mussel and Fish Stock (basic 8)
alt and freshly ground white pepper

arnishes
scallops, shelled and cleaned
ourt Bouillon to cover (basic 10)
00 g (4 oz) spaghetti
tablespoons Pistou (basic 35)

Sweat the onion in a little olive oil in a saucepan then add the carrot and celeriac. After a few minutes add the turnip, swede and potato, and sweat for a few minutes more. Add the beans and courgettes at the very end.

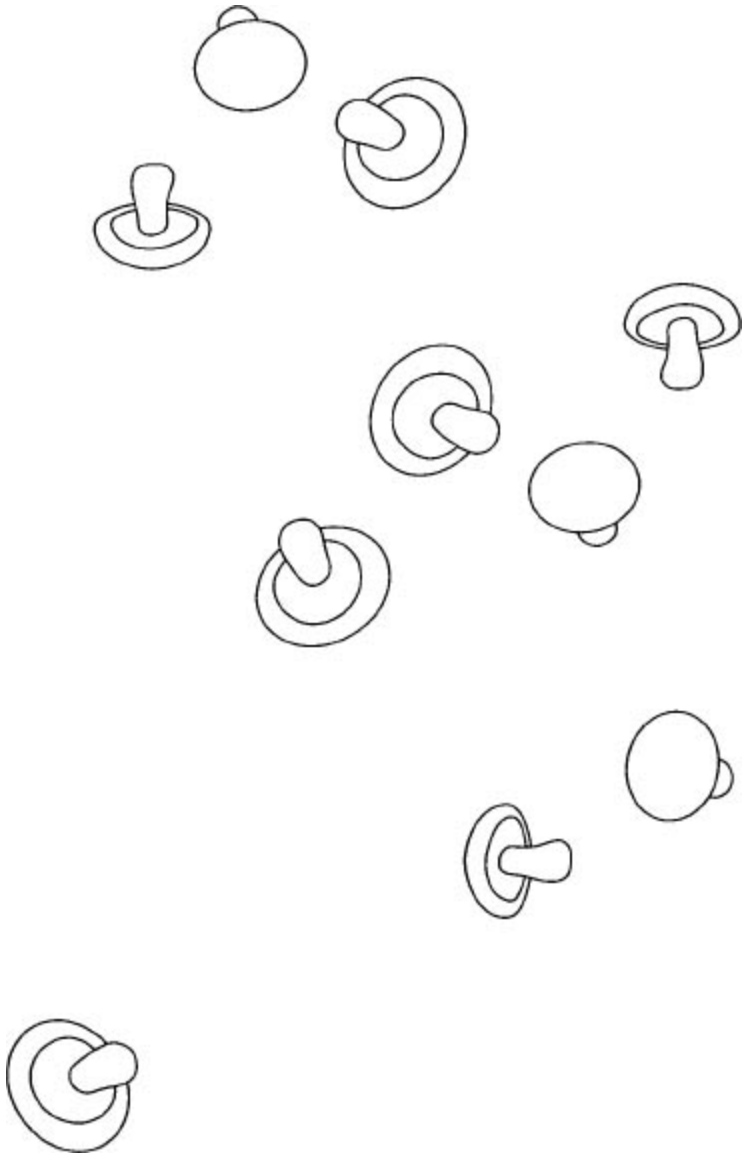
Bring the stock to the boil in a separate pan and pour over the vegetables. Bring back to the boil, then remove from

the heat and season to taste.

Meanwhile, wash the scallops briefly and pat dry. Cut the nuggets of white meat into three slices horizontally. Poach for 1 minute only in the court bouillon with a little olive oil added. Drain.

Break the spaghetti into 2.5 cm (1 in) lengths, and blanch separately in boiling salted water. Drain well and add to the vegetable soup.

To finish, divide the hot soup between the hot soup plates, and add 1 tablespoon pistou to each. Stir to emulsify, then pop three slices of poached scallop into each.



cappuccino of mushrooms with crayfish tails and chervil

The soup can be made a day in advance.

portions
kg (2 1/4 lb) very white mushrooms, finely sliced
onion, sliced
white of leek, sliced
0 g (3/4 oz) unsalted butter
00 g (4 oz) potatoes, sliced
litre (1 3/4 pints) Double Chicken Stock (basic 2)
litre (1 3/4 pints) double cream

arnishes
8 crayfish tails
resh chervil leaves

Sweat the mushrooms, onion and leek in the butter until most of the moisture in the vegetables has evaporated.

In a separate pan, simmer the potatoes in the chicken stock and cream until tender.

Bring the potatoes to the boil, pour over the mushrooms, and cook gently together for 10 minutes. Liquidise the whole lot and pass through a fine sieve.

Steam the crayfish tails for 1 minute. Place three in the bottom of each warmed soup plate.