

Clancy that!

Private chef Clancy Atkinson shares his philosophy on food and his passion for charitable work.

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Clancy Atkinson is a Sydney-based chef and food writer whose talents have served many prestigious companies and individuals, and whose recipes have featured in publications such as *Gourmet Traveller*, the *Daily Telegraph* and *InStyle* magazine. His style of cooking comes from the desire to eat "organically, ethically and seasonally."

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His passions go beyond the culinary world and encompass an unwavering support of small businesses and charities. This year, he will design and cook the menu

for a private charity dinner that has raised \$11,000 towards cancer research, in addition to sponsoring a cocktail party raising funds for The Hunger Project, an organisation campaigning to end hunger and poverty. He says that being involved with and supporting a charity is "an amazing feeling."

Clancy's work history is impressive. He's trained with renowned chefs and cooked at events and parties held by luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Swarovski and Giorgio Armani. He moved from Brisbane to Sydney while training under "one of Australia's greatest chefs" Russell Armstrong. Currently, he's the food columnist for the city's leading gay lifestyle publication, *SX* magazine, and a fly-in resident

chef at the Woodward Bay private villa on the Great Barrier Reef. He also recently worked as the private chef of award-winning actor Gerard Butler, whose favourite meal quickly became Clancy's miso-glazed sashimi tuna with a salad of steamed greens and ponzu dressing; a "tasty, healthy dinner ready in five minutes."

The chef can cater for dining and canapé events for up to twenty-five and one hundred guests, respectively. His service is "relaxed, professional and personable," and features dishes that are produce-driven, yet sophisticated and inspired by various global influences. Clancy works very closely with his clients and so the process of creating new dishes is often a collaborative





BALSAMIC-GLAZED PERSIAN FIG, GORGONZOLA CREAM AND PROSCIUTTO CRISP FILO

Makes 40

Ingredients

For balsamic-glazed

Persian fig:

- 40 dried Persian figs
- 2 cups balsamic vinegar
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 cup water

For crisp filo:

- 16 sheets filo pastry

- 200g melted butter

- Sea salt

For prosciutto:

- 20 thin slices of prosciutto cut in half, rolled into rosettes

For gorgonzola cream:

- 200g gorgonzola cheese
- 200ml pouring cream

Method

For balsamic-glazed Persian fig:

1. Place all ingredients in a saucepan, bring to the boil then reduce to a simmer. Place the lid on and slowly simmer for three hours.
2. Allow figs to cool in the syrup, then transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate until ready to use. The longer they macerate, the better the flavour. The figs can be made in bulk.

For crisp filo:

1. Preheat oven to 160°C. Spray a mini-muffin tin with non-stick spray. Take a filo sheet and lay flat on a chopping board. Brush filo with melted butter then place another sheet of filo on top of the first sheet. Repeat process until 4 sheets of filo are layered. Season with sea salt. Using a sharp knife cut the filo into squares to fit inside the hole of the muffin tin. Repeat process three more times.
2. Push the filo squares into the muffin tin holes and place in oven. Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until they are crisp and golden brown. Leave to cool. (Filo tarts can be made two days ahead and stored in an airtight container)

For gorgonzola cream:

1. Process gorgonzola in a food processor until smooth. Add cream and process until very smooth and the mixture forms medium peaks. Transfer mixture to a piping bag and refrigerate until required.

To assemble tart:

1. Pipe gorgonzola cream into filo tarts, top each tart with a glazed fig and a rosette of prosciutto. Garnish with a micro herb or chive baton and serve.

Rapidfire

What's the most unique thing you've ever eaten?

A traditional Timorese goat stew called 'Tukil'. The stew is a long-slow braise of goat shoulder, tripe and calves liver that is flavoured with lemongrass, ginger, chilli, garlic, fresh turmeric and tamarind.

How do you spend your time when you're not cooking?

Travel is a huge part of my life. I love going on little adventures whenever I have a few days off - whether it be a daytrip to Melbourne to check out the café scene or a weekend exploring the wineries of the Adelaide Hills.

What is the ingredient you couldn't live without?

Extra virgin olive oil. Along with salt, I use it virtually every single day. I love smelling and tasting different olive oils; it's incredible the variety and range of flavours that are available.

one, something he finds "fun and exciting." What's more, his clients are guaranteed to personally see Clancy cooking at their events, a special feature of his service.

Clancy's philosophy on cooking is one adopted by his personal hero Nigel Slater, who said: "The simple act of making someone something to eat, even a bowl of soup or a loaf of bread, has a many-layered meaning. It suggests an act of protection and caring, of generosity and intimacy. It is, in itself, a sign of respect."

Visit luxehouses.com.au to book Clancy for an event. 