Main dishes / France

Tournedos Rossini

The composer's namesake extravagance — a thick filet mignon seared to a rosy heart, set on a butter-fried crouton and crowned with a slab of seared foie gras, the whole gilded with shaved black truffle and a glossy Madeira demi-glace that pulls every luxury into one bite.

Time 50 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Filet mignon (two 4 cm thick tournedos, ~180 g each, tied)
- ☐ 60 parts Foie gras (two ~60 g slices, 1.5 cm thick, well chilled)
- ☐ 30 parts White bread (two crustless rounds cut to the filet's width)
- ☐ 18 parts Clarified butter (for the crouton and the sear)
- ☐ 22 parts Dry Madeira (Sercial or Verdelho)
- ☐ 35 parts Veal demi-glace (or rich brown veal stock, reduced)
- ☐ 6 parts Shallot (finely minced)
- ☐ 8 parts Black truffle (fresh, half shaved / half minced into sauce)
- ☐ 12 parts Cold unsalted butter (to mount the sauce)
- ☐ 1 parts Fleur de sel & freshly cracked black pepper

Let's make it.

01 Cut the bread into rounds the exact width of the tournedos so the meat sits flush. Heat clarified butter in a skillet over medium heat and fry the rounds, turning once, until evenly golden and crisp on both faces but still tender at the centre, 1-2 minutes a side. Drain on paper and keep warm — these crisp pedestals lift the meat off its juices so the bottom never goes soggy.

02 Pat the tournedos bone-dry and season well with salt and pepper. In a heavy skillet, heat a film of clarified butter until shimmering. Sear the filets undisturbed until a deep crust forms, about 3 minutes, then turn and sear the second face, basting, to a rosy medium-rare (52°C / 125°F internal), 3-4 minutes more. Transfer to a plate, tent loosely, and rest while you build the sauce in the same pan. Leave the fond behind.

03 Score the chilled foie gras slices lightly in a crosshatch and season with salt and pepper. Wipe the skillet of all but a whisper of fat and set over medium-high heat. Sear the foie straight from the fridge, 45-60 seconds per side, until a caramel crust forms but the centre stays just-set and meltingly soft. Lift it out the instant it yields — foie gras renders to nothing if it lingers. Pour off the rendered fat, reserving it, and keep the pan for the sauce.

04 Lower the heat to medium and sweat the minced shallot in a teaspoon of the reserved foie fat until soft and translucent, about 1 minute. Pour in the Madeira to deglaze, scraping the fond loose, and reduce until syrupy and nearly dry, 2–3 minutes. Add the demi-glace and the minced portion of the truffle and simmer until the sauce coats the back of a spoon and turns deep and glossy, 3–4 minutes.

05 Off the heat, swirl the cold butter into the sauce a cube at a time until it turns silky and emulsified — never let it boil or it will break. Taste and adjust salt. Set each foie-crowned filet on its crouton, spoon the glossy Madeira sauce over and around, shower with the remaining shaved truffle, and finish with a pinch of fleur de sel. Serve at once, while the foie is still warm and yielding.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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