

Insects Innovation in Gastronomy

COURSE SUPPORT



Module 1 Unit 4:

Insects in European Cuisine:

Creating a Complete European Menu with Insect-Based Ingredients

Disclaimer:

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Module 1: Introduction to Edible Insects in Gastronomy

Unit 4: Insects in European Cuisine: Creating a Complete European Menu with Insect-Based Ingredients

In this unit, we will take a practical and hands-on approach to one of the most sustainable and innovative trends in modern gastronomy: cooking with insect-based ingredients.

Together, we will create a complete European menu, featuring a starter, main course, and dessert, all incorporating these cutting-edge ingredients. Through this experience, you will discover how to adapt familiar European recipes using edible insects, making them both nutritious and environmentally friendly.

Meet the Chefs

Three culinary experts will guide us through this journey:

- **Antonio**, a chef with over 25 years of experience and an instructor in culinary arts.
- **Gloria Badía**, a professional trainer for 10 years with nearly 20 years of experience in the HORECA (hotel, restaurant, and catering) industry.
- **Santiago Sánchez**, a chef for 14 years and professor at Maude.

Their mission is to introduce us to these new ingredients and demonstrate how they can be seamlessly integrated into European cuisine.

Exploring Edible Insects in Cooking

To begin, the chefs introduce some of the key edible insects used in cooking:

- **Crickets** in three forms: powdered, dehydrated, and smoked.
- **Mealworms** (*Tenebrio molitor*), commonly known as flour worms.

Each of these ingredients offers unique textures and flavors, making them ideal for modern and traditional European dishes.

Now, let's get cooking!

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Starter 1: Crispy Cricket Tortillitas (Inspired by Spanish Cuisine)

In Spain, *tortillitas* are small, crispy fritters typically made with shrimp or vegetables. This version integrates crickets as a protein-rich and flavorful alternative.

Ingredients:

- Wheat flour
- Chickpea flour
- Water
- Salt
- Fresh parsley (chopped)
- Dehydrated crickets (whole or chopped)
- Olive oil

Preparation:

1. Mix wheat flour and chickpea flour in a bowl.
2. Add water gradually while stirring to create a smooth batter.
3. Season with salt and incorporate chopped fresh parsley.
4. Add dehydrated crickets, ensuring they are evenly distributed in the batter.
5. Heat olive oil in a frying pan.
6. Spoon small amounts of the batter into the pan, frying until golden and crispy on both sides.
7. Drain excess oil on paper towels and serve hot.

This dish is a great example of how traditional European street food can be innovated with insect-based ingredients.

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Main Course 1: Smoked Cricket Salmon Tartare (Northern Europe)

A refined and modern dish, tartare is a traditional preparation in Nordic countries and other regions of Northern Europe, where fresh fish is commonly served raw and lightly seasoned. This version adds an innovative twist by incorporating smoked crickets to enhance flavor and texture.

Ingredients:

- Fresh salmon (cubed and marinated)
- Avocado
- Lime
- Fish roe
- Smoked crickets

Preparation:

1. Marinate cubed salmon with salt, soy sauce, and lime juice.
2. Dice the avocado and mix with the salmon.
3. Add smoked crickets to taste and combine.
4. Plate the tartare using the avocado skin as a container.
5. Garnish with microgreens and additional smoked crickets for a final touch.

This dish reflects Nordic culinary traditions while introducing new, sustainable ingredients.

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Main Course 2: Cricket-Powder Falafel (Middle Eastern classic, now embraced across Europe)

Falafel, originally an Arab dish, has become widely embraced throughout Europe as a popular plant-based meal. This version replaces breadcrumbs with cricket powder, enhancing both texture and nutritional value.

Ingredients:

- Chickpeas
- Cilantro
- Cumin
- Black pepper
- Baking powder
- Salt
- Onion
- Cricket powder

Preparation:

1. Blend chickpeas with cilantro, cumin, black pepper, baking powder, salt, and onion.
2. Add cricket powder to help bind the mixture.
3. Shape into falafel patties.
4. Cook on a hot griddle, which helps dry the falafel and enhance its toasted flavor.

Now commonly found in restaurants across Europe, falafel is a great example of how Middle Eastern cuisine has influenced European dining habits—and now, edible insects are taking that innovation even further!

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Dessert: Caramelized Mealworms with Yogurt and Honey (Inspired by French Pastry Menus)

French gastronomy is known for its elegant desserts, often featuring caramelized nuts, honey, and creamy textures. This dish takes inspiration from classic French dessert menus, using dehydrated mealworms for a nutty, seed-like flavor that enhances the overall experience.

Ingredients:

- Sugar
- Water
- Dehydrated mealworms
- Natural yogurt
- Honey
- Cream
- Cinnamon
- Walnuts

Preparation:

1. Prepare a caramel by heating sugar and water in a pan.
2. Once golden, add the mealworms and coat them in the caramel.
3. In a separate bowl, mix natural yogurt with honey.
4. Fold in cream and a touch of cinnamon.
5. Plate the yogurt mixture in a serving glass and top with walnuts and caramelized mealworms.

Alternative: Beetle larvae can also be used in this recipe.

A dish like this would not be out of place on the menu of a high-end French restaurant, proving that edible insects can be a gourmet ingredient in fine dining.



Conclusion: A Complete European Menu Using Insect-Based Ingredients is possible and delicious!

With these recipes, we have successfully created a complete European menu using edible insects—from starters to dessert, each inspired by different culinary traditions across Europe and beyond.

For culinary professionals, this is an exciting opportunity to innovate and introduce new, sustainable flavors into modern cuisine. By mastering these ingredients today, you position yourself at the forefront of an emerging gastronomic trend.

Are you ready to push the boundaries of traditional cooking and explore the future of sustainable gastronomy? Take the challenge, experiment, and create something extraordinary!