



Recipe courtesy of Tom Van Lente:

As the executive chef of the Jean Banchet Award-nominated best new restaurant Two, Tom Van Lente showcases Midwestern ingredients at their prime. For him it's all about seasonality, sustainability, and making everything from scratch - no walk-in cooler, can-opener, or shortcuts in his kitchen. The chef sources the best products available from local farms, allowing them to shine on the plate by cooking them with respect and not overpowering their flavors, a mantra held true by his entire team.

Steakhouse Rubbed Grilled Ribeye with “Dirty” Grits, Smoked Cherry Compote and Herb Salad

Steaks:

2 8oz ribeye steaks
Salt and pepper
Olive oil

Steak house rub:

¼ c black pepper corns
2 tbsp coriander seeds
2 bay leaves
1.5 tsp sweet paprika
1.5 tsp brown sugar
1 tsp each granulated garlic and onion

Dirty grits:

1 bunch scallions
Salt and pepper
Olive oil
2 cups course ground yellow grits, preferably from Anson Mills, SC
8 cups whole milk
2 tbsp butter
½ cup shredded parmesan

Smoked cherry compote:

3 cups fresh pitted cherries
1 cup brandy or orange juice or sherry
½ cup sugar

Herb salad:

2 tbsp fresh picked parsley leaves
2 tbsp chive batons
2 tbsp cilantro leaves
1 tsp evoo
Few drops fresh lemon juice
Pinch of salt and pepper

For the rub: toast peppercorns and coriander seeds, grind with all other ingredients.

Rub the steaks with oil, season lightly with salt and pepper then season aggressively with steak rub. Preheat grill to hot as possible. Sear the steaks for 3-4 minutes on each side for medium rare. Place the steaks on a cutting board and let rest for at least 10 minutes before slicing.

For the grits: toss the scallions with oil, salt and pepper and grill till nicely charred on all sides. Once cooled a little bit, give them a rough chop. Combine milk and grits and stir occasionally till thickened, anywhere between 40-60 minutes. Once grits are cooked and you have the desired consistency, add butter, cheese and chopped scallions. Re-season with salt and pepper if needed.

For the compote: Bring all ingredients to a boil in a heavy bottom sauce pan. Reduce to a simmer until the cherries start to release their juices, about 10 minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove the cherries to a bowl and reduce the remaining liquid till it covers the back of a spoon. Combine that liquid with the cherries. Once combined, cover the bowl with plastic wrap and smoke lightly for 1-2 minutes with a smoking gun (Williams-Sonoma.com). Season with a pinch of salt if needed, serve warm.

For the herb salad: combine fresh herbs with a couple drops of oil and lemon juice, salt and pepper

To plate: This dish is perfect to serve family style. Dollop the grits all over a big platter, slice the steak and fan out on the plate. Drizzle everything with the compote and garnish with the herb salad. I chose this dish because it's a big meaty wine with a lot of fresh jammy qualities to it. The smoke on the cherries will complement the char of the steaks and the pepper in the rub. The acid in the herb salad helps cut some of the fat of the steaks.