

Caviar Ravioli with Lobster Sauce

The back story:

When I was just a little critter, twelve maybe, we took a trip down to Washington, DC to see the sights. For whatever reason, while we were there we went to see a show – 42nd Street if I remember correctly, ironically enough since it was DC and not NYC. Anyway, after the show we went out to dinner. Fancy-shmancy place – cannot remember its name now, unfortunately – and on the menu was caviar ravioli with lobster sauce. Being a spoiled little thing, I insisted on having it. It was awesome, but so super rich that even with my voracious appetite I couldn't finish it.

Fast forward to December 2008: we were doing then an annual Christmas dinner for the family, each of which had a theme, and I was playing Head Chef for them all. One of the traditions is each year there would be a menu item that's completely over-the-top. That year, it was this. I remembered that over-the-top meal from my childhood and was determined to reproduce it. Nailed it, I think.

The caviars came from [Marky's](#), as did, I believe, the squid ink. Lobsters were locally sourced. Be forewarned it does contain wheat – I don't know if it's possible to make it otherwise.

1. The Lobster

Start with approx. 10 lbs of live lobster. Drop in boiling water just long enough to begin cooking the meat, but not thoroughly (a couple minutes). Remove and cool. Pull claw, knuckle and tail meat, reserving shells. Vac-pack meat (should yield 2-2.5 lbs) and freeze.

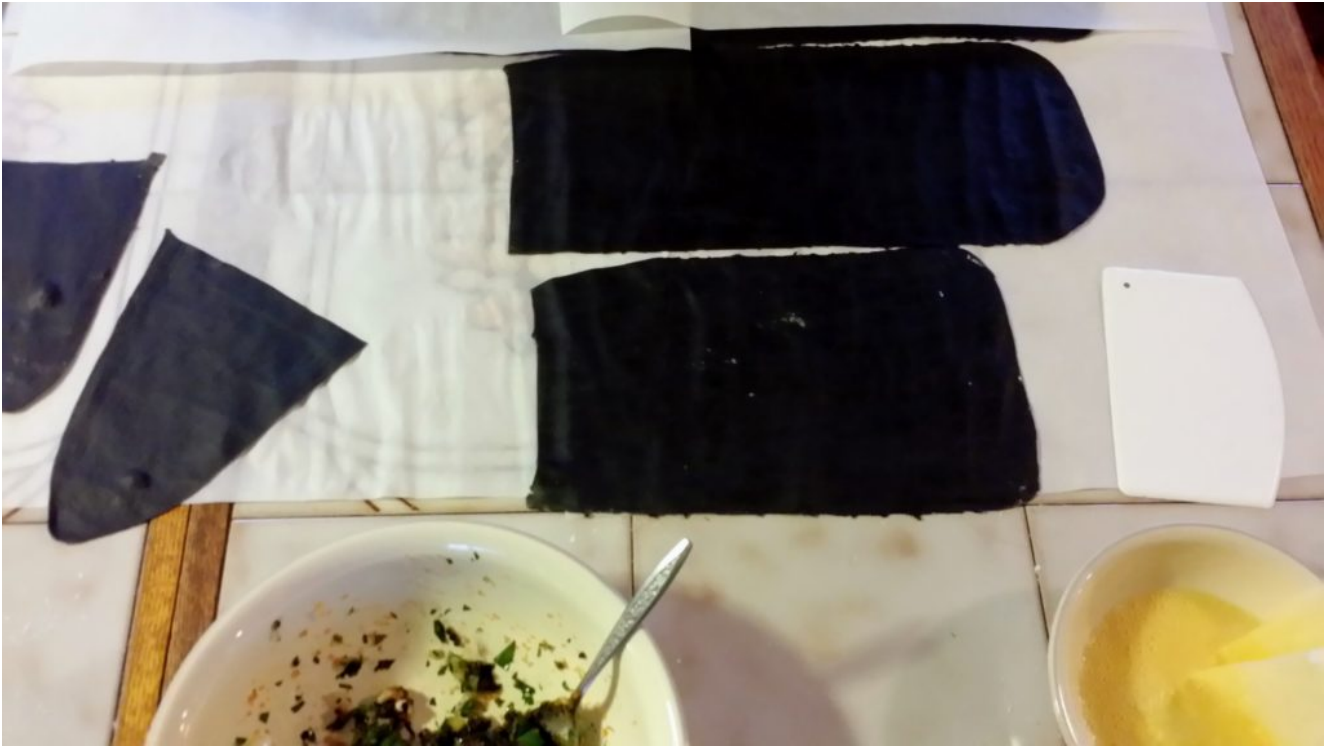
2. Lobster Stock

Place reserved shells into stock pot. Pull legs from bodies, being careful to remove “dead man’s fingers” should they remain attached. Break legs into multiple pieces and add to pot. Add one medium onion, halved and halves quartered; 2 carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped; 2 ribs celery, washed and coarsely chopped; 2 bay leaves; 1 whole clove (yes, just one, unless it’s tiny). Cover with water, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt, approx 1 tablespoon peppercorns, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white wine. Simmer 3-4 hours. Strain through cheesecloth, and freeze in pint containers.

3. Squid Ink Pasta

Whisk 3 eggs with $\frac{3}{8}$ cup olive oil. Whisk in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water and 32g (8 packets) squid ink. Pour atop 3 cups sifted all-purpose flour. Mix thoroughly and dump onto floured bench. Knead until smooth and shiny. Wrap in plastic wrap and let rest in refrigerator at least one hour.

When ready to prepare pasta, remove from refrigerator and allow to warm to room temperature. Cover table with lightly floured waxed paper. Pull off a ball of dough approx. golf-ball sized and squash to flatten. Flour lightly, and run through pasta machine at widest setting. (If very irregular, fold in thirds, lightly flour again and re-roll.) Repeat until all dough has been so treated. Increment the knob on the pasta machine (to the next narrower setting) and roll each sheet. Repeat process until all sheets have passed through setting 6 (the next to narrowest). Cover all sheets with paper until ready to fill.



Squid Ink Pasta

4. Ravioli Filling

Mix $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped parsley, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup finely minced shallot, and finely grated zest of two small (or one larger) lemons. Gently fold in 8 oz hackleback caviar and 4 oz orange tobikko.



The Filling

5. Raviolis

Prepare an egg wash: whisk one egg with a tablespoon water. Keep dusting flour handy, and lightly dust a sheet tray lined with waxed paper or parchment. For each sheet of pasta: trim the irregular ends, brush half (lengthwise) with egg wash, deposit 1 teaspoon filling, spaced 2-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart, fold pasta over lengthwise to cover, carefully removing as much air as possible from each lump of covered filling. Cut into individual raviolis, and place on prepared sheet tray (keeping tray covered with paper or cloth to impede drying). Hold under refrigeration.



Ravioli

6. Lobster Sauce

Defrost vac-pack of lobster and one pint stock. Melt 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs unsalted butter in medium sauce pot. Medium-fine chop lobster meat, add to butter, and slowly poach.

In large sauteuse, melt 1/8 lb unsalted butter (1/2 stick) over medium heat. Sauté $\frac{1}{2}$ cup minced shallots and 2 crushed cloves garlic until translucent. Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ small (6 oz) can tomato paste and cook to pinc . Stir in stock and heat to simmer. Strain lobster meat out of residual butter (reserving butter) and add to sauce. Taste and correct seasoning.

If desired, heat residual butter and add flour (a couple tablespoons) to create a roux. This may be added to the sauce both as a thickener and to help prevent breaking. (Sauce can be further thinned, if needed, via additional lobster stock.)



Lobster Sauce

7. A La Minute

Into large pot of boiling salted water, carefully drop no more than eight or so raviolis at a time. Cook in the water only briefly – under a minute: you want to cook the pasta but only warm the filling. Strain out with a spider and deposit into simmering lobster sauce. Finish cooking there for another minute or so. Plate raviolis with some sauce (including lobster meat), garnish with sprinkle of finely chopped parsley and a faint drizzle of black truffle oil.