

**HELLO!**  
LIFESTYLE SERIES

# HAUTE CUISINE

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## 20 of the world's top chefs

Share their passion for food and showcase simple yet sumptuous dishes for easy and elegant entertaining



## Luxury on a plate

From Marco Pierre White, James Martin and Jean-Christophe Novelli to cookery schools and masterclasses, hotels for foodies and feasts for friends, we've got the season all wrapped up



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# Tradition... with a twist

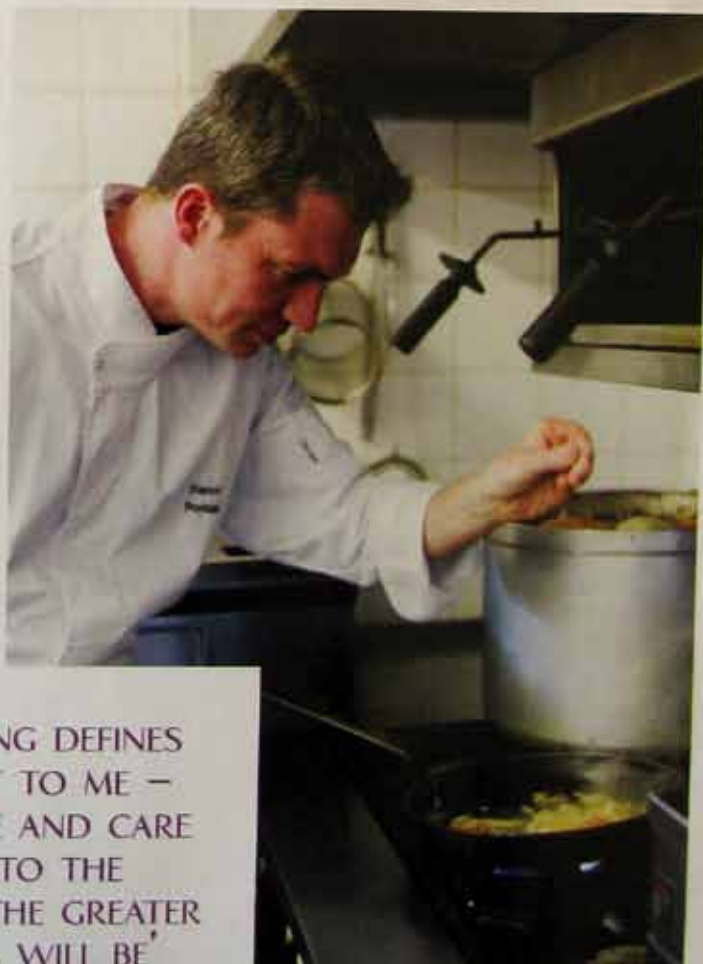
*Franck Pontais' unique take on the humble terrine – and chic culinary newcomer the verrine – are loved by showbiz and royalty alike. The French-born chef has dedicated his career to perfecting sublime food to share. Here he reveals some of his favourite recipes to Haute Cuisine*

**F**ranck Pontais was born to cook. He began his career at just 14 when his mother, realising that schoolwork was not his forte, sent him to work as an apprentice at a butcher's in his native Paris. After two years, with his first qualification in hand, he enrolled at CEPROC, one of the top French culinary schools, where he realised he had found his vocation. Topping his class and winning awards in national competitions, he was baptised into the French tradition of *traiteur*, or creating beautifully made savoury and sweet gourmet dishes for dinner parties and banquets.

In 1996, Franck received a life-changing phone call offering him a job at Harrods. So, aged just 22, he set off for London with one suitcase and only a handful of English words, to throw himself into expanding the *traiteur* counter at the legendary luxury store.

"Being a creative chef and breaking my own rules, I went in search of other ways to present my traditional terrine. I discovered other shaped moulds give a new dimension to the art of making them," says Franck. "Terrine making defines food as art to me – the more love, care and attention you put into the presentation, the greater the rewards will be."

Part of the "wow" factor in Franck's catering comes from using verrines – a course in a glass – as well as innovative terrines. After years of perfecting them, he's on a mission to show how easy it is to make these entertaining, elegant dishes a regular part of your recipe repertoire. Turn the page for some sweet sensations... **HC**



**'TERRINE MAKING DEFINES FOODS AS ART TO ME – THE MORE LOVE AND CARE YOU PUT INTO THE PRESENTATION, THE GREATER THE REWARDS WILL BE'**

# Pudding of figs, rhubarb, strawberries and blackberries

'You need to allow 1 hour chilling time for this pressed terrine. Serve with sticks of crystallised rhubarb. You can also try crushed fresh raspberries and mint with rhubarb and serve very cold with a drizzle of lemon and golden syrup'

Reserve some plump, attractive berries and figs for decoration.

Cut the rhubarb into 10cm/4in batons then place in a saucepan with the orange juice – make sure the rhubarb is just covered, adding a little water if necessary. Sprinkle over 125g/4½oz of the sugar then cover with a disc of parchment paper and steam gently then cook over a low heat for 10 minutes.

Cut the strawberries and figs into quarters and place in another saucepan with the blackberries. Cover with water and 50g/2oz of the sugar. Simmer for 5 minutes, uncovered, then remove from the heat and allow to cool for 5 minutes.

Drain the rhubarb and the fruits, reserving both liquors, then mix the reserved liquors together in a pan and bring to the boil for 2 minutes to make a syrup. Leave to cool.

Remove the crusts from the bread. Lay the terrine dish on the bread so you can cut the

strips to the exact size. Soak the bread pieces in the fruit syrup then use to line 8 individual terrine dishes. Layer in the fruits and finish with a slice of bread on top. Press firmly and drain off the excess juice that comes to the surface, but don't squeeze it all out. Apply a small weight and leave overnight.

To make the crystallised sticks of rhubarb preheat the oven to 150°C, 275°F, Gas 1.

Using a sharp vegetable peeler take long strips from along the rhubarb. Lay the strips on a baking tray lined with parchment then, with a fine sieve, sprinkle generous amounts of icing sugar over the rhubarb. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes then remove from the oven. Carefully peel the strips from the tray then turn over and leave to dry for 15 minutes.

Serve the terrines dusted with icing sugar and decorated with the reserved berries and figs and sticks of crystallised rhubarb.

SERVES 8

## INGREDIENTS

### For the terrines

225g/8oz strawberries, rinsed and hulled

180g/6½oz blackberries

300g/11oz fresh figs

300g/11oz sticks of rhubarb

Juice of 2 oranges

180g/6½oz caster sugar

8-10 slices medium-sliced white bread

icing sugar, for dusting

### For the crystallised rhubarb

1 stick of rhubarb

icing sugar for sprinkling

