

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Chef Chris Lusk Recipes - Cafe Adelaide, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

Executive Chef Chris Lusk of **Café Adelaide** at the **Loews New Orleans Hotel**, located in **New Orleans, Louisiana** brings "Boosted New Orleans Bistro" to the culinary table. Innovative culinary interpretations, an attractive contemporary ambience, and excellent service are the hallmarks of **Café Adelaide**.

Hailing from East Texas, Chef Chris Lusk honed his culinary career graduating from Johnson & Wales Culinary School in Charleston, South Carolina before venturing off on a 5-month externship to Ireland. Returning to the United States, he worked at such prestigious restaurants as Vin Bistro in Austin, Texas, at Mario Batali's Otto Enoteca in New York City as the Sous Chef, at Commander's Palace in New Orleans as the Sous-Chef, and at Star Canyon in Dallas, Texas as the Sous Chef cooking Tex-Mex, to name but a few of his many credentials. He joined Café Adelaide, operated by the Commander's Palace Family of Restaurants, as the Executive Chef in 2008.

Since joining Café Adelaide, this soft-spoken chef with a slight Texas drawl has been accruing accolades including Louisiana Cookin' Magazine's 8th Annual Awards, "Chefs to Watch" in 2009, and named as Top Seafood Chef in Louisiana and the "King of Louisiana" at the 3rd annual Louisiana Seafood Cook-off Grand Tasting at the New Orleans Wine and Food Experience in 2010. This from a man that doubled majored in Psychology and Biology in undergraduate school and thought he wanted to go to medical school before hearing the siren song of the kitchen.



Chef Chris Lusk

I had the opportunity to meet Chef Chris Lusk when I was staying at the Loews New Orleans Hotel in July 2011, and got to know him as well as his culinary vision over a lunch and a dinner at Café Adelaide. During the course of our conversation, I learned that both of Chef Chris Lusk's grandparents were farmers, cattle farmers on one side, hog farmers on the other side, so he was accustomed to having quality, fresh products. One of his fondest memories is of time spent at his grandparents' farm and the smell of the tomatoes ripening on the vine. "Creole heirloom tomatoes always remind me of my grandfather's garden and eating ripe tomatoes off the vine, still warm from the sun." His grandfather would humor him and would plant whatever Chris wanted, which at one time was peanuts, which is a bit unusual for Texas. He is committed to eating seasonally and remembers his time working in Ireland and the phenomenal potatoes there, and appreciates the Louisiana tomato and grapefruit season.

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When not working in the kitchen, he likes to fish when he has the chance, something that he fondly remembers doing with his dad growing up. He likes to eat what he catches, and cook it simply with salt, some lemon juice, and black pepper, as that is all that it takes. He also likes to run, admits to being a bit of a techie and enjoys working on computers, likes to read, cook, and is into martial arts.

Chef Chris Lusk graciously shares his recipes for a delicious three-course menu of Crab Pound Cake with Port Salut "Icing", Crawfish Maque Choux, and White Chocolate Biscuit Pudding, which is a variation of his grandmother's recipe. Bon Appetit!

The Menu

Crab Pound Cake with Port Salut "Icing"

Crawfish Maque Choux

White Chocolate Biscuit Pudding



Crab Pound Cake

Yield: 1 large cake

Ingredients:

2

Cups

Corn Flour

2

Cups

Flour (approximately)

1 $\frac{3}{4}$

Cups

Sugar

7

Eggs

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1

Cup

Sour Cream

$\frac{1}{2}$

Tablespoon

Salt

$\frac{3}{4}$

Pound

Butter (melted)

$\frac{3}{4}$

Teaspoon

Baking Powder

Method: Whisk together sugar and eggs. Sift all other dry ingredients. Combine dry ingredients with egg mixture. Put mixture through a strainer to remove all lumps. Add melted butter to strained mixture. Place mixture in a large cake pan (9" or 10") with tall sides, filling pan only half-full. Bake at 300° F (149° C) for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick came be removed from the center of the cake clean.

Port Salut Icing

Ingredients:

$\frac{1}{2}$

Quart

Heavy Cream

$\frac{1}{2}$

Quart

Half & Half (or Light Cream)

$\frac{1}{4}$

Ounce

Fresh Thyme

1

Clove

Garlic, minced

1

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Shallot, diced

1

Bay Leaf

6

Ounces

Port Salut (a French semi-soft pasteurized cow's milk cheese)

½

Teaspoon

Butter

2

Ounces

Brandy

8

Ounces

Crabmeat

Salt and Pepper, to taste

Method: Sauté garlic and shallots in butter until shallot are translucent. Deglaze with brandy and ignite. Add remaining ingredients except Port Salut. Cook over medium-low heat until mixture is reduced by half. Whisk in the Port Salut. Allow to cook for five minutes or until cheese is thoroughly combined. Remove from heat and puree. Strain through mesh strainer. Add picked crabmeat to mixture and season to taste. Pour over a small piece of pound cake.

Ingredients:

Pepper Sprinkles

1

Green Bell Pepper, very small diced

1

Red Bell Pepper, very small diced

1

Yellow Bell Pepper, very small diced

Method: Place on a non-stick pan and place in the oven with just the pilot light on, leave in the oven overnight to dry out. If you do not have a gas stove, you can cook in electric oven at 140° F (60° C) or the lowest setting on the oven for 30 minutes. Check the peppers for dryness, and cook longer if not dried out completely.

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Crawfish Maque Choux

Yield 4-6 portions

Ingredients:

1

Pound

Crawfish Tails

1

Onion, diced

1

Bell Pepper, diced

2

Stalks

Celery, diced

2

Cloves

Garlic, minced

½

Pound

Okra, sliced thin

1

Cup

Fresh Corn

1

Yukon Gold Potato, diced and roasted

2

Cups

Tomato Purée

1

Quart

Shrimp Stock

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½

Pound

Butter

½

Pound

Flour

2

Bay Leaves

1

Teaspoon

Fresh Thyme

1

Teaspoon

Fresh Oregano

1

Teaspoon

Cayenne

Hot Sauce, to taste

Salt and Pepper, to taste

Method: In a large saucepot melt butter and combine with flour to make a roux. Add onions, celery, pepper and garlic to roux and cook until onions are translucent. Add tomato purée, bay leaves and stock (if you do not have stock, you can substitute water) bring to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes or until you cannot taste the flour. Add herbs, cayenne, diced potato, and crawfish, cook for 5 more minutes on medium heat. Season with salt, pepper, and hot sauce.

Sweet Corn Crust

Ingredients:

1

Cup

Masa Harina

1

Cup

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Cornmeal

1

Cup

Sweet Corn

1

Egg

½

Cup

Milk

4

(6 oz each)

Red Fish Fillets

Salt and Pepper, to taste

Method: Combine masa harina, cornmeal, and sweet corn in food processor and puree until thoroughly combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Combine egg and milk season with salt and pepper. Season both sides of the fish with salt and pepper. Brush the skin side of the fish with the egg mixture and then place the fish into the crust so it adheres.



White Chocolate Biscuit Pudding

Yield: 4 portions

Ingredients:

8

Buttermilk Biscuits, crumbled

4

Eggs

2

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Cups

Half & Half (or Light Cream)

½

Cup

White Chocolate, diced into small pieces

1

Cup

Whole Milk

½

Cup

Butter, melted

1

Cup

Sugar

1

Teaspoon

Vanilla

½

Teaspoon

Cinnamon

Method: Combine eggs, Half & Half, milk, sugar, cinnamon, vanilla and butter, whisk together until smooth consistency. Add biscuits and chocolate to mixture, then combine thoroughly but not as to break up biscuits completely. Place in oven-safe dish. Bake at 325° F (163° C) for 25 minutes or until mixture sets and top is golden brown.

Café Adelaide is open daily and serves breakfast Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 10:00 am, Brunch on Saturday and Sunday from 7:00 am until 12:30 pm, lunch Monday through Thursday from 11:30 am until 2:00 pm, and on Friday from 11:30 am until 2:30 pm. The restaurant is open for dinner Sunday through Thursday from 6:00 pm until 9:00 pm, on Friday and Saturday from 6:00 pm until 9:30 pm, and "Off-hours" dining is available at the Swizzle Stick Bar until 11:00 pm.

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Café Adelaide

Read more about **Café Adelaide** in the **Restaurants** section.

Read about **Loews New Orleans Hotel** in the **Destinations**, **Hotels and Resorts**, and **Restaurants** section.

Read about "In the Land of Cocktails by the Cocktail Chicks, Ti Adelaide Martin and Lally Brennan", Adelaide Brennan's nieces, and co-proprietors of Café Adelaide in the **Luxury Products, Gifts** section.



Café Adelaide

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