

YARRA VALLEY CAVIAR CONTINUED...

by LEE on OCTOBER 16, 2012 · 1 COMMENT

I love living in the city of Melbourne for so many reasons, in particular the farmers markets.

You don't have to travel far to find one, so there is really no excuse not to support our local producers...

A few weeks ago I discovered Yarra Valley Caviar at the Slow Food Farmers Market on every fourth Saturday of the month at the Abbotsford Convent.

Nick Gorman who was running the stall kindly gave me a run down on the business between serving other customers. (Thanks Nick!) I purchased a smoked rainbow trout and smoked salmon. Lunch was going to be delish!

I also picked up some Holy Goat Fromage Frais from the stall next door, a perfect addition to my smoked fish. It is particularly good at this time of year, as the goats have had lots of delicate spring greens to graze upon, but more on that another time....



Styling by Lee Blaylock
Photography by Brent Parker Jones

What is the background, philosophy of Yarra Valley caviar? When was the business started?

The business started in 1992. The philosophy is around sustainability and treating the fish humanely.

The business is one of the only fresh water aquaculture farms of its kind to take a completely natural approach to rearing, and milking, its Atlantic Salmon – refusing to use antibiotics or chemicals.

Its fish are milked entirely by hand under a natural anaesthetic of clove oil and returned to the fresh water ponds where they are reared to spawn again the following year.

In regards to its environmental policies a recent study by the Department of Primary Industries, documented that its practices have actually improved the water quality on the Rubicon River.

YVC is well known for its salmon caviar and has won many awards; can you explain the technique of the 'milking' of the salmon? How often is this done? What are the benefits of this technique?

The salmon are only milked once a year in May when they are naturally ready to release the eggs. This means the eggs are plump and flawless and literally 'pour' out as the salmon's stomach is stroked so there is no undue stress on the salmon.

They are lifted from the ponds, put in tubs with some clove oil which makes them sleepy, then hand-milked, and

returned to recovery ponds before they go back to their own ponds again.

The benefits are happier, healthier fish and better quality caviar.

Is your intention to stay a boutique farm? Are there any major challenges of running a boutique organic farm?

The size of the farm does mean it can only produce a certain amount of product each year as it only has 16 ponds and wants to continue to ensure that the salmon are given plenty of room to move – more than any other average aquaculture farm.

Is there popular demand for local sustainable fresh and smoked fish in victoria?

We certainly find that leading chefs around the country want to use produce where they know its footprint, and consumers are increasingly demanding to understand this too.

Where besides from the local farmers markets can you purchase your products?

<http://www.yarravalleycaviar.com.au/where-to-buy/retail>

Is the farm open to the public to come and look and purchase your products?

It's a working aquaculture farm so isn't open to the public, however, we do host those in the industry and media to give valuable insights into how the farm operates.

What is on the cards for the future of YVC?

We're launching new product all the time, most recently a 'first harvest' caviar from salmon which have not been milked before and are three years old, and a premium line of rainbow trout. We're also looking into official organic certification, something that hasn't been able to be achieved purely because you can't purchase organic fish food in Australia. We are also looking into export markets for our products.





Here's what I had for lunch...Enjoy!

SMOKED RAINBOW TROUT WITH BABY BEETS AND SOFT BOILED QUAIL EGGS

1 bunch baby beets (approx. 8)

3 tablespoons olive oil

3 sprigs picked fresh thyme

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

6 quail eggs

1 300-400 g YVC smoked rainbow trout

2- 3 handfuls fresh picked herbs (chervil, mint and Italian parsley)

1 cup fresh peas

zest of 1 lemon plus juice

1/2 cup Holy Goat Fromage Frais

Preheat the oven to 190 degrees.

Wash and peel the baby beets. Trim the stems and leaves keeping aside the small/medium sized leaves for the salad. Place in a serving bowl. Place the beets in a roasting tray with the oil and the thyme, roast covered loosely with foil for 20 mins or until tender when pierced with a knife.

Meanwhile place the quail eggs gently into a pot boiling water and cook for 2 mins for soft yolk. Cool under running water and peel, cut in half and set aside. Blanche the peas in a pot of boiling water and refresh in cold water, drain and add to the bowl.

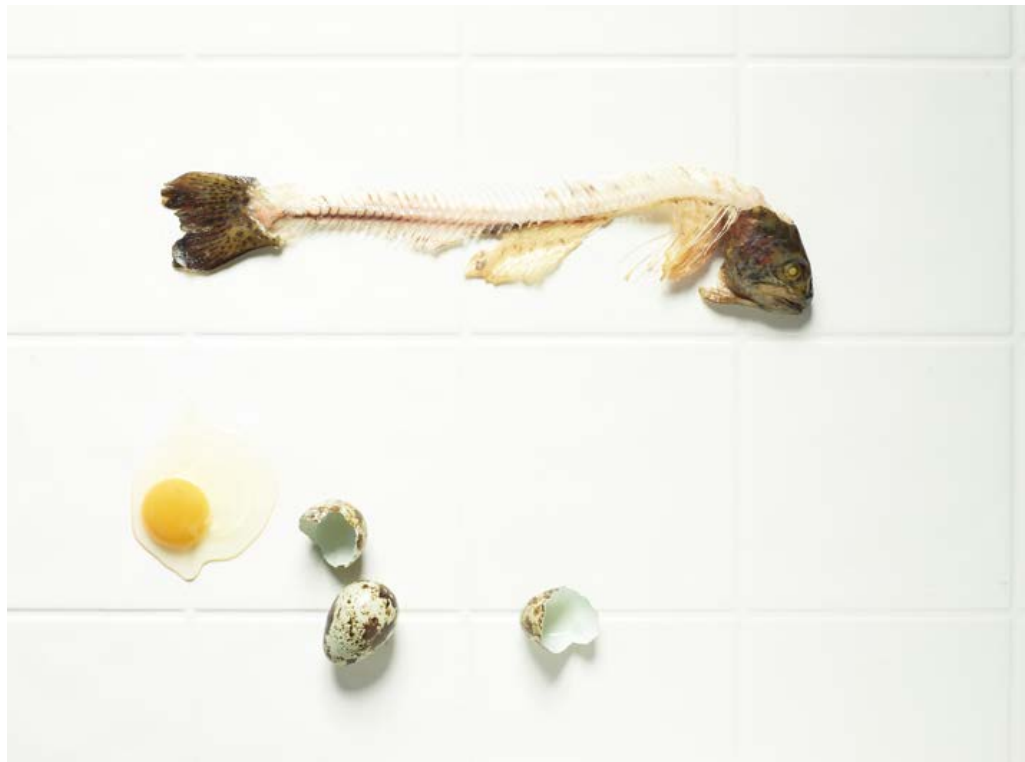
Remove the skin from the trout and pull away the flesh from the bones, break into chunks and add to the bowl.

Add the picked herbs, lemon zest, and juice. Cut the beets in half lengthways, add to the salad and toss gently. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Arrange the quail eggs on top and serve with the Fromage Frais on the side.

Tip: Instead of using the YVC smoked rainbow trout you can replace with their smoked salmon



Recipe by Lee Blaylock



Photographed by Brent Parker Jones

Tagged with: [cheese](#) • [fish](#) • [salad](#) • [trout](#) • [vegetables](#)

Pass it on please -



ONE RESPONSE TO *yarra valley caviar continued...*



Brent Parker Jones says:
October 16, 2012 at 9:53 pm

Quality Miss Lee – I just posted on Twitter and Facey! Everyone I implore you to do the same! Pay it forward and share the love! — BPJ

REPLY

LEAVE A REPLY

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Name *

Email *

Website

Comment

You may use these HTML tags and attributes:

 <abbr title=""> <acronym title=""> <blockquote cite=""> <cite> <code> <del datetime="">
 <i> <q cite=""> <strike>