Pan Seared Hog Island Oysters with Parsnip Soup and Carrot Emulsion

Parsnip Soup ingredients:

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/4 yellow onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 shallot, chopped
1 pound parsnips, peeled and diced
1/4 cup white wine
1 quart chicken stock
1/2 cup heavy cream
Small pat of sweet butter
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 bay leaf
5 cloves
1 star anise
1/4 tablespoon fennel seed
Fresh grated nutmeg, for garnish

Carrot emulsion ingredients:

3 pounds sweet carrots
2 cups grape seed oil
1 cinnamon stick

To finish

4 oysters (one per person)
4 ounces flour
2 tablespoons butter (suggest clarified butter)

Parsnip soup: Heat a sauce pan large enough to hold all vegetables and liquid over medium-high flame, add oil and sauté onions, garlic and shallots in oil till translucent; do not allow to color. Add parsnips and sauté gently, continue to take care vegetables do not color. Add wine and stock and bring to a simmer. Place bay leaf, star anise, clove and fennel in cheese cloth and add to the pan. Simmer until vegetables are tender, approx. 30 minutes.

Remove spice sachet and add cream and butter. Blend (in batches if needed, should only come up halfway to top of blender) and pass through a mesh strainer to get a smooth texture. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Add grated nutmeg to taste.

Carrot emulsion: Peel carrots and juice in a vegetable juicer. Pour juice into a saucepan, add the cinnamon stick and slowly reduce by three-quarters over low heat. Whisk in the grapeseed oil and pass through a chinoise.

Oysters: Drain oyster liquor, reserve 1/4 cup of liquor. Dredge oysters in flour and set aside. Heat a sauté pan over high heat. Add clarified butter and reserved liquor. When pan is very hot, sear oysters for only 30 seconds per side, until lightly browned. Serve with soup, garnished with carrot emulsion.

Adapted from Mark Ayers, Hyatt Regency Monterey Resort & Spa; posted on www.cuesa.org