

## Restaurant Tapas & Small Plates — Modern Entertaining (Hands-On) April 14, 15, 16, 2026

Explore the art of contemporary small plates in this dynamic hands-on experience inspired by modern restaurant dining. Participants create refined shareable dishes while learning professional techniques for flavor development and presentation.

### Menu

#### **Roasted Carrots with maple & Sherry**

Roasted carrots glazed with maple, sherry vinegar, and thyme, finished with toasted pistachios.

#### **Scallop Ceviche**

Fresh Atlantic scallops cured in citrus with lime, orange, and chili, finished with olive oil, shaved fennel, and fresh herbs.

#### **Baked Manchego wrapped in prosciutto**

Warm baked Manchego wrapped in Prosciutto with honey, toasted almonds, and rosemary, served with grilled crostini.

#### **Pork Albondigas**

Spanish-style pork meatballs simmered in a rich tomato and smoked paprika sauce with garlic and herbs.

#### **Roasted Carrots with Maple & Sherry**

Roasted carrots glazed with maple, sherry vinegar, and thyme, finished with toasted pistachios.

Serves 6–8 as a side

### Ingredients

- 2 lb carrots, peeled and cut lengthwise if large
- 2 tbsp neutral oil
- 2 tbsp butter
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 to 1 1/2 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves, plus extra for garnish
- 1/3 cup pistachios, toasted and roughly chopped

1. Heat oven to **425°F**.
2. Season the carrots with salt and pepper.
3. Heat a large ovenproof sauté pan or skillet over medium-high heat. Add the neutral oil, then sear the carrots until lightly caramelized on a couple of sides, about **3–5 minutes**.
4. Add the butter to the pan and let it foam. Roll the carrots in the butter for **1–2 minutes**.
5. Transfer the pan to the oven and roast for **15–20 minutes**, or until the carrots are tender and nicely colored.
6. While the carrots roast, combine the maple syrup, sherry vinegar, and thyme in a small saucepan. Warm gently just until combined.
7. When the carrots are cooked, remove them from the oven and toss with the maple-sherry glaze.
8. Return to the oven for **2–3 minutes** to let the glaze cling lightly to the carrots.

9. Transfer to a serving dish and finish with toasted pistachios and extra thyme.

### **Scallop Ceviche**

Fresh Atlantic scallops cured in citrus with lime, orange, chili, and coriander seed, finished with olive oil, shaved fennel, and fresh herbs.

Serves 4 as an appetizer

#### **Ingredients**

- 12 large fresh Atlantic scallops, side muscle removed
- 3 limes, juiced
- 1 orange, juiced
- 1 tsp orange zest
- 1 small red chili, very thinly sliced
- 1/2 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 small fennel bulb, shaved very thin
- 2 to 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 to 2 tbsp finely sliced chives
- 1 tbsp chopped dill or fennel fronds
- Salt
- Fresh cracked black pepper
- Optional: a few small orange segments for garnish

#### **Method**

1. Lightly toast the coriander seeds in a dry pan over low heat for about **30–60 seconds**, just until fragrant. Let cool, then crush them lightly with a mortar and pestle or the bottom of a pan.
2. Slice the scallops into thin rounds or small bite-sized pieces and place in a chilled bowl.
3. Combine the lime juice, orange juice, orange zest, chili, and crushed coriander seed.
4. Pour the citrus mixture over the scallops and toss gently.
5. Let the scallops cure in the fridge for **10–15 minutes**, just until they turn opaque on the outside but stay tender.
6. Drain off most of the citrus liquid, leaving just a little behind.
7. Add the shaved fennel, olive oil, chives, dill or fennel fronds, a pinch of salt, and a few turns of black pepper. Toss very gently.
8. Taste and adjust with a little more lime, olive oil, or salt if needed.
9. Plate immediately and garnish with extra herbs and orange segments if using.

#### **Chef note:**

Keep the coriander subtle. **1/2 tsp** is enough to give a floral, citrusy background note. Too much will start to read more like cure than ceviche.

### **Baked Manchego with Honey, Toasted Almonds & Rosemary**

Warm baked Manchego finished with floral honey, toasted almonds, and rosemary.

Serves 4–6 as a starter or sharing plate

#### **Ingredients**

- 250–300 g Manchego, cut in a thick wedge or left as a small wheel if format allows
- 1 tbsp olive oil

- 1 1/2 tbsp honey, plus a little extra if needed
- 2 tbsp almonds, toasted and roughly chopped
- 1 tsp fresh rosemary, very finely chopped
- Fresh cracked black pepper
- Flaky sea salt, optional
- Crostini, grilled bread, or crackers for serving

### Method

1. Heat oven to **400°F**.
2. Place the Manchego in a small baking dish or ovenproof skillet. Drizzle lightly with olive oil.
3. Bake for **8–12 minutes**, depending on thickness, until the cheese is warmed through, slightly softened, and just beginning to relax at the edges. It should not fully melt like Brie.
4. While the cheese bakes, toast the almonds if needed and mix them with the chopped rosemary.
5. Remove the Manchego from the oven and immediately drizzle with honey.
6. Scatter over the toasted almonds and rosemary. Finish with a few turns of black pepper and a tiny pinch of flaky salt if you like.
7. Serve right away with crostini or grilled bread.

### Chef notes

- Manchego will soften but usually keeps its shape, so this is more **warm and supple** than gooey.
- For a slightly deeper flavour, warm the honey gently with the rosemary for a minute before spooning it over.
- A few drops of sherry vinegar at the end can sharpen it nicely if you want a more balanced sweet-savory finish.

### Pork Albóndigas in Tomato & Smoked Paprika Sauce

Spanish-style pork meatballs simmered in a rich tomato sauce with smoked paprika, garlic, and herbs.  
Serves 6 as a tapas-style dish or 4 as a main

### For the meatballs

- 1 lb ground pork
- 1/2 cup fresh breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- 2 cloves garlic, finely grated
- 2 tbsp finely minced onion
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp milk
- 1 tbsp olive oil for browning

### For the sauce

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp sweet paprika
- pinch chili flakes, optional
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1/2 cup dry white wine or dry sherry
- 1 can crushed tomatoes (about 14 oz)
- 1/2 cup chicken stock or water
- 1 tsp sherry vinegar
- 1 small sprig rosemary
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper to taste

### To finish

- Chopped parsley
- Good olive oil
- Grilled bread, if serving tapas-style

### Method

1. In a bowl, combine the pork, breadcrumbs, egg, garlic, onion, parsley, smoked paprika, cumin, salt, pepper, and milk. Mix gently until just combined. Do not overwork.
2. Roll into small meatballs, about walnut size.
3. Heat olive oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat and brown the meatballs lightly on all sides. They do not need to be fully cooked through. Remove and reserve.
4. In the same pan, add the olive oil for the sauce. Sweat the onion until soft, then add the garlic and cook briefly.
5. Stir in the smoked paprika, sweet paprika, chili flakes if using, and tomato paste. Cook for 1 minute.
6. Deglaze with the white wine or sherry and reduce slightly.
7. Add the crushed tomatoes, stock, sherry vinegar, rosemary, thyme, and bay leaf. Simmer gently for about **10–15 minutes**.
8. Return the meatballs to the sauce and simmer gently for another **12–15 minutes**, until cooked through and tender.
9. Taste and adjust seasoning. Remove the rosemary sprig and bay leaf.
10. Finish with chopped parsley and a drizzle of olive oil.

### Chef notes

- A splash of **dry sherry** makes this feel especially Spanish.
- You can add a few chopped olives near the end for another layer.
- For a smoother, more refined sauce, blend it before returning the meatballs.
- These hold well and are often even better the next day.