

AUSTRALIAN BLACK TRUFFLES

(A GUIDE FOR CHEFS)

Truffle sizes and costs –

- A 20 gram truffle is about the size of a squash ball.
- A 50 gram truffle is about the size of a large hen egg.
- A 100 gram truffle is about the size of a tennis ball.
- A 200 gram truffle is about the size of an emu egg.
- A minimum serving for an entree plate would be 3 gm. (@ \$3/gm = \$9/serve)
- A minimum serving for a main plate would be 5 gm. (@ \$3/gm = \$15/serve)

Serving Truffles –

- Australia's fresh truffle season is late May to early August.
- Australia has yet to develop a 'Truffle Culture', so new customers are best entertained by the full experience of seeing fresh truffle and smelling fresh truffle on the plate, as subtleties of more complex flavours could be lost. That will come later!
- If handled at the table, a nice option could include wearing white cotton gloves and serving, as the customer's wishes regarding quantity, by weighing the truffle (before and after shaving).
- Truffles go with anything as they are a flavour enhancer (contain glutamic acid!) and have the 'umami', or savoury taste.
- Truffles go best with simple dishes involving eggs, mushrooms, chicken, pasta, potatoes, risotto, Jerusalem artichokes, celeriac.
- Truffles have a great affinity for fats, any fats, which retain the aroma.
- Truffle should be shaved as thinly as possible as the greater the surface area exposed, the greater the aroma from the truffle serving.
- Truffle shavers (available from the Association, www.trufflegrowers.com.au) are a **must** to show the texture and marbling of slices but microplanes can be useful for some dishes. A fine julienne can be an option or they can be used whole.

Storing Truffles –

- Truffles are best stored in the refrigerator in a large jar, each wrapped in a paper towel to prevent them getting wet. Truffles lose moisture (weight) and aroma continually.
- If they grow a little white mould, brush it off under running cold water and dry the truffle before replacing it in the fridge.
- Store the truffles with fresh eggs (any eggs!) in the large jar and the yolks will be infused with the truffle aroma, excellent for making sauces, omelettes, scrambled dishes that can be lightly cooked.
- Truffles continue to lose their aroma following harvest and are best used within 3 weeks of harvest.
- Truffle stored as suggested above will keep longer but the aroma will continue to decline.
- Truffles can be preserved by snap freezing (minus forty degrees), but will only have about 50% of the aroma of fresh truffle must then be kept, used/shaved, frozen as they become rubbery on thawing.

Remember –

- All truffle oil is synthetic and does not taste anything like FRESH truffle.
- **TRUFFLES ARE SEASONAL AND FRESH IS BEST!**