



BEST SMALL PLATE

AANIIN (WELCOME) TASTING PLATE
CATIES 2024

SYNOPSIS



"AANIIN," PRONOUNCED [AH-NEE], MEANS "HELLO" OR "WELCOME" IN OJIBWAY



The Aaniin Tasting Plate was the culinary symphony of Indigenous flavours featured as the evening's introductory course at our Summer Solstice al fresco event.

Meticulously crafted with bites like petite fire-roasted Bannock and Northern bean and sumac dip, it epitomized the event's goal of celebrating authentically North American ingredients. Each element contributed to the showcase of harmony between plate and land, while introducing guests to the evening's flavour profiles through a plated landscape of small bites.

The Aaniin Tasting Plate posed as a culinary expression of our mission to educate, heal and break bread through the power of food.



CONCEPT

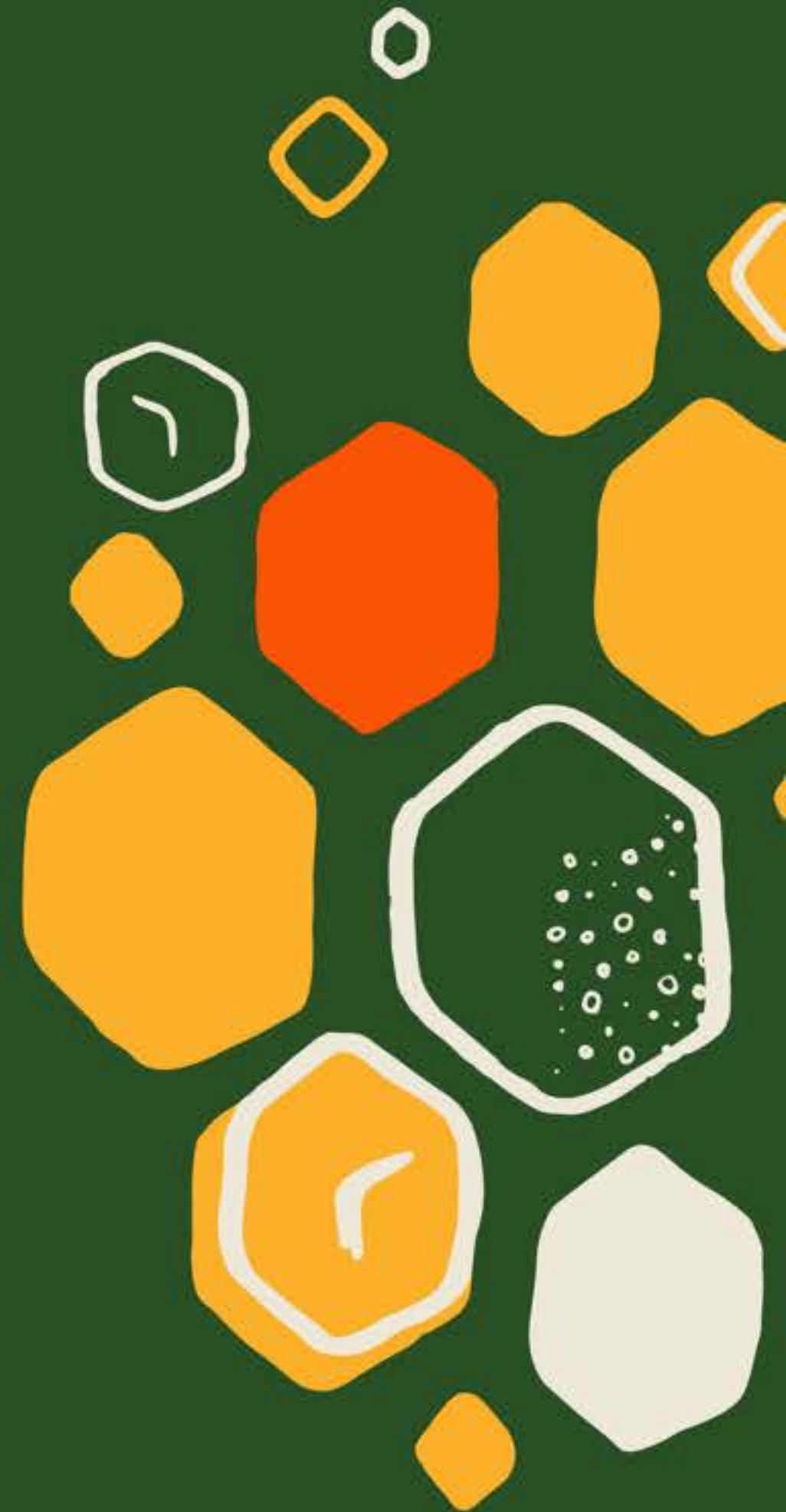
Our Summer Solstice event was developed as an immersive exploration of Indigenous Cuisine. When considering menu design, it was important to recognize that the guests would have little to no experience with this form of cultural cuisine.

That's where the Aaniin Tasting Plate played a crucial role.

The purpose of this dish was to present our guests with a medley of aromas, flavours and ingredients, through a kaleidoscope of small bites in a manner that best presented the Indigenous communities of our region.

The elements were chosen with intent: Fire-roasted Bannock exuding the symbols of our past; nutritious amaranth crisps symbolizing the strength and resilience of our communities; and timeless cornbread providing a comforting touch of familiarity. Puffed wild rice added an ethereal quality, while corn nuts contributed a satisfying crunch, creating a symphony of textures. The Northern bean and sumac dip, a harmonious blend of diverse flavours, celebrated the cultural mosaic of our region, while the butternut squash & maple spread brought a sweet crescendo to the plate, paying homage to local, seasonal ingredients.

More than a dish, the Aaniin Tasting Plate was an offering of peace and welcoming to our guests and would serve as an overture for the rest of the evening's culinary journey.



MAINTAIN TRADITION & AUTHENTICITY

Beyond taste, the dish was an educational voyage into Indigenous cuisine. Each element told a story of cultural richness, inviting diners to embrace and appreciate Indigenous culinary traditions.

SHOWCASE SEASONAL

A celebration of seasons, the dish was a culinary ode to nature's bounty. Its dynamic composition harmonized with changing seasons, offered a sensorial journey that mirrored the ebb and flow of the local landscape.

QUALITIES

The Aniin Tasting Plate aimed to meet four essential criteria:

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Crafted intentionally, the dish became a communal experience. Each bite served as a bridge, connecting individuals through shared joy in culinary exploration, fostering conversations and forging bonds through the love language of food.

SUPPORT LOCAL

Our dish showcased a commitment to local sourcing, featuring ingredients meticulously chosen from regional vendors where possible. We were even able to include elements like home-grown honey and fresh sage directly from the venue property.

DESIGNED TO PRESENT THE ELEMENTS IN A MANNER THAT REPRESENTS A 'LANDSCAPE' OF DIVERSE FLAVOURS AND TRADITIONS.

PRESENTATION

In a vibrant landscape of flavours, our presentation of the dish is a testament to the artistry of simplicity and the allure of nature's palette.

Each element is meticulously arranged on the plate, resembling a picturesque culinary terrain. Bright, natural hues pop against a canvas of clean plating, creating a visual feast that mirrors the dish's diverse flavours. The fire-roasted Bannock, amaranth crisps, and seasonal ingredients harmonize in a dance of color and form, inviting diners to embark on a sensory journey.

It's a celebration of simplicity, a canvas where the beauty of taste and presentation intertwine, making each bite an exquisite masterpiece.

NATURAL ELEMENTS
CONNECT PLATE TO
THE LAND.

BRIGHT COLOURS THAT
CELEBRATED THE SEASON



CLEAN & SIMPLE
PLATING TO ALLOW
INGREDIENTS TO SPEAK





PRODUCTION

Executed in a dynamic, outdoor catering setup, the assembly process was a well-coordinated production. Plates were strategically laid out on mobile tables, and our staff efficiently moved between stations, each handling specific elements. The seasonal ingredients were systematically placed with precision and care to ensure visuals brought cohesion between plate and venue.

Under the watchful eye of our Chef, the final plating inspection ensured consistency. This methodical approach allowed for immediate delivery by service staff, streamlining the process.

The mobile setup transformed into an operational hub, marrying efficiency with culinary excellence, as a testament to our meticulous production and delivery strategy.

CHALLENGE

SOURCING RESTRICTED INGREDIENTS

Sourcing wild rice, a crucial element in Indigenous cuisine, presents a distinctive challenge for us, particularly in our area. The process of gathering wild rice requires a delicate balance between ecological sustainability, cultural preservation, and navigating stringent regulatory frameworks.

Traditional harvesting methods involve hand-paddling canoes through shallow waters, and gently collecting ripe grains. However, modern agricultural practices, pollution, and habitat degradation have impacted the availability of wild rice in its natural habitats.

In our region, strict regulations governing wild rice harvesting reflect efforts to protect water ecosystems and uphold Indigenous rights. These regulations limit harvesting areas, methods, and quantities, creating a complex sourcing process for this culturally significant ingredient.

To address these challenges, our commitment led us to collaborate with a supplier who shares our mission to educate and contribute to a more sustainable culinary landscape. We were able to successfully source the wild rice, ensuring its inclusion in our event's educational segment, emphasizing its importance in the history of Indigenous cuisine.



KEY RECIPE

CORNBREAD

INGREDIENTS

- 342 grams of Lard or Butter (TIP: keep extra lard for frying)
- 200 grams of Maple Sugar
- 400 grams of Egg (duck preferred, 6pc)
- 530 grams of Milk (soy preferred)
- 234 grams of Brown Rice Flour
- 234 grams of Amaranth Flour
- 357 grams of Cornmeal
- 25 grams of Baking Powder
- 15 grams of Sea Salt
- 1/4 cup of Chopped White Sage
- 500 grams of Corn Kernels (cooked)
- 10 grams of Xanthan Gum (optional)

COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all wet ingredients, lard, and mix.
2. Blend in dry ingredients to form a batter.
3. Preheat oven to 375*.
4. Grease mini muffin tins with lard. Pan liners are optional.
5. Scoop batter into the muffin pan and place into the oven.
6. Bake for approximately 8-10 minutes or until a cake tester is clean when the muffins are probed.

SERVING

- Do not refrigerate.
- Best serve at room temperature, or slightly warmed.

KEY RECIPE

NORTHERN BEAN & SUMAC DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 500 ml of Northern Beans, cooked
- 25 ml of ground Sumac
- 125 ml of Vegetable Oil
- 10 ml of fresh Sage, chopped
- 5 ml of fresh Thyme, chopped
- 5 ml of fresh Rosemary, chopped
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground juniper, to taste

COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a food processor, combine beans and sumac.
2. Puree while pouring in the oil until you reach a spreadable consistency. Add additional oil if required.
3. Season with salt and juniper to taste
4. Finish with chopped herbs, chill and serve.

MAPLE BUTTERNUT SQUASH DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole Butternut Squash, halved and seeded
- Vegetable Oil
- 125 ml of real Maple Syrup
- 30 ml of fresh Sage, chopped
- 30 ml of fresh Parsley, chopped
- Sea Salt, to taste
- Ground Juniper, to taste

COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375*
2. Rub the squash with oil and season liberally with salt, lightly with juniper
3. Place on a baking tray lined with parchment, cut side down, roast until soft.
4. Cool and scrape the squash from the peel.
5. Place the squash into a food processor with herbs and maple syrup. Pulse until smooth.
6. Season with salt and ground juniper to taste. Adjust sweetness with additional syrup if desired.
7. Chill and serve.

