

Chef Lauren Lovatt

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My fondest festive memories all focus around food. I have a tiny family and our Christmas always involves a very mellow day of cooking. My fondest memory is waking up in the morning and getting the presents out from under the tree with my granddad. My family also has a tradition of drinking whisky in their tea and nibbling chocolates all morning up to lunch. So, the dishes I'm creating today take inspiration from Lovatt family classics, each one here with a mind food twist.

Focusing on the health of the plant and the mind-body-soul connection within ourselves, I love to use classic flavours like sprouts, chestnuts and potatoes with sprinkles of superfoods, championing medicinal mushrooms and CBD for an extra brain boost. I was inspired by the three choices we have each day and so each dish uses the same three ingredients in a different way.

Championing Hemp, Potato & Kalette through these bites. These dishes are cyclical and use the waste from each other to create an impact showing the versatility of the ingredients.

Candied Lion's Mane Chestnuts & Sprouts

INGREDIENTS:

100 g chestnuts, cooked
and peeled
20 0g kalette, sliced in half
100 g peacock kale
10 g maple
10 g olive oil
5 g tamari
10 g lion's mane

METHOD:

First, place your peeled chestnuts in a bowl. Drizzle them with olive oil, maple and tamari and break them up just a little with a fork. Leave to marinade while you prepare the next steps.

First, set up a steamer with boiling water and steam the kalette for two minutes until lightly cooked, then run under cold water to stop the cooking process for a moment. Warm a frying pan on medium heat and add the oil. Once the oil is hot, add your chestnuts and caramelize moving around the pan until golden. Place back in the bowl and toss over the lion's mane. It is important this ingredient remains raw, but lightly coats the chestnuts.

Keeping the pan on the heat, toss in the kalettes. The joy of this is some of the leaves fall off and become extra crispy. Turn the heat up and sizzle the kalettes a little until just crispy around the edges. Once cooked through and lightly crispy, turn off the heat and grind some black pepper over the kalettes. Put the kalettes into the bowl with the sprouts and lightly toss and serve as a plant-powered side dish for any festive meal.

