

## CHAPTER 10 : FORCEMEATS

The term forcemeat or farce, is used to describe the basic mixture that needs to be prepared in order to produce charcuterie products.

The word farce comes from the Latin **farcire**. A farce or forcemeat is a ground seasoned mixture of meat, game, poultry, fish or vegetables, prepared as a dish on its own or used to stuff other numerous other items such as eggs, meat, fish and poultry, pastry shells and perhaps even pasta. Such dishes are prepared in the *Garde Manger*.

Forcemeats are used in the preparation of a various cold dishes such as pate, terrines, galantines, ballotines, quenelle, roulade, mousse and mousseline.

Pate: from the old French ***paste***, meaning paste.

Terrine: from the Latin ***Terra***, meaning earth.

Galantine: from the old French ***galant***, meaning gorgeous or showy  
Also from the old French term ***galine***, meaning chicken.

Ballotine: from the Italian ***Balla***, meaning ball.

Quenelle: from the Alcasian French ***knodel***, meaning dumpling

Roulade: from the French ***rouler***, meaning to roll

Mousse/Mousseline: from the French, meaning **froth**.

Timbale: from the English **Thimble**

## COMPOSITION OF THE FORCMEAT

Traditional forcemeat/farce is made up of four parts:

1. The Meat (Primary Ingredient)
2. The Binder
3. Seasoning, Flavoring and Garnish
4. The Additives

### The Meat :

Consists of three elements:

- The **Dominant Meat** (basic meat) which could include veal, game, poultry, rabbit, duck, or even fish. This will provide the dominant flavor and will also name the dish. e.g. chicken liver in a **Chicken Liver Pate**. These ingredients should be fresh and of prime quality. All bones, skin, sinews and gristle must be removed and the flesh cut up into  $\frac{1}{2}$ " pieces for grinding. The dominant meat normally accounts for **40%** of the meat component.
- **Lean Pork** which contributes to the bulk as well as the flavor. This will be about **30%** of the meat component. Nowadays, when preparing forcemeat using other varieties of meat, the lean pork can be substituted with another subsidiary meat. For example, in a Lobster Mousse, the lean pork will be substituted with shrimp or some other cheap white fish. The important thing to remember is that the subsidiary meat should complement the dominant meat
- **Pork fat** which gives richness and smoothness to the product as well as for its binding qualities. This too will be **30%** of the meat component. Again, other fats such as butter and cream can be substituted in order that the meat and fat complement each other. In the Lobster mousse, cream would be better suited as a fat instead of pork fat.

### **The Binding Agent:**

To lighten the farce and to give it a finer texture, binding agents are needed. These are typically used in the making of poultry, fish and vegetable farce. Game, veal and pork do have their own binding qualities, with the protein from the meat acting as binding agents. Binding could consist of egg yolks and/or egg whites; fresh bread soaked in milk, cream or stock; thickened bechamel sauce (panada); beurre manié (uncooked butter/flour mixture), blood, or even cooked rice.

### **Seasoning Flavoring and Garnish:**

Salt is an important part of the forcemeat. It helps to bring out the natural flavors of the other elements. 20 gm of salt / kilo of the mixture is a rough guideline to use. The salt must be evenly mixed to ensure equal distribution. Seasoning should not be extravagant to cover up for inferior quality ingredient. One mistake is to use excessive MSG for this purpose. Flavorings such as herbs and spices give character to the product. The garnish is related to the farce to which it is added. A central garnish - lamb fillet in a lamb farce, strips of ham in a pork farce, or a piece of goose liver in a game farce - provides a visual focal point when the farce is sliced. Garnishes could also be dispersed or interspersed throughout the farce and would include pistachio, crushed peppercorns, diced truffle, capers, gherkins, stuffed olives, mushrooms and similar ingredients which will provide contrast and relief in the mass of the forcemeat.

### **The Additives:**

Many additives are included in the forcemeat. These include Nitrates and Nitrites of Sodium and Potassium, MSG, Sodium Erythorbate, BHT and BHA, Salt Petre.

These additives will enhance the color, increase shelf life, contribute to the taste and flavor and prevent/delay the fat from going rancid.

## **BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A FARCE:**

The meat being used to make the farce as well as the equipment to grind it like the buffalo chopper or the food processor *must* be absolutely chilled before use. Such chilling is essential as it facilitates clean grinding of the farce, as opposed to tearing which inhibits the release of the protein which in turn later binds the farce and gives it the correct texture. A sharp cutting blade is also essential.

The process of grinding involves three stages:

- First the ingredients are coarsely ground through a medium holed plate
- It is then passed through a small holed plate
- If the farce is to be ground to a fine textured paste it can be emulsified in a food processor. A small amount of crushed ice can be added during the emulsifying stage. This helps to maintain the temperature of the farce during the grinding.
- Finally, the farce is passed through a sieve to remove any trace of sinew, gristle or skin that might have remained during the grinding.

Remember, that the process may not require all the stages mentioned. For a coarse farce, like that required for a salami sausage, only the first two stages are required.

There are times when the food grinder is not available. In that case, the meat can be placed in the freezer for 30 to 60 minutes, rendering it partially frozen. This is done so that when it is placed in the food processor, the interaction of the blade against the partially frozen meat poultry or fish results in it being cut up, much the way it would if put through a meat grinder.

### **Herb and Spice Seasoning & Flavoring Blends:**

Garde Manger chefs will develop their own blend of seasoning mix for the different products they make. The degree of strength will vary from a mild, light blend for fish and seafood roulade to a medium blend for pork and veal terrine to a heavy blend for a game pate. Ideally, the herb and spice blend should be of a dry nature and finely powdered so that it blends in well with the farce. However, some chefs prefer to use the fresh variety, especially of herbs. If the herbs are fresh, they need to be chopped very finely. Spice blends are a matter of personal choice.

#### **Seasoning/Flavoring Blend I**

(All Purpose mixture, from Escofier's *Le Guide Culinaire*)

5 parts bayleaf  
4 parts clove  
4 parts cinnamon  
3 parts coriander  
3 parts ginger  
3 parts mace  
6 parts nutmeg  
5 parts Black Pepper  
5 parts White Pepper  
1 part cayenne pepper  
3 parts thyme

#### **Seasoning/flavoring Blend II**

(Good For Fish Farce)

7 parts thyme  
6 parts White Pepper  
4 parts nutmeg  
3 parts dill seed  
3 parts bayleaf

3 parts clove  
3 parts coriander & 3 parts cumin

**Seasoning/flavoring Blend III**

(Good for Meat and Poultry Farce)

3 parts White Pepper  
2 parts clove  
2 parts tarragon  
1 part all spice  
1 part ground nutmeg  
1 part each cumin, thyme, paprika, and marjoram

**Seasoning/flavoring Blend IV**

(Good for Game and Rich Meat Farce)

7 parts juniper berries  
4 parts cumin  
3 parts basil  
3 parts clove  
3 parts bay leaf  
3 parts garlic  
3 parts ginger  
3 parts nutmeg  
3 parts black pepper  
3 parts white pepper  
2 parts marjoram

## TYPES OF FORCEMEAT

There are five primary types of forcemeat:

Campagne (Country Style)

Straight Method

Gratin Style

Mousseline Style

5/4/3 Emulsion forcemeat

**Campagne** is also called the country style forcemeat. It is the earliest style that was used and is the precursor of all modern versions. It is generally made out of pork. This is probably due to the historically low expense and small amount of land required to raise pigs. Pork fat is also incorporated. The farce has a dense, coarse texture, a characteristic which resulted from the lack of sophisticated equipment in the early days when it was first developed. The earliest forcemeats were chopped with two knives giving the coarse texture that is associated with country style forcemeat today. Another character resulting from the time it was developed is that of being highly seasoned. Due to the virtual non - existence of refrigeration techniques or other preservation methods, the heavy seasoning covered both the flavor of the tainted meat and acted as a preservative for the forcemeat. The seasonings commonly used include onion, garlic, black pepper, juniper berries, bay leaf and nutmeg. Country style forcemeat is usually a combination of coarsely ground farce and a smooth ground farce so that chunks of meat are visible in the mass of the mixture.

**Straight Method** forcemeat is more refined, having a finer, less dense texture. As culinary preparations and equipment improved, the capability of producing a more refined style of forcemeat was possible. Here, any type of dominant meat can be used. It is normally, veal, duck, rabbit plus pork. White

poultry and fish is rarely used here. Ideally pork fat especially jowl fat is used.

The finer lighter texture and more delicate seasoning of this forcemeat is indicative of the refinement of many culinary preparations as technological advances were made. It was no longer necessary to mask the flavors of the meats. It was possible to simply enhance it. The common flavors used are shallots , wine, brandy and all spice. Better grinding techniques meant that the meats were binding better on their own and additional binding was not required.

In some cases a panada can be used to achieve a lighter texture and color in the farce.

**Gratin Style** is the name given to the forcemeat that is obtained from pre cooked meats. This style is used extensively to make pates. In some cases the cooking will entail only lightly searing and browning of the meats(hence the term *gratin*), at other times, the meat may be completely cooked before grinding and pureeing . The contemporary interpretation of gratin style is an expansion of the definition of farce given by Escoffier. His definition refers to any forcemeat based on liver, needed to be pre cooked before grinding. Most types of meat can be used in gratin style forcemeats. However, as in the case of the straight method, poultry and fish is normally not use. Often, the liver of veal and pork are used. Pork back fat and jowl fat are also incorporated. The texture of this type of forcemeat is very fine and should be properly ground till smooth. The density of this type of farce is slightly lighter than a straight method due to the varying degree of binding power that is lost because of the pre cooking. Panada is avoided a it will soften the already delicate texture. To compensate the loss of binding power, extra eggs are added. A different flavor is achieved here as a result of the browning and pre cooking. A nutty flavor develops. The result is a very smooth, delicately flavored forcemeat.

**Mousseline** style is the fourth type of farce. The most distinctive characteristic of this method is the type of fat that is used in its preparation. The use of cream as the source of fat, combined with the processing of the components to an ultra fine consistency, results in an extremely light and smooth product. This product is in sharp contrast to



that produced using the harder types of fat. Mousseline -style forcemeats are made using lean white or light meats and fish. Chicken, rabbit, shellfish, sole and trimmed lean pork fillet is ideal to use. Although a panada is not needed for additional binding for this type of forcemeat, one is occasionally added to achieve a lighter consistency. Due to the delicate nature of the meats and the cream, the seasoning should be very delicate. Care must be taken not to overpower the flavors of the components of the forcemeat. Shallots, ground white pepper and white wine can be used.

**Note:** The term *mousseline forcemeat* is often improperly abbreviated as *mousse* in everyday use. This is a source of much confusion. A mousse is a mixture of fully cooked and pureed basic ingredients bound with gelatin and fat and lightened with an aerator like egg white.

**5/4/3 Emulsion Forcemeat** is used extensively in making sausages like frankfurters, bologna and knockwurst. It is a commercial mixture and hardly ever used in a hotel kitchen. Its name is derived from the ratio of the components of the forcemeat: 5 parts of meat, 4 parts of fat and 3 parts of ice. A 5/4/3 emulsion forcemeat can be made with almost any kind of meat. Fish is not considered suitable for this kind of forcemeat. Pork jowl fat is the common fat used, The term emulsion automatically indicates the texture, which should be a perfectly smooth paste. Processing of the components of the forcemeat with ice, results in a very strong emulsion of the meat and the fat when it is cooked. The resulting blend has a moderate density. A variety of binders can be used to assist in the binding and water retention. *Panada* is not capable of providing the type of binding required. Therefore, non-fat milk powder is preferred. **Sodium caseinate** and phosphates can also be used. Since this is used commercially, the seasoning and flavoring will vary from one manufacturer to the other.

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