

Caviar & Buttermilk Snow

Frozen buttermilk shards, dill oil, pickled cucumber pearls, and caviar.

Yield: 10 tasting portions

Prep Time: 24 hours (including freezing)

Active Time: 60 minutes

Serving Temperature: 0–2°C (frozen/cold)

Ingredients

- *Buttermilk Snow*
 - 400 ml cultured buttermilk
 - 60 ml heavy cream (35%)
 - 15 g sugar
 - 2 g sea salt
 - 5 ml lemon juice
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Pickled Cucumber Pearls

- 1 large seedless cucumber
 - 80 ml rice vinegar
 - 40 ml water
 - 15 g sugar
 - 3 g salt
 - 1 g mustard seeds (optional, for nuance)
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Dill Oil

- 50 g fresh dill (leaves only)
 - 100 ml neutral oil (grapeseed or rice bran)
 - Pinch of salt
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Caviar Garnish

30–40 g Imperial, Kaluga, or Oscietra caviar (3–4 g per portion)

Method

1. Make the Buttermilk Base (Day Before)

Combine buttermilk, cream, sugar, salt, and lemon juice in a bowl.

Whisk until sugar dissolves completely.

Pour into a shallow stainless tray.

Freeze overnight at -18°C.

2. Prepare the Pickled Cucumber Pearls

Use a melon baller or Parisienne scoop to make small cucumber pearls.

Alternatively, cut into fine 4 mm dice.

Bring rice vinegar, water, sugar, salt, and mustard seed to a boil.

Pour hot liquid over cucumber pearls in a heatproof bowl.

Cool to room temp, then refrigerate at least 4 hours (preferably overnight).

3. Make the Dill Oil

Blanch dill in boiling water for 10 seconds, then shock in ice water.

Pat completely dry.

Blend dill and oil at high speed (70–80°C for 2 minutes) until vivid green.

Strain through a fine chinois or coffee filter.

Store in a dropper bottle.

4. Prepare the Buttermilk Snow (à la minute)

Remove the frozen buttermilk tray from the freezer.

Using a Pacojet, fine Microplane, or spoon, scrape into delicate, snowy shards.

Work quickly — snow should be airy and flaky, not melted.

Store in a chilled container over ice until plating (max 10 minutes).

5. Plating & Assembly (Service Time)

Plating Setup:

Vessel:

Frosted glass bowl or white ceramic dish set over a chilled stone.

All components pre-cooled to maintain structure.

Plating Steps:

Place 1 tsp of pickled cucumber pearls at the base.

Drizzle a few drops of dill oil around.

Spoon a generous cloud (2 tbsp) of buttermilk snow over the top.

Nestle a 3–4 g quenelle of caviar into the snow (off-center for asymmetry).

Add a small dill frond for height and freshness.

Optionally, finish with a pinch of frozen lemon zest dust for aromatic lift.

Service Notes

Temperature control: Keep bowls chilled at -4°C before plating.

Timing: 2 minutes from plating to table — beyond that, snow begins to melt.

Texture arc: Crisp frozen → creamy melt → briny burst → herbaceous finish.

Lighting: Soft overhead with reflective base to make the caviar glisten.

Wine / Pairing Suggestions

Dry Riesling Kabinett — acidity lifts dairy and cucumber.

Aquavit with dill infusion — echo of Nordic herbs.

Non-alcoholic option: Chilled cucumber-kefir tonic with lemon mist.