

Magret du Canard à la Sauce Figs
Seared Duck Breast with Fig Sauce

Ingredients:

Four 6-ounce boneless duck breasts, skin scored in crosshatches with a very sharp knife (careful not to cut below the skin), at room temperature

Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

1 teaspoon vegetable oil

Fig Sauce:

1 shallot, minced

3/4 cup dry sherry

1 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth

1/4 cup fig jam

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, chilled

Fresh chives, chopped, for garnish

Directions:

For the duck breasts: Sprinkle each duck breast liberally with salt and pepper. Heat the vegetable oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. Add the duck skin-side down and reduce the heat to low, cooking as the fat slowly renders and the skin becomes crispy, 8 to 10 minutes.

Once the skin is crispy and golden brown, flip and continue cooking until a thermometer reads about 130 degrees F when inserted into the thickest part of the breast (for medium-rare doneness), 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate or cutting board and allow to rest about 5 minutes. Don't cover with foil in order to ensure the duck skin will stay crispy.

For the fig sauce: Pour off all but 1 or 2 tablespoons of fat from the skillet and reserve the rest to sauté the potatoes. Over medium heat, add the shallots and cook until softened. Add the sherry and reduce by half. Next, add the chicken broth, fig jam and balsamic vinegar, and continue simmering until the sauce has thickened and is syrupy, another 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from the heat, season with salt and pepper and whisk in the butter. Garnish with chopped chives.

Sauce the thinly sliced duck breast and accompanying vegetables and sauteed potatoes and serve immediately. Bon appétit!

Bouillabaisse
(This makes 8-10 servings)



Ingredients:

1/2 cup fruity, dark green olive oil
1 ½ cups leeks, well cleaned and coarsely chopped
1 cup finely chopped yellow onions
2 cups canned concentrated tomato puree
3 cups chopped fresh tomatoes
2 teaspoons dried thyme
½ cup chopped Italian parsley
2 bay leaves
2 cups dry white wine
4 cups fish stock
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
6 tablespoons sweet butter, at room temperature
2 teaspoons flour
2 quarts fresh mussels, scrubbed and debearded
48 Cherrystone clams, scrubbed, or alternatively 20 large scallops
1 ½ teaspoons whole saffron
3 pounds skinless firm white fish steaks (sea bass, snapper, cod), cut into large cubes
36 raw shrimp, shelled and deveined
4 lobster tails, fresh or defrosted, 1 pound each, shelved and halved crosswise

Directions:

Heat the olive oil in a large soup pot. Add the leeks and onions and cook over medium heat, covered, until the vegetables are tender and lightly colored, about 25 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add tomato paste, tomatoes, thyme, parsley, bay leaves, wine fish stock, and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for 20 minutes (Soup can be prepared several hours ahead to this point. Return to the simmer before proceeding.)

Blend butter and flour together in a bowl (this is called a "roux" in French cuisine) and then whisk into the tomato mixture.

Add the mussels and clams (if using) in their shells and the saffron and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the fish, shrimp, scallops and lobster tails and simmer for another 5 minutes, or until all shellfish are opened and fish is done. Do not overcook.

Ladle into hot soup plates, garnish with fried garlic croutons, rouille and serve immediately. Bon appétit!

Aïoli Sauce



Aïoli is a cold sauce consisting of garlic and olive oil; it is an essential condiment in Mediterranean French cuisine. The name means "garlic and oil" in Provençal. With 15 garlic cloves it's also good at keeping vampires away!

Ingredients:

15 garlic cloves, peeled and trimmed
2 egg yolks, at room temperature
Salt and freshly ground white pepper to taste
Juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon Grey Poupon or Maille Dijon mustard
1 ½ cups light olive oil at room temperature

Directions:

It is acceptable to puree garlic in a food processor or blender, but it is best to pound the garlic with a mortar and pestle. Even if you chop first in a food processor the final sauce will taste better if you pound the chopped garlic to extract all the juices. Whisk the egg yolks in a small bowl until light and smooth, and add to the crushed garlic. Add salt and pepper to taste, lemon juice, and mustard, and process to a smooth paste. With food processor running, pour the olive oil very slowly into the egg yoke-garlic mixture in a steady stream, blending constantly. Continue blending until you obtain a thick, shiny, firm sauce with the consistency of mayonnaise. Transfer to storage container, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until ready to use. Bon appétit!

Rouille



Rouille is a thick French sauce spiced with saffron, and often served with bouillabaisse.

Ingredients:

large garlic clove, chopped and crushed
1/2 red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, and seeded
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
Small pinch of saffron threads
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt
Pepper

Directions:

Place the seeded red pepper cut side down in broiler. Broil until the skin is at least 50% charred black (about 8-10 minutes). Let cool. When cool enough to handle, gently peel the skin. Combine the garlic, roasted and skinned red pepper, egg yolk, lemon juice, and saffron in a food processor. Pulse until smooth, then slowly drizzle in the olive oil

and process continuously until the mixture thickens to the consistency of mayonnaise. Season with salt and pepper to taste and use immediately. Bon appétit!