

Baroque Salmon in Champagne Wine

This dish would have been one of the grande entrée served in the first course at a dinner for Louis XIV of France.

Ingredients

2 1/2 lbs. salmon cut from the middle of the fish

5 cups water

2 1/2 cups champagne

1 Tbs. fresh parsley

1 bay leaf

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. black peppercorns

Utensils

knife and cutting board

measuring cup

measuring spoons

string

scissors

cookpot

strainer

bowl

fork

wooden spoon

poaching pan

spatula

serving plate

gravy boat

ladle

1 *bouquets garnis*—made from 3 or 4 sprigs of parsley **or** chervil, 1/2 bay leaf, 2 sprigs fresh thyme, 1 white portion of a leek, and 2 cloves, placed inside several celery stalks and tied with string.

Make the sauce (see below). Make the *bouquets garnis*. Finely chop the parsley. Place all the ingredients except the salmon into the cookpot and bring to a simmer on the stove over low heat. Simmer for 30 minutes, then strain the cooking liquid into a bowl. The dish can be prepared up to this point in advance. Turn the oven on low and place the serving plate inside to warm. Place the fish and the cooking liquid into the poaching pan and cover with the lid. Gently bring the liquid to a simmer on the stove over medium low heat. Poach the fish 35 minutes or until the meat easily comes away from the bone when tested with a fork. Remove the fish from the pan and place it on the warm serving dish. Gently reheat the sauce and pour it into the gravy boat. Serve the warm sauce with the salmon.

for the sauce

Ingredients

1 cup Champagne

2/3 cup heavy cream

2/3 cup cream

1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms

3 1/2 Tbs. unsalted butter

2 1/2 Tbs. cornstarch

Utensils

knife and cutting board

measuring cup

measuring spoons

cookpot

wire whisk

wooden spoon

frying pan

spatula

Slice the mushrooms. The sauce can be prepared up to this point in advance. Melt 1 1/2 Tbs. butter in the cookpot on the stove over medium low heat. Using a wire whisk, add the cornstarch and form a roux. Gradually add the cream, stirring constantly to make a smooth sauce. Remove the cookpot from the heat. Melt 2 Tbs. butter in the frying pan on the stove over medium high heat and add the mushrooms. Sauté the mushrooms 2 minutes then remove the frying pan from the heat and add the champagne. Return the frying pan to the heat and rapidly boil until the liquid is reduced by half. Remove the frying pan from the heat and allow it to cool slightly. Gradually add the cream sauce to the wine and mushroom sauce. The combined sauce should be the consistency of thick cream. It may not require all the cream sauce to obtain the correct consistency. The sauce can be made in advance of the meal and gently reheated on the stove over low heat. Do not boil the sauce or the cream will curdle.