

Asparagus With Hollandaise Gets A Remake

By America's Test Kitchen

The combination of asparagus and hollandaise is quintessential in French cooking. Steamed asparagus is typically used, but the combination gets even better when the asparagus is roasted; the browning adds deep flavour to the sweet and verdant vegetable.

This complexity called out for a hollandaise with a bit more character than our lemon-scented standby, so we decided to use our Foolproof Mustard-Dill Hollandaise; tasters thought its zingy, herbal flavour woke up the dish. When roasting the asparagus, America's Test Kitchen discovered that thicker spears held up better to the high heat. Peeling the bottom halves of the stalks — just enough to expose the creamy white flesh — delivered consistently tender and visually appealing asparagus.

To ensure a hard sear on our spears, we preheated the baking



sheet and resisted the urge to give it a shake during roasting. This recipe works best with thick asparagus spears that are between 1/2 and 3/4 inch in diameter. Do not use pencil-thin asparagus; it overcooks too easily.

Roasted Asparagus With Mustard-Dill Hollandaise

2 pounds thick asparagus, trimmed

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pepper
Mustard-Dill Hollandaise
3 large egg yolks
2 tbsp lemon juice
Salt
Pinch cayenne pepper, plus extra for seasoning
16 tbsp unsalted butter, melted and still hot (180 degrees)

1 tbsp whole-grain mustard
1 tbsp minced fresh dill
Adjust oven rack to lowest position, place rimmed baking sheet on rack, and heat oven to 500 degrees. Peel bottom halves of asparagus spears until white flesh is exposed, then toss with oil, salt, and pepper in bowl.

Transfer asparagus to preheated sheet and spread into single layer.

Roast, without moving asparagus, until undersides of spears are browned, tops are bright green, and tip of paring knife inserted at base of largest spear meets little resistance, 8 to 10 minutes.

To prepare hollandaise, process egg yolks, lemon juice, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and cayenne in blender until frothy, about 10 seconds, scraping bottom and sides of blender jar as needed. With blender running, slowly add hot butter and process until hollandaise is emulsified, about 2 minutes. Adjust consistency with hot water as needed until sauce slowly drips from a spoon. Add 1 tablespoon whole-grain mustard and 1 tablespoon minced fresh dill to hollandaise and pulse until combined but not smooth, about 10 pulses. Season with salt and extra cayenne to taste.

Transfer asparagus to serving dish and drizzle with hollandaise. Pic: Daniel J. van Ackere/America's Test Kitchen via AP

Cauliflower With Sesame Drizzle - A Great Side Dish



By Katie Workman

Food writers (and I include myself) are often talking about what new things you can do with that package of chicken breasts or that pound of ground beef to get out of the same-old, same-old cooking rut. But we might not spend enough time talking about what to do with that head of cauliflower or broccoli. We can all feel as uninspired looking at those stoic spheres as we do with our proteins, right?

So off we go, on the hunt for a new and simple side dish. This is definitely one to keep in mind when you're making a stir fry or other Asian-influenced dish. It's especially useful since you can make the drizzle ahead of time, pop the vegetable in the oven, and get to work at the stove making the rest of the meal. The cauliflower or broccoli needs no attention as it roasts, only the sound of the buzzer to remind you to take it out of the oven.

Cauliflower With Sesame Drizzle

1 large (1 3/4 pound) head cauliflower (or substitute the same amount of broccoli heads)
2 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 tablespoons untoasted sesame seeds (optional)
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1 teaspoon honey
1 teaspoon Sriracha sauce

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Cut the cauliflower into florets. Place the cauliflower on a rimmed baking sheet and drizzle with the olive oil. Toss well, and then sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for about 25 minutes, until crisp-tender and browned at the edges.

Meanwhile, if you are using the sesame seeds, heat a skillet over medium heat. Add the sesame seeds and stir frequently for about 1 or 2 minutes, until they start to become golden; don't let them get too brown. Transfer them to a plate.

In a small bowl, combine the soy sauce, sesame oil, honey and Sriracha sauce. When the cauliflower is roasted, transfer it to a serving platter and drizzle the sauce over it (or pass the sauce on the side for everyone to drizzle over their own portion). Sprinkle the top with sesame seeds, if desired, and serve hot or warm.

(AP Photo/Matthew Mead, File)

Couscous With Baked Chicken

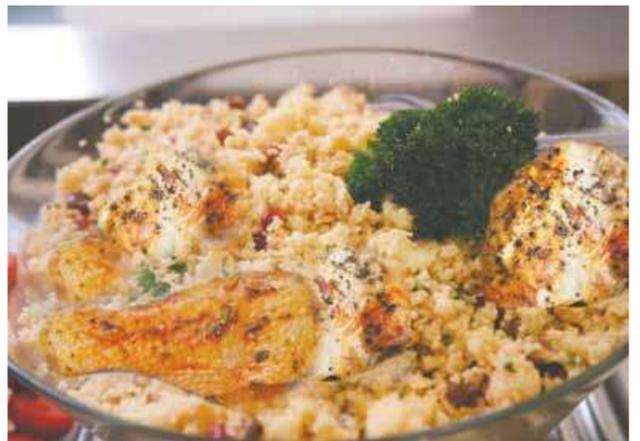
By Sara Moulton

With Ramadan, Islam's annual holy month, upon us, I thought I'd offer up some couscous, a dish that originated among North Africa's Berbers a thousand or so years ago. The term refers to a grain-like kernel made of crushed durum wheat semolina as well as to the broad range of recipes — a combined dish of broth, vegetables and red meat, chicken or fish — served with it.

Couscous is the national dish of Morocco, where it possesses "a quasi-mystical character," according to Claudia Roden in "Arabesque: A Taste of Morocco, Turkey & Lebanon." She writes: "Morocco's Berbers call it keskou, a name said to be derived from the sound steam makes as it passes through the grain. It is served on all great occasions, both happy and sad. It can be very simple, with the couscous plus just one vegetable such as fresh green peas, or it can be quite grandiose with stuffed pigeons sitting on a mountain of couscous mixed with almonds and raisins."

The stew here consists of chicken thighs, frozen artichoke hearts crisped up in the chicken fat, green olives, chicken broth and lemon wedges. Why lemon wedges instead of lemon juice? Because as they bake among the other ingredients, the wedges impart a more lemony flavour to the dish.

What's wonderful about this dish (besides its lusciousness) is that it calls for very little time and work on your part. You can brown the chicken thighs while prepping the rest of the ingredients, a step that helps get the dish into the oven that much faster.



And the sauce makes itself as the chicken bakes.

The final touch? Chopped fresh herbs. And don't skimp on them. They brighten up the whole shebang.

Couscous With Baked Chicken Thighs, Green Olives, Lemons And Artichoke Hearts

3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
8 small bone-in chicken thighs
Kosher salt
One 9-ounce package defrosted frozen artichoke hearts (about 2 cups), quartered and patted dry
1 tbsp minced garlic
1/2 cup green olives
1 lemon cut into 8 wedges, plus 1 1/2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
One 10-ounce box instant couscous
1/2 cup coarsely chopped flat leaf parsley, cilantro or mint, or a mix
Preheat oven to 350 F.

In a large ovenproof skillet heat 2 tbsp of the oil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium, and working in two batches, season the chicken with salt and add it to the skillet skin

side down. Cook until the skin is golden brown, about 6 minutes. Turn the pieces over and cook them for 4 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate and repeat with the remaining chicken. Pour off all but 2 1/2 tbsp of the fat.

Add the artichokes to the skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until they are lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring 1 minute. Return the chicken to the pan, skin side up, add the olives, lemon wedges and chicken broth.

Put the skillet on the middle shelf of the oven and bake the chicken for 20 minutes or until the chicken is just cooked through. While the chicken is baking, prepare the couscous following the instructions on the back of the package, adding the remaining tablespoon oil as instructed. Fluff up the couscous with a fork before serving.

Mound the couscous on each plate and top with some of the chicken, artichokes, lemon wedges and olives, some of the broth from the skillet and a generous sprinkling of the herbs. CP/AP



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