

Eggs Florentine Recipe

Serves 6.

Shortcrust Pastry / Pâte Brisée (for six greased 3.5-inch (9cm) diameter English muffin rings).

1.7 cups (250g) all-purpose flour

8 Tbsp (125g) unsalted butter, cubed and cold

1 pinch salt

1/4 cup (60ml) milk or water, cold

Method

In a large bowl, combine flour, salt and the cubed butter and rub in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add liquid and knead the dough briefly until just combined. Do not add extra flour during mixing process. Wrap in plastic and chill for a couple of hours or until firm (shortcrust pastry can be refrigerated up to 5 days). Dust work surface and dough lightly with flour. Roll out pastry until dough is about 0.12-inch (3mm) thick. Divide sheet into six 6-inch (15cm) diameter disks. Make them a bit larger and shape the dough inside of each mold by applying it to the whole surface of the mold from the bottom up using your thumbs. If your dough ever becomes too soft or too warm, pop it into the refrigerator for 20 minutes or up to 4 days. Save and chill trimmings as well to reuse later. Once done, place rings in the freezer for about 30 minutes or until the pastry has hardened. Line each mold with a piece of foil and fill the pie crust up to the top with the weights, rice or beans. Bake in a 350°F (180°C) preheated oven for about 20 minutes. Remove weights and bake for an additional 15 minutes. Let cool. Tart shells can be stored at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Poached Eggs

6 ea. large fresh eggs, pasture-raised eggs preferably*

1/4 cup (60ml) distilled white vinegar

No salt; adding salt to your poaching liquid breaks up the eggs whites and essentially ruins everything.

Method

In a large pot bring water and vinegar to boil and lower the heat and maintain a low simmer. Crack each egg in a separate container. Carefully drop an egg or 2 into the center of the pot (do not let eggs to touch each other) and let it cook for about 30 seconds. Then, slowly stir the water in one direction until it's all smoothly spinning around. The swirling water will help prevent the white from "feathering," or spreading out in the pan. Let cook eggs for about 3 minutes and remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and transfer to an ice bath and refrigerate up to 8 hours.

*Grass-fed/pastured hens are raised on pasture, as opposed to being kept in confinement and fed primarily grains. Eggs from pastured hens contain up to 20 times more healthy omega-3 fatty acids than those their less fortunate cousins, factory hens.

Pastured hens' diets are naturally complemented with bugs, earthworms, and other such critters that give their eggs a huge nutritious oomph. Although not necessarily organic, pastured hens are usually much healthier and happier than their space-restricted and antibiotic-pumped industrial cousins.

Pasturing is the traditional method of raising egg-laying hens and other poultry. It is ecologically sustainable, humane, and produces the tastiest, most nutritious eggs.

Pastured eggs also have 10 percent less fat, 40 percent more vitamin A, and 34 percent less cholesterol than eggs obtained from factory farms. Read more at: localharvest.org.



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Mornay Sauce

2 Tbsp (30g) unsalted butter

3 Tbsp (30g) all-purpose flour

1.8 cup (400ml) milk

1 small bay leaf and nutmeg to taste

1 ea. (20g) egg yolk

1 ounce (30g) parmesan, grated

1 ounce (30g) gruyère or comté, grated*

*Cheddar cheese can be used instead. Parmesan is optional.

Salt, ground black pepper to taste.



Method

To make the roux, melt butter over medium high heat and add flour and cook for a minute and turn the heat off. Bring milk with the bay leaf and nutmeg to boil and mix in the room temperature roux. Turn on the heat and bring béchamel to boil whisking constantly; for 2 minutes over medium high heat. Turn off the heat and whisk in the yolk and add cheeses and salt and pepper. Let cool to room temperature before using. Mornay sauce can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

Note that there are actually 2 options to making a béchamel based sauce; one is to whisk cold milk in a hot roux and the other is whisking cold milk in hot roux. However if milk and roux are mixed up hot; it may turn into a lumpy sauce.

Spinach

10 ounces (300g) fresh spinach, thoroughly washed and stems trimmed off.

Method

Wilt spinach in a hot large pot. Add a drizzle of olive oil, throw in spinach and cook for about a minutes stirring swiftly and season with salt and pepper. Drain cooked spinach on paper towels.

To Assemble

Spoon or pipe out some mornay sauce on the bottom of each baked pie shell. Add the wilted spinach, a dot of mornay, the poached egg and cover completely with mornay. Top with parmesan and bake in a 400°F (205°C) preheated oven for 8 minutes and finish under the broiler leaving the oven door ajar for about 4 minutes more or until golden brown. Season with fleur-de-sel and ground black pepper and serve immediately with a light salad or fresh herbs as parsley, dill, oregano, chervil...Eggs florentine can be kept refrigerated up to 2 days – rewarm before serving.