

Menu Du Jour

18 Apr 2004

Sunday Brunch

Red Flannel Hash

Poached Eggs

Hollandaise Sauce

Bloody Marys With Attitude

A variation on the traditional eggs Benedict where poached eggs are served over Canadian bacon and English muffins, this brunch entrée is served over Red Flannel Hash with a creamy Hollandaise sauce. Another variation is eggs Maryland, poached eggs served over crab cakes.

Red Flannel Hash

In New England, Red Flannel Hash is a favorite, not only for breakfast or brunch but also served as a dinner meal with crusty bread and a tossed green salad. Red Flannel Hash is also a traditional Irish meal on St. Patrick's Day. The hash also freezes well for future use.

1 1/2 cups cooked corned beef
1 1/2 cups boiled potatoes
1 1/2 cups boiled beets
1 medium onion, diced
1 Jalapeño, seeded and diced
1 tablespoon Louisiana-style hot sauce
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon minced garlic
Kosher salt and cracked black pepper to taste
1/2 – 3/4 cup beef stock
2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Dice corned beef, potatoes, and beets to a uniform small dice. Place 1/3 of the mixture and 1/2 of the diced onion in a food processor and process until coarsely ground. Combine with hand-diced mixture in a large mixing bowl. Add Jalapeño, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce, and garlic. Season to taste with kosher salt and cracked black pepper. Add enough beef stock to bind mixture together.

Preheat the oven to 400° F.

Using a cast iron skillet over medium heat, melt butter and add mixture, pressing it with a spatula to form a large patty. (Alternatively, form mixture into three-inch patties.) Cook over medium heat until a crisp crust has formed on the bottom, about five minutes. Transfer to oven and bake for 30 minutes.

Chef's Note: If the hash breaks into pieces when you try to remove it from the skillet, let the mixture cool and form into smaller patties. Reheat in a low oven.

(Serves four)

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Poached Eggs

By adding vinegar to the water, the egg whites will congeal and form nicer looking eggs. Fresh eggs will also cook better than week-old eggs. (These may be prepared ahead, held in cold water, and reheated before service. To prepare in advance, cook the eggs and put them in a large bowl of cold water. Refrigerate, uncovered, up to three days. When ready to use, fill a large saucepan 2/3 full of water and heat to a low boil. Using a slotted spoon, drop the eggs into the water and simmer about 30 seconds to warm.)

8 jumbo eggs
2 tablespoons distilled vinegar
1 tablespoon kosher salt

Fill a medium-sized (10-inch diameter) skillet or sauté pan about 2/3 full with water, add vinegar and kosher salt; bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat so the water is at a low simmer.

Individually break eggs into a small saucer and slide the eggs into the simmering water. Immediately cover the pan and turn off the heat. Cook for three minutes for medium-firm yolks. Remove each egg with a slotted spoon and drain on a clean chef's towel.

(Serves four)

Hollandaise Sauce

This rich egg-based sauce flavored with lemon, butter, and a hint of cayenne pepper is one of the five "mother sauces," sauces from which all other sauces derive. Hollandaise may be served over vegetables, fish, or eggs Benedict. (The "mother sauces" are the white sauce Béchamel, the light stock-based Velouté, the brown stock-based Espagnole; Hollandaise; and tomato sauce.) Use a double boiler and make sure not to let the water in the bottom of the double boiler to boil, keep it lightly simmering.

1/2 cup unsalted butter
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
3 large egg yolks
1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

Melt the butter and keep it warm.

Place the top of a double boiler over, not in, hot water. (The bottom of the top of the double boiler should not touch the water heating in the bottom half of the double boiler.)

Place the egg yolks in the top of the double boiler and whisk until they begin to thicken. Add the lemon juice. Remove the double boiler from the heat. Continue to beat the mixture while slowly adding the melted butter. Add the cayenne pepper and salt; beat the sauce until it is thick. If the sauce becomes too thick, thin with one tablespoon of hot water. Serve immediately.

(Yield: One cup)

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Bloody Marys With Attitude

According to mixology legend, during the 1920's Fernand Petiot, an American bartender at Harry's New York Bar in Paris mixed up equal parts of tomato juice and vodka. In 1934, Petiot moved to the King Cole Bar in New York City, where patrons said the drink tasted flat, and asked Petiot to spice it up. He added black pepper, cayenne pepper, Worcestershire sauce, lemon and – for those who wanted more of a kick – Tabasco® pepper sauce. This recipe is a variation on this classic hangover cure.

1 1/2 ounces cold Absolut Peppar or Inferno Pepper Pot vodka
3 ounces tomato or V-8® juice
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
3 drops Tabasco® sauce
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
Cracked black pepper and celery salt, to taste
Lime wedge
Celery stalk or green onion and pickled okra for garnish

Mix the vodka, sherry, tomato juice, lemon juice, Tabasco and Worcestershire sauce, black pepper, and celery salt with ice and stain into an old-fashioned glass over ice cubes. Garnish with lime and celery or green onion and okra.

(Serves one)

To prepare a mix in advance, here's a larger recipe.

1 (48-ounce) bottle tomato or V-8® juice
1/4 cup prepared horseradish
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon Tabasco® sauce
1 tablespoon cracked black pepper
1 tablespoon celery salt

Stir all ingredients together in a large container and chill. To serve, add 3/4 cup of mix with 1 1/2 ounces of Absolut Peppar or Inferno Pepper Pot vodka and serve over ice. Garnish with lime wedge, green onion or celery, and pickled okra.

Homebrew Pepper Vodka

If you'd like to make your own pepper vodka, it's simple to do. Keep the vodka in the freezer so it's ice cold when served. This seasoned vodka may be used for Bloody Marys, Bloody Bulls, or any cocktail calling for vodka.

1 (750-ml) bottle good quality vodka
1 fresh red Jalapeño pepper
1 fresh green Jalapeño pepper
1 fresh Serrano pepper

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Beginning about 3/8 of an inch from the pepper's shoulder, slit the peppers in half lengthwise. Remove 1/4 cup of vodka from the bottle and reserve for another use. Add the peppers to the vodka. Cap and keep at room temperature for about one week before using. (The longer the peppers remain in the vodka, the hotter it becomes.)

Plate Presentation

Plate Red Flannel Hash onto a service plate; top with two poached eggs and drizzle Hollandaise sauce over eggs. Garnish plate with chopped fresh parsley. Serve with steamed asparagus and toast, if desired.
