

SALMON “À LA SARAH”

(SAUMON AU VIN CRÉMEUSE)

Salmon with creamy tarragon wine sauce

Servings: 4

“Poisson vie en l'eau, et mort en vin.”

(Fish live in water and die in wine) - Medieval French proverb



We've created a salmon dish that pairs perfectly with our Estate Chardonnay for you to make at home if you feel adventurous. The sauce is rich with wine, butter and cream, but somehow tastes light and lively at the same time – give it a try. Especially during the chilly autumn, this salmon will bring the warmth of a summer day to your dinner table.

This dish requires no great skill in the kitchen, but some preparation is involved. For best success, it's important is to have the ingredients all ready before cooking the salmon. The salmon fillets are thin, cook very quickly and will cool just as quickly. They will be best enjoyed when barely cooked and served on a puddle of the hot crème sauce, on a heated plate, to be eaten immediately.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds salmon (fillets)
- Olive oil, for searing salmon
- 2 cups fish stock
- 2 medium shallots, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup dry white wine, preferably Sarah's Vineyard Estate Chardonnay
- 3 tablespoons dry Spanish sherry (“Fino” or “Manzanilla” style)
- 1 1/4 cups crème fraîche*
- 2 tablespoons fresh tarragon leaves, finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- Freshly squeezed lemon juice
- Bundle of asparagus, cleaned and tough ends removed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

**Note: If you can't find crème fraîche in your local supermarket (sometimes it's found in the deli near the ricotta cheese) you can make your own (fun but it takes overnight) or use an acceptable substitute (takes 5 minutes), directions on next page.*



Prepare the salmon fillets

Choose the thick center section salmon. Cut apart the two fillets, and carefully remove skin. With tweezers, remove tiny bones from center of the flesh. Divide each fillets in half horizontally to make four pieces (about 6 ounces each). Lay plastic wrap across a cutting board and smear with a little olive oil. Lay each fillet on the plastic wrap, lightly oil the top of the fish and lay a second piece of plastic wrap over. With the side of a cleaver, gently pound all fillets to equal thickness.

Roast the asparagus

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Lay asparagus on foiled baking sheet and coat with olive oil, light salt and pepper. Roast in oven for 15 to 20 minutes, or until tender. Remove from oven, place asparagus spears on a plate and cover.

Prepare the sauce

In a medium saucepan, combine fish stock and shallots. Bring to a boil, and cook until reduced to a glaze, 10 to 15 minutes. Add wine and sherry and boil until syrupy, about 3 minutes. Add creme fraiche and boil until slightly thickened, 2 minutes. Pass through a fine mesh sieve into a clean pan. Add tarragon, and simmer for 5 more minutes on low heat. Remove from heat. Whisk in butter slowly one chunk at a time until completely incorporated. Season sauce carefully with lemon juice, salt, and pepper to taste. Cover and keep warm.

Cook the salmon

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Season salmon on the less presentable side with salt and pepper. Place in pan, seasoned side up. Sear for 2 - 3 minutes, flip, and sear 2 - 3 minutes more (depending on thickness). The salmon should be barely cooked to preserve its tenderness and flavor.

Plate and Serve

Puddle the sauce on the plate. Attractively fan the asparagus over the sauce, then place salmon, seasoned side down, on the asparagus. Serve immediately, paired with Sarah's Vineyard Estate Chardonnay.

CRÈME FRAÎCHE

Pronounced "krem fresh", crème fraîche is a very common French cultured dairy product. Though more and more common in the US it can be hard to find in regular supermarkets, and sometimes you'll need to make your own or make do with a substitute.

Making your own takes overnight, but it's fun and well worth the effort:

1. Buy a pint of heavy whipping cream and some cultured buttermilk.
2. In a clean 1 pint glass container, pour 1 cup of heavy cream. Using your microwave, pulse 5 seconds and stir, repeating until the temperature is barely lukewarm, about 75 degrees.
3. Add 1 tablespoon of the buttermilk.
4. Cover the glass container and let the mixture sit out overnight. In the morning gently test the top of the mixture with a clean butter knife and it should be thickened like yogurt. Taste it and be delighted by the thick, creamy tangy goodness!

If you're in a hurry, use this substitute:

1. Buy a cup of sour cream (whole, not light or nonfat) and a cup of heavy cream.
2. Mix sour cream and heavy cream with a whisk until smooth.
3. Use as a direct replacement for crème fraîche.