



Recipes by Hubert Keller

Maine Lobster Macaroni and Cheese “Au Gratin”

Ingredients:

(Yields: 4 servings)

- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 4 live Maine Lobsters (about 1 lb each)
- salt, to taste
- white pepper, to taste
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1/3 cup shallots, finely minced
- ¼ cup carrots, very finely diced
- ¼ cup celery, very finely diced
- 1 tablespoon Cognac
- 2 tablespoons Port wine
- 1 ½ cup and 2 ½ tablespoons cream, or half & half
- 1 bouquet garni (see below)
- 3 egg yolk
- 8 oz elbow macaroni, or small pasta shells
- 3 tablespoons Mimolette or aged cheddar cheese, freshly grated

Bouquet Garni

- >• 4-5 sprigs Fresh Parsley
- 1 sprig Fresh Thyme
- 1 whole Dried Bay Leaf
- 3” stalk Celery
- 1 sprig Fresh Basil, optional
- 1 sprig Fresh Tarragon, optional
- 1 sprig Fresh Rosemary, optional
- 1 sprig Fresh Cilantro, optional
- 1 leaf Leek, optional

Bunch the herbs and celery neatly and tie securely with the leek leaf or kitchen twine. Use as directed

Directions:

To prepare the lobster, bring 1 ½ gallons of salted water to a boil in a large stockpot. Add the vinegar and then add 2 of the lobsters, head first. Cover tightly with a lid, and cook for 3 minutes. Remove the lobsters, drain and set aside to cool. Repeat with the remaining two lobsters. Break the lobsters in two where the tail meets the body. Using scissors, cut the underside of the tail and remove the meat in one piece. Break off the claws, carefully crack the shells, and remove the claw meat in one piece. Cut the bodies in half, lengthwise and remove and discard the greyish, milky sand sacks behind the eyes. Remove the soft green strip of tomalley and dark green coral and reserve.

Season the lobster meat with salt and white pepper. Heat the butter in a large non-stick skillet, and gently sauté the lobster meat over medium heat for 2 minutes. Remove the claw meat and continue to sauté the rest of the lobster meat for 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer the lobster meat to a work surface and let cool slightly. Cut the meat into ¼-inch-thick slices and set aside.

In the same skillet, sweat the shallots, carrots, and celery over medium heat for 3 minutes. Add the cognac, port, 1 ½ cups of the cream, the bouquet garni, salt and pepper. Reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook for 5 to 7 minutes. Cover the skillet, remove from the heat and set the sauce aside.

Whisk the remaining 2 ½ tablespoons of cream in a small mixing bowl until thick. Fold in the egg yolk and keep refrigerated.

Cook the macaroni in a large saucepan of boiling water until just tender, about 10 minutes. Drain in a colander and set aside.

Preheat the broiler. Return the sauce to low heat and warm gently. Whisk the reserved lobster tomalley and coral into the sauce, and then stir in the cheese, lobster meat, and macaroni. Increase the heat to high and quickly bring to a boil. Adjust the seasonings if necessary.

Divide the mixture equally between individual warm gratin dishes. Pour reserved cream-egg mixture over the macaroni, and place the gratin dishes under the broiler until golden brown. Serve immediately.