

Classic Eggs Benedict

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Servings: 4

FOR THE HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

2 sticks unsalted butter
3 large egg yolks
4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
2 pinches cayenne pepper
Kosher salt
FOR THE EGGS BENEDICT
2 tablespoons distilled white vinegar
8 large eggs
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
8 slices Canadian bacon
4 English muffins, split
unsalted butter (for spreading)
chopped fresh chives (for topping)

Make the hollandaise sauce:: In a small saucepan over medium heat melt the butter until no longer foamy (but not browned), 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer the clear butter to a liquid measuring cup, leaving the milk solids on the bottom of the pan. Discard the solids.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, heat one inch of water until steaming but not simmering. In a medium stainless steel bowl, combine the egg yolks, one tablespoon of water and two teaspoons of lemon juice. Set the bowl on the saucepan (do not let the bowl touch the water). Cook, whisking constantly, until the egg mixture is pale yellow and thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. Check periodically to make sure that the water is not boiling or the egg yolks might overcook.

Remove the bowl from the saucepan. Slowly pour in the melted butter, a drop at a time at first, whisking constantly until thick. Whisk in the remaining two teaspoons of lemon juice, the cayenne and 1/4 teaspoon of salt. If the sauce is too thick, whisk in some warm water, one tablespoon at a time, to loosen. Return the bowl to the saucepan of water with the heat turned off to keep warm. Whisk occasionally.

Make the eggs Benedict: Fill a large wide pot with three inches of water. Heat over medium-high heat until steaming with small bubbles. Reduce the heat as needed to maintain a bare simmer. Stir in the vinegar. Crack four eggs into individual small bowls or ramekins. Carefully tip the eggs into the water, spacing them as far apart as possible. Cook until the whites are set but the yolks are still runny, 3 to 3-1/2 minutes. Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and transfer to a plate lined with a kitchen towel. Gently blot the eggs dry and trim off any wispy pieces. Repeat with the remaining eggs

Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the Canadian bacon and cook until lightly browned and warmed through, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Meanwhile, toast the English muffins and spread with butter.

Top each English muffin half with a slice of Canadian bacon and a poached egg. Thin the hollandaise sauce with more warm water, if necessary. Season with salt. Spoon over the poached eggs and sprinkle with chives.

POACHED EGGS: Start with cold eggs - they'll keep their shape better than room temperature ones. Poach in barely simmering (not boiling) water and add a little white vinegar to help the egg whites set quickly.

HOLLANDAISE: This classic sauce is easy to fix if things go wrong. If there are a few bits of cooked egg in the finished sauce, strain thru a fine-mesh sieve. If the sauce looks oily or "broken" when you add the butter, whisk in a teaspoon of warm water.

ENGLISH MUFFINS: Timing is everything when you're making eggs Benedict. Toast the English muffins while the Canadian bacon is cooking and make sure you spread butter on them while they're still warm.

CANADIAN BACON: This lean breakfast meat is fully cooked when you buy it, so you just need to warm it up before serving. Cook in a skillet with butter until browned around the edges. No need to drain on paper towels.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 874 Calories; 70g Fat (72.6% calories from fat); 31g Protein; 29g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 751mg Cholesterol; 1216mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 1/2 Grain(Starch); 3 1/2 Lean Meat; 0 Fruit; 12 Fat.