

Frisee Aux Lardons with Poached Egg

Ingredients:

10 1-inch thick slices crusty bread
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tbsl walnut oil
1 tsp purple mustard or dijon
Sea salt and cracked black pepper to taste
1/2 lb smoked lardon (smoked bacon, cut into 3/4 inch dice)
4 shallots, finely chopped
3 tbsl maple vinegar
1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
1 tbsl chives, finely sliced
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
12 cup baby frisee, torn into pieces, washed thoroughly and spun dry
6 large eggs
1 tspn salt for every quart of water
1 tspn white wine vinegar for every quart of water

Directions:

Make the Croutons: Preheat oven to 350°. Brush bot sides of bread slices with 3 tbsl of olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Cut into 1-inch cubes and bake croutons in oven on a baking sheet, shake the pan occasionally, until golden brown 12-15 minutes.

Boil the salt pok in water to cover in a saucepan for 2 minutes and drain in colander. Rinse salt pork under cold water and pat very dry with paper towels.

Heat remaining 1 tbsl olive oil in a large skillet over moderate heat, and cook the smoked bacon, stirring frequently until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

Pour off all but 1/2 cup of fat from skillet, and add the shallots, maple vinegar, and garlic. Cook the dressing, stirring for 2 minutes, or until shallots are soft. Whisk in purple mustard and walnut oil, adjust seasoning with sea salt and cracked black pepper.

To poach eggs: bring at least 1 1/2 inches of water to a boil in a saucepan or skillet, add the salt and vinegar and lower the heat so the water barely simmers - you want it hot, the kind of heat where bubbles might cling like condensation to the inside walls of the pan – 160-180 degrees - not a gentle boil.

Crack the egg into a cup then slide it from the cup to the water. The egg should start to set a few seconds after it hits the water and will be ready in 3 1/2 to 4 minutes, when the white is set and the yolk is still runny.

Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and transfer them to a kitchen towel to drain off any water clinging to them. Use them within the next few minutes.

If you are making them in advance, transfer them directly from the hot water to a bowl of ice water. Once cold transfer to a plate lined with paper towels. Store them in the refrigerator for up to 5 hours. Reheat them in near boiling water for 15 - 30 seconds , drain on towels and use.

Lastly, in a large bowl toss the baby frisee, smoked bacon, croutons, and warm dressing. Divide salads among 6 plates. Top each salad with one poached egg. Sprinkle egg with salt, herbs and freshly cracked black pepper. Serve.