



# JP's KITCHEN

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## NORDIC SALMON WITH BUERRE ROUGE SAUCE

### INTRODUCTION

Beurre Rouge literally translates to “red butter”. It’s a reduction of herbed infused red wine and red wine vinegar emulsified with unsalted butter. It has its origins in the French Nouvelle Cuisine revolution (as opposed to the traditional, heavier sauces of the Haute Cuisine).

Beurre Rouge sauce is the sauce of choice with this dish of shallow poached red salmon served upon a bed of lightly buttered leek fettuccini – providing an elegant balance of flavours and textures.

In this recipe, we shall be shallow poaching the salmon in pure water rather than submerging the salmon into a poaching liquid and we shall cook it slowly and without a cover on the pan so that it cooks at the bottom while the warms to the touch but remains red in colour.

Cooking salmon in this way brings it out nicely and tenderly as the salmon cooks slowly and gently, retaining its full flavour unadulterated by aromatics or contamination by any additives in the poaching liquid – we want to savour the natural, lovely taste the salmon.

Shallow poaching in pure water is one of the healthiest ways to cook salmon as it protects the nutrients and retains the natural oils within the salmon that are lost by overcooking and frying at a high temperature, allowing the salmon to retain the consistency of its texture.

We shall seek to contrast the absence of “umami” (one of the 5 flavours (the other four being sweet, sour, salty, bitter) from the low inosinic acid content of the salmon with an acidic beurre rouge sauce.

A beurre blanc sauce may be a pleasant combination but, personally, I find it a little sweet and prefer the dryness and acidity and velvety texture of the rouge and the colour on presentation. The best wine to use is an inexpensive cabernet sauvignon with good body and tannins.

Generally, the more red the salmon the higher fat content and flavour. A fresh, red coloured and skinless belly will provide the most delicious and pleasant eating experience for our dish.

There is no need for a side dish as we have it all, pretty much, on the one plate: healthy and fatty ‘meaty’ flesh, green/vege, and a rich sauce that you may find yourself licking off the plate at the end of the meal.

We shall serve the salmon on a bed of buttered leek ‘fettuccini’: the cooked, julienne leek will have its own sweet, creamy-buttery texture and flavour to contrast with the beurre rouge sauce but we will want to enhance this a little by cooking it in butter.

All together, the flavours of this elegantly simple dish are well balanced and amazing.

The rich, accented flavour of this dish would wash down well with a bland Pinot Gris or a blander Pinot Blanc; going the other way, a light Alsatian Pinot Noir works well, too; depending on personal taste – write to me and let me know what you think.

### INGREDIENTS

#### The main part

½ cup of inexpensive Cabernet Sauvignon  
 ½ cup red wine vinegar  
 1 tablespoon black peppercorns  
 2 shallots, finely chopped  
 4 sprigs tarragon (or you can use dried tarragon).  
 2 small leeks (white parts only)  
 6 tablespoons of cold, unsalted butter (cut into 2cm x 2cm cubes)  
 2 skinless salmon fillets (fresh, red)  
 Finely milled sea salt  
 Finely milled black pepper

### METHOD

Prepare the beurre rouge sauce:

- In a small pot, combine the red wine, red wine vinegar, black peppercorns, shallots and tarragon.
- Bring the contents to the boil, then reduce heat to a slow boil for about 15 minutes or so, until the liquid is reduced to a little less than a 1/4 cup and becomes more viscous.
- Strain the contents of the pot through a sieve (a strainer), squeeze the liquid through with a spoon. Then put the strained liquid back into the pot and cover to keep warm for now.

Prepare leek fettuccini:

- Trim both ends of the leeks and retain only the white part, remove the first outer layer and wash to remove any dirt from the farm.
- Split the leek in half (top to bottom) and then carefully slice in thin, even strips about the width of fettuccini.



## INGREDIENTS

### The garnish

- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh tarragon (dried is ok)
- ½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped shallots

## METHOD CONTINUED

- Put the leek in a small pot and cover with water and a tablespoon of butter.
- Season with salt and a little pepper and simmer on a low heat for about 15 minutes until the leek strips become tender.
- Leave covered in the warm water until serving time.

Prepare the salmon:

- 1-2 cups of water in a shallow pan (just to cover the surface of the pan), give it a pinch of salt.
- On a medium heat, bring the water to a very soft simmer.
- Season the salmon well on both sides with salt and pepper then gently place the salmon in the pan (skin-side down) with the gently simmering water.
- Let the salmon slowly cook on one side only (ie; do not turn it over and do not cover) until the bottom half to three-quarters is cooked and the top is still red but warm to the touch (about 5 minutes)...be careful not to over-cook it, the top must still be red.

Finish the sauce as the salmon is cooking:

- Over a low-medium heat (don't let it boil), whisk in the remaining cold butter a tablespoon (or a cube) at a time until it is emulsified (whisking the whole time).
- Keep warm for a minute until serving time; give it a final whisk just before serving.

Put it together and serve:

- The leek should still be warm; strain it, pat dry with paper towel, and arrange it on a warm plate as a bed for the salmon.
- Carefully remove the salmon from the pan and sit each fillet on a paper towel for a few seconds to blot up the water.
- Place the salmon fillets on top of the arranged bed of leek.
- Sprinkle tarragon, cracked black pepper, and shallots on top of the salmon fillets.
- Pour the sauce around the salmon & leek and serve immediately with a Pinot (Noir, Gris, or Blanc, as you desire).

BON APPETIT - I HOPE YOU ENJOY.....JP