

# Matthew May's

## TEACHING KITCHEN

BETTER LIVING THROUGH FOOD AND SCIENCE

**“A Taste of France”**  
**September 14, 2024**

### CLASSIC FRENCH CHEESE FONDUE

**1-cup white wine**  
**1/3-pound Gruyere or other soft, mild melting cheese**  
**(Swiss, Gouda, Fontina, Monterey Jack, etc.), shredded**  
**1 TBSP. corn starch**  
**1/8-tsp. cracked black pepper**  
**dash of fresh ground nutmeg**  
**Rustic bread or veggies for dipping**

In medium size saucepan, heat wine over medium heat until it's at a low simmer. In a mixing bowl, combine shredded cheese and corn starch; mix until cheese is evenly coated with corn starch. Stir half of the cheese mixture into hot wine. Continue to stir until cheese is thoroughly melted. Slowly, add the remaining cheese and corn starch mixture. Reduce heat to low. Continue stirring until the cheese is melted, and the fondue begins to thicken. Add black pepper and nutmeg; stir to combine. Remove from heat and transfer to a serving bowl. Serve with crusty bread, corn chips, steamed potatoes and/or vegetables. This recipe is great for utilizing leftover wine, cheeses, and bread.

### BAKED COD En PAPILLATE W/ FENNEL, LEMON AND GARLIC BUTTER

**2 4-6-ounce cod fillets**  
**2 TBLS. unsalted butter**  
**2 lemon slices**  
**1/8-tsp. Lemon Garlic Sea Salt (found at [www.eastcoastsaltcompany.com](http://www.eastcoastsaltcompany.com))**  
**½-cup shaved fennel**  
**¼-cup white wine**  
**1-tsp. minced garlic**  
**2 each 18"x12" pieces of parchment paper, folded in half lengthwise**

Preheat your oven to 400°F. On one side of each piece of parchment paper, place half of the shaved fennel, then place a cod filet on top of the fennel. Then, place one lemon slice on top of the fish, followed

by the butter, garlic, and sea salt. Pour half the wine over each bundle, then fold the parchment in half lengthwise so that the ends of the parchment paper meet. Starting at one corner of the parchment, create a small pleat by folding over about an inch of the parchment paper in onto itself, then create another pleat midway through the first pleat, and continue until you reach the other side of the parchment. You will end up with an oval/semi-circle. Place pouches on a sheet tray and bake until cod reaches an internal temperature of 145°F. Remove from oven and place each pouch on your serving plate. Using two forks, a sharp knife, or a pair of scissors, carefully pierce the pouch (as hot steam will be released) and open the pouches for presentation.

## **PAN-SEARED or SOUS VIDE DUCK BREAST**

### **W/ CHERRY-PORT WINE**

**1 whole duck breast, split, skin on, cut in half (resulting in two half-breasts)**

**½-tsp. "Herbs de Provence" Sea Salt (found at [www.eastcoastsaltcompany.com](http://www.eastcoastsaltcompany.com))**

**1/8-tsp. cracked black pepper**

**½-cup red or white port wine**

**¼-cup dark sweet cherries, pitted**

**1 cinnamon stick**

**1 sprig fresh thyme**

**1 sprig fresh rosemary**

Preheat oven to 250°F. Place a baking sheet pan or cookie sheet pan in the oven to get hot. Score (cut shallow cuts) diagonally on the fat-side of each duck breast. Turn each breast 45 degrees, and then score again, creating a 'diamond pattern' on the fat-side of the breast. Season both sides of the breast with black pepper and sea salt. Lay each duck breast, fat-side down, in a cold skillet or fry pan. Turn burner on low heat and render the fat from the breasts. This process can take 30-40 minutes. Take your time. Do not let the rendered fat get too hot. It should sound like gently sizzling bacon. The amount of rendered fat will increase in the pan, while the thickness of fat on each duck breast will decrease. Do not let the rendered fat come above the layer of fat on the duck breast. You will need to pour off some of the rendered fat as you go along. Save it! As duck fat is amazing to cook with potatoes! (You can store duck fat in your freezer up to 6 months.) When most of the fat is rendered and has become golden brown, carefully remove the breasts from the pan and place on heated cookie sheet (already in the oven) fat-side down. Finish cooking in oven for about 15 minutes, or until the internal temperature has reached 135°F. Remove duck from oven and remove from hot pan and allow to rest skin side up for about five minutes. The internal temperature will continue to climb to about 140°F. While duck is in the oven, combine port wine, cherries, cinnamon stick, and herbs in a small saucepan. Cook on medium heat for about 15-30 minutes, allowing the wine to reduce in volume by half.

Place each duck breast on a cutting board, fat-side up. Allow the breast to rest for about 5-7 minutes. Slice each duck breast about ¼-inch thick. Transfer sliced duck to a serving plate or platter. Serve with the port wine cherry sauce on top. Sweet and savory.

**SOUS VIDE:** Or place seasoned duck breasts in a zip lock storage bag and sous vide at 135°F for two hours. Be sure to release the air from the bag while submerging bag into the water. After two hours, remove the duck breasts from the bag and either finish the breasts under a broiler or use a torch to re-crisp the duck fat. Slice and serve with cherry port wine over the top.

# LEMON CRÈME BRÛLÉE

**4 egg yolks**

**zest of 2 medium-sized lemons**

**1-cup heavy whipping cream**

**2 TBSP. sugar (divided)**

**2 6–8-ounce baking cups/ramekins**

(Makes two desserts)

**Optional: Add 1-tsp. pure lavender extract to egg yolks and sugar**

**Optional fruit-on-the bottom:** Add 1 TBSP. raspberry jam, blackberry jam, or fruit preserves to each ramekin before pouring crème Brûlée on top.

Heat oven to 300°F. Zest lemons and separate egg yolks from the whites (discard whites). Whisk together 1 TBSP. sugar and egg yolks in a small mixing bowl. In a small saucepan, bring cream and lemon zest to a simmer over medium heat. (Takes about 5 minutes). Stir occasionally and do not let it boil. Once the cream mixture reaches a low boil, remove from heat. Allow to sit for 5 minutes to draw the lemon oil out of the zest. Strain to remove the lemon zest. Slowly pour the hot cream into the egg yolk mixture (a little at a time), while whisking constantly. Pouring too fast will result in scrambled eggs. Place your 2 ramekins into a 9"x9"-inch pan. Divide the custard mixture into the ramekins. Pour the water into the pan until it's halfway up the side of the ramekins. Be careful not to pour water any into the custard. Bake 40-45 minutes or until centers are just set. Cool to room temperature then refrigerate for a minimum of three hours. When ready to serve: Cover each ramekin with 1-tsp. of white sugar and tilt Brûlée around to evenly coat with sugar. Pour off any excess sugar. Brûlée the tops with a kitchen torch or under the broiler until sugar browns. Wait a few minutes before eating, as the sugar is very hot.