

Breakfast in thoughtful ways

From EPICURE ONE

to the pan and cook for a couple of minutes or until heated through. Add beaten eggs and stir so they mix well with the crab.

Cook until just set and then transfer to a griller so the top is quickly cooked. Don't let it toughen, give it only a few seconds.

Pour the Thai hollandaise over the top and put the dish back under the griller again. As soon as the top is glazed, remove.

Spread some warm spinach on a plate and top with the omelet. This quantity should be ample for two people with crisp, brown toast.

Thai hollandaise

3 egg yolks
 ¼ cup dry, white wine
 salt and pepper
 ½ cup clarified butter, melted
 ½ teaspoon sambal oelek
 1 tablespoon ketjap manis
 1 tablespoon finely chopped coriander
 ½ chilli, seeds removed and chilli cut very finely

juice of half a lemon
 juice of half a lime

Beat the yolks with wine and salt and pepper. Whisk in a pan over the heat until thick and creamy. Gradually add the butter, whisking constantly and mix in the remaining ingredients.

Campton Place yoghurt berry hotcakes

A luxury small hotel in San Francisco, Campton Place is well known for its dining. Not just for lunch and dinner but especially now for breakfast which is aimed not just at hotel guests but businessmen who conduct quick deals over their morning meal.

Corned beef hash with poached eggs, a warm custard made with brioche, warm fruit compote, calf's liver, smoked salmon, crepes and berry hotcakes are some of the styles of dishes eaten for breakfast.

This kind of breakfast makes a stop for lunch unnecessary, especially if you don't eat too early and particularly enjoy their hotcakes. Perhaps it is not a dish I would eat at home everyday but for special occasions or on a weekend these puffy light cakes are wonderful when accompanied with coffee or tea and fresh fruit.

These need to be made and served at the last minute but you can have everything ready and the dry ingredients sifted so the mixing takes only a couple of minutes.

It makes plenty for six to eight and although it may look substantial the hotcakes are beautifully light with a puffy texture.

The strawberries mixed throughout soften to a pale pink as slightly tart little bursts of flavor as you munch the hotcakes.

Apart from breakfast they make a delicious dessert when you have had a cold main course or light meal.

1 punnet strawberries, hulled and cut into quarters

1 tablespoon castor sugar
 ¼ cup milk
 90 g unsalted butter
 ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
 3 large eggs
 1½ cups flour
 ½ teaspoon bicarbonate soda
 3 teaspoons baking powder
 2 tablespoons castor sugar
 pinch salt
 1 cup skim milk yoghurt
 a little oil to cook the hotcakes

In the original recipe the strawberries were cut into quarters but American berries are huge. I would think

Picture: GREG TOTMAN



Guy Angwin and Jennifer Grieve from Cafe Sweethearts, South Melbourne.

halves would be sufficient for most Australian berries — unless you happen to buy the very big ones which don't necessarily have the best flavor.

Put berries into a bowl and scatter with the sugar. Let them sit while preparing the mixture. Put the milk and butter into a saucepan and warm gently until the butter has melted. Remove from the heat and add vanilla. Let cool slightly. Beat the eggs in a bowl and whisk in the milk and butter.

Sift the flour, bicarbonate soda and baking powder. Add sugar and add the berries and their juices to the flour. Stir so they are coated. Add the egg mixture and fold. The mixture will be firm. Stir in yoghurt gently.

The batter will be quite thick and some lumps of flour may be noticeable but do not overmix. If the batter is too dry add a little more milk but no yoghurt which will make the pancakes too soft.

Heat a pan. I use a non-stick one but I still lightly brush it with oil. It is at the right temperature when a few drops of water "skitter" across it.

Use about a third of a cup of batter for each hotcake and cook over a medium heat so they cook through in the centre.

When golden brown on one side and some bubbles appear on top turn over and cook until golden on the other side. Serve at once.

The recipe says with honey pecan butter and as I wasn't sure what this was I have made up a honey pecan sauce which I use around the cakes. I also generally slice a few more berries for the side of the plate.

Honey pecan butter

¾ cup honey
 90 g butter
 ½ cup pecan nuts

Put the honey and butter into a saucepan and warm over low heat. Process the nuts until finely ground, or chop them small.

When the honey butter mixture is well blended add the nuts and mix. If too thick add a tablespoon of boiling water.

Peach and nectarine salad

While the stone fruits are still so good I have been making this peach and nectarine salad. It can be left in the refrig-

erator and taken out at breakfast when it will be perfectly chilled and matured.

It is from a special breakfast book 'Ten Late Breakfasts' by Alexandra Carlier, published by Allen and Unwin.

Some of these could be lunch menus as they are rather more substantial than the snack most people grab before rushing out the door. The author does include one for romantic occasions such as Valentine's Day.

At this time she suggests serving a dish such as "Oeufs a L'amour" — eggs which have been scrambled and replaced in the egg shell with caviar and passionfruit salad.

Serves 8

4 firm peaches
 4 firm nectarines
 250 g castor sugar
 1¼ cups water
 pinch salt
 juice 1 small lemon
 3-4 tablespoons slivered almonds (optional)

Choose fruit with pink skins so when they are boiled with the syrup they give it a natural pink blush. Loosen the skins of the fruit by scoring them lightly around the middle and plunging them briefly into boiling water, then into cold. Remove the skins and set them aside for use in the syrup. Cut the fruit in halves. Remove the stones and crush to free the kernels.

Wrap in cheesecloth and set aside. Cut the fruit into quarters. Put the sugar and water into a large heavy-based saucepan. Stir over gentle heat until the sugar dissolves, then raise the heat and bring the syrup to a boil without stirring. Let the syrup boil for several minutes, then lower the heat to a gentle simmer.

Add the kernels and fruit, lowering into the syrup with a large spoon. Simmer the fruit until tender but still holding their shapes. This will depend on the ripeness of the fruit. Remove pieces as they are done, using a slotted spoon to transfer them to a plate to cool.

Raise the heat. Add the reserved fruit skins to the syrup and boil hard for at least five minutes or until the skins have lost their flavor and color.

Strain through a sieve set over a bowl, preferably metal. Discard the skins but reserve the kernels. Put the bowl of syrup aside in iced water so it cools rapidly. When cold stir in a pinch of salt and the lemon juice.

If you seek a bitter almond flavor, remove the kernels from the cheesecloth. Add the fruit, turn over gently. Add almonds, if you wish, and you can decorate with rose petals.

Serve at room temperature or lightly chilled, plain or with cream.

Prohibition fruit punch

1 cup apricot nectar or canned apricots in natural syrup, pureed and sieved

1/3 cup lime juice
 juice half lemon
 1 cup orange juice
 pinch salt
 2 cups lime-flavored mineral or soda water

Mix the ingredients in a jug except for the mineral or soda water. Add a few chunks of ice and refrigerate if not serving immediately. Add the mineral water last and garnish, if you wish with slices of orange, lemon or lime and a few sprigs of mint.

Another recipe from 'Ten Late Breakfasts' and, as its name suggests, it is non-alcoholic punch. It is refreshing and fruity and only takes a moment to mix.

Have everything already chilling in the refrigerator the night beforehand. It makes about six glasses.