

Poached cod & asparagus

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In this recipe, we poach the cod right on top of the asparagus. The result is perfectly cooked cod and tender-crisp asparagus.

The sauce is our take on beurre blanc - a traditional French sauce made with wine and lots of butter. Ours uses a little cornstarch for thickening and a judicious amount of butter for flavour.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 1 lemon, divided
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 1 tbsp thinly sliced shallot
- 1 bay leaf
- 5 whole black peppercorns
- 550g [cod](#), cut into 4 equal portions
- ½ tsp salt, divided
- ¼ tsp ground white or black pepper
- 4 sprigs fresh tarragon
- 1½ bunches asparagus (about 680g), trimmed
- ½ cup water

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- 2 tbsp good quality organic butter

Method

Juice half the lemon into a small saucepan; reserve the other half. Whisk in wine and cornflour until combined. Add shallot, bay leaf and peppercorns. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened and reduced by about half, 10 to 12 minutes.

Meanwhile, sprinkle cod with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and pepper. Place a tarragon sprig on each portion. Thinly slice the remaining lemon half and lay the slices over the tarragon.

Place asparagus in an even layer in a large pan. Add half a cup of water. Place the cod on top of the asparagus. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Cover and cook until the asparagus is tender and the fish is cooked through, four to five minutes.

Strain the reduced sauce through a sieve into a bowl. Return it to the pan. Over low heat, swirl butter into the sauce one tablespoon at a time until melted. Stir in the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and remove from the heat.

Serve the fish and asparagus topped with the sauce.

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