

Langouste Mauresque

Crayfish in a rich creamy sauce

This dish is very delicate. Do not use more curry than shown in the recipe; a touch of curry produces a subtle flavour, too much would make it just another curry dish.

If the cost of truffles frightens you, replace them with button mushrooms which you gently cook in butter. Truffles, however, are part of the original recipe from my husband's family and give the finest result.

3 lb (1½ kg) crayfish
1½ oz (45 g) butter
1 tablespoon brandy
2 level tablespoons plain flour
¾ cup (180 ml) stock made with the leg shells
pinch of paprika
½ level teaspoon curry powder
½ level teaspoon salt
5 fl oz (150 ml) cream
1 tin truffles (optional)

Break the crayfish shell and remove all the meat from the tail and legs in one piece. Cut the tail meat in half, remove the vein and cut the meat into cubes. Put the leg pieces into a saucepan.

Melt the butter in a skillet and when it starts to sizzle add the crayfish cubes, pour on the brandy and set alight, shaking the pan away from the heat until the flame dies. Set aside – remove the crayfish from the skillet with a slotted spoon and add it to the rest of the crayfish pieces in the saucepan.

Mix 2 tablespoons flour with the juice in the skillet, whisking, then add the stock, put it back on the heat and bring to the boil, stirring constantly. When it has thickened, add the cream and continue stirring until a smooth sauce results. Season with salt and pepper, paprika and curry. If you are using truffles, slice and add them with their juice, to the sauce. Add the crayfish to the sauce to warm it through and serve on a bed of rice.

Serves 4-6.