

## The Chef's Table

### Best Brussel Sprouts, and Then Some

1-2 Pounds Fresh medium sized Brussel Sprouts  
1-2 Quarts Sweet Water (See below)  
¼ cup Dry Parmesan Cheese  
¼ Cup Panko Bread Crumbs  
2 teaspoons Johnny's Salad Elegance (Available on line if not in your local store)  
Freshly Ground Black Pepper  
Unsalted Butter  
Ice Bath

#### Sweet water:

Simply desolve sugar in cold water until it is slightly sweet to sweet. For a pint of water use about 2 to 3 tablespoons of sugar. Your taste buds are the best way to adjust this water.

#### Brussel Sprout Preparation:

Pick firm and bright green Brussel Sprouts at the market. Thoroughly wash them, trim the cut end off and then halve through the middle from top to bottom. Place the cut sprouts in a bowl half filled with sweet water making sure the cut side is toward the water. If necessary, add more sweet water, but be sure all the sprouts are exposed to the water. (Sometimes it helps to place a plate on top of the sprouts to keep them submerged.) Macerate them for at least on hour at room temperature, or better yet overnight in the refrigerator.

Heat additional sweet water in a medium sauce pan to boiling and place the sprouts in the water and return to a boil. Cook the sprouts until they just turn bright green then quickly drain them and place the sprouts in an ice bath to stop the cooking process. When the sprouts a completely cold, drain them in a colander and set aside allowing them to thoroughly drain (about 20 minutes or longer).

#### Final Cooking:

Pre-heat oven to 375°

Using a baking dish only large enough for a single layer of the sprouts melt enough butter to coat the bottom of the dish, plus a little more for later application. Place the drained sprouts in the baking dish and toss to coat them with the melted butter and then season them with the Johnny's, some pepper and toss again. Now add the Panko and toss again. If the sprouts seem to be a little dry add additional butter and toss again. Add in the cheese and, yes, toss again to thoroughly coat. You should still have a little butter in the bottom of the baking dish; this will prevent sticking.

Place the sprouts in the oven in the very center and bake until they are turning to a golden brown or slightly darker. The actual time will vary with the amount of sprouts you are cooking, but the average time is about 25 - 35 minutes. They should still be relatively firm, hot through yet tender with this wonderful browned outside covering.