

# sizzle

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EGGS  
BENEDICT

Heirloom  
Beans  
trends

foodservice  
manager

Q&A with  
Chicago's  
Ryan Poli

# classical v. modern



top: Jamie Keating  
bottom: Tyler Mock

Eggs Benedict on the American menu dates back to the 1800s in New York. Two stories compete as to the origin of the English muffin halves topped with sliced ham or Canadian bacon, a poached egg and hollandaise sauce. One involves LeGrand Benedict, who asked Charles Ranhofer, chef of Delmonico's Restaurant to come up with something interesting for her to eat.

Ranhofer included his resulting recipe for what he called Eggs à la Benedick in his 1894 cookbook *The Epicurean*.

Fast-forward to 2012 and the opening of Epic restaurant in Columbus, Ga. Chef/owner Jamie Keating had *The Epicurean* in mind when he named the restaurant Epic. He is ever mindful of Ranhofer's classic dishes, including eggs Benedict. Keating

also is chief executive officer and chef of catering company Jamie Keating Culinary, Inc., which manages The RiverMill Event Centre in Columbus.

"The egg is so versatile. It's in almost every recipe possible. Think of recipes that don't have eggs. We don't respect the egg enough," Keating says.

Preparing eggs Benedict is good practice for culinary students to work on timing and perfecting the components. It requires an understanding of a classic mother sauce, meat preparation, baking rather than purchasing English muffins and proper egg-poaching techniques. "And if they deconstruct all those pieces, they can go off on their own tangent," Keating says.

Tyler Mock, food and beverage director at Epic restaurant and executive

sous chef at RiverMill Event Centre, found many ways to spring from the classic recipe to something more contemporary, beginning with the English muffin. He chose to go with brioche to present a denser, sweeter base. Instead of salty bacon, he used sweeter crabmeat in a pan-seared crabcake. He added spinach to give it a nice color and flavor.

For the poached egg, he used a thermo circulator to sous vide the egg. "I did that to make a perfectly poached egg, not overdone or runny in the center. Then I lightly pan-fried it so it would be a little crispy on the outside," he says.

Finally, for a tomato flavor, he chose Choron sauce, a derivative of bearnaise sauce, which itself is derived from hollandaise sauce.



## classical

**EGGS BENEDICT WITH CANADIAN BACON, POACHED EGG, ENGLISH MUFFIN AND HOLLANDAISE SAUCE**

**1.** Add a little vinegar, wine or lemon juice to the poaching water to help coagulate the white of the egg around the yolk, like a pillow. **2.** Keep the English muffin from becoming soggy by making sure the poached egg and Canadian bacon are drained and/or patted dry. **3.** Hollandaise sauce can be the trickiest element. It is an emulsion, so make sure you know how to prepare it. **4.** Concassé tomatoes and chopped parsley give the classic dish a final touch of color and flavor.



## modern

**EGGS BENEDICT WITH CRABCAKE AND SOUS VIDE POACHED EGG ON BRIOCHE WITH SAUTEED SPINACH AND CHORON SAUCE**

**1.** This modern version of eggs Benedict uses a crabcake as the protein in place of Canadian bacon or ham and brioche in place of the English muffin. **2.** The poached egg is prepared sous vide style in a thermo circulator bath set at 64°C for 1 hour. **3.** The Choron sauce used here is a type of the classic bearnaise sauce. The color is a little deeper than hollandaise sauce with the addition of tomato paste and paprika. The color can be adjusted with the use of more of these ingredients. **4.** Pancetta and a sprig of dill or fennel for garnish complements this upscale version of the classic.

## classical

The stage was set for Jamie Keating's culinary career one Sunday when he was 16 and a busboy and prep cook at a Holiday Inn. The action chef in charge of carving the meat and making omelets and waffles didn't show up for brunch service. Keating was asked if he would take over. Everything was fine until area churches let out, and he suddenly found more than 40 people standing in line waiting to be served from his stations.

"I couldn't make a Spanish omelet, my fingers were cut up, my apron was filthy, I had sweat across my paper hat. At the end, I cleaned

up, looked around and saw that experience as a challenge I needed to overcome," he says. Thus was born his drive to become a "culinary servant" and make people happy through food. He went on to get culinary degrees at Paul Smith's College in Brighton, N.Y., and The Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, St. Helena, Calif.

He is chief executive officer and chef of catering company Jamie Keating Culinary, Inc., LaGrange, Ga., which manages The RiverMill Event Centre, a 50,000 square-foot facility in an old cotton mill in Columbus, Ga. With energy

left, he opened Epic restaurant in Columbus in August.

"I love to take comfort foods and put my own twist on them," he says. Instead of the standard tuna noodle casserole, he may use tuna steak, Asiago cheese and ravioli. For a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich, he might use a brined and smoked duck with arugula and tomatoes on brioche. He urges young culinarians to think of simplicity with a twist.

He believes that eggs Benedict is appealing to consumers, but only when the dish is consistently

prepared properly. "To build or serve it properly is a challenge," Keating says.

Each individual component can be easily prepared, but errors arise in building the dish. "Take the muffin. You put ham on it that is seared and fatty, and it leaches into the muffin. You put the egg on top, but didn't drain it, so it soaks in. Then you put it in the chafing dish or in the oven and it dries out." That doesn't even count the challenges of hollandaise sauce when it breaks down. "Folks have been turned off. It's usually prepared without love," he says. ■

## Classical Eggs Benedict

**Yield: 18 servings**

**Jamie P. Keating, CEC  
Chef/Chief Executive Officer  
Jamie Keating Culinary, Inc.,  
LaGrange, Ga.  
Chef/Owner  
Epic restaurant,  
Columbus, Ga.**

### Ingredients:

1 recipe **English muffins**  
1 recipe **poached eggs**  
1 recipe **hollandaise sauce**  
18 slices **Canadian bacon**  
½ lb. **butter**  
2 **concassé tomatoes**  
¼ **bunch parsley**, chopped

### English Muffins

#### Ingredients:

1 cup **milk**  
2 T. **sugar**  
¼ oz. **active dry yeast**  
1 cup warm **water** (110°F)  
¼ cup **shortening**, melted  
6 cups all-purpose **flour**, divided  
1 t. **salt**  
**Cornmeal**, as needed

### Method:

1. Warm milk in small saucepan until bubbles form; remove from heat.
2. Mix in sugar, stirring until dissolved. Cool to lukewarm.
3. In small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes.
4. In large bowl, combine milk, yeast, shortening and 3 cups flour. Beat until smooth. Add salt and remaining flour until soft ball forms. Knead until smooth. Place in greased bowl, cover; let rise. Punch down. Roll out to about ½-inch thick. Sprinkle parchment paper with cornmeal; set rounds on cornmeal to rise. Dust tops with cornmeal. Cover; let rise 30 minutes.
5. Heat greased griddle. Cook muffins on griddle on medium heat about 10 minutes each side. Keep baked muffins in 350°F oven until centers are cooked, 5-6 minutes. Cool. Place in airtight container for storage. To use, split and toast.

### Poached Eggs

#### Ingredients:

2 quarts **water**  
¼ oz. **salt**  
¼ cup **white vinegar**  
18 **eggs**, divided

#### Method:

1. In shallow pan, bring to simmer (180°F) water, salt and vinegar.
2. Crack eggs 6 at a time into water in different areas of pan. Cook about 3 minutes or until egg whites are set and yolks are still runny.
3. Remove eggs from water with slotted spoon; place on clean towel to drain excess water. Reserve for service in hotel pan.

### Hollandaise Sauce

#### Yield: 1 pint

#### Ingredients:

6 T. **water**, divided  
2 T. **white vinegar**  
**Salt, pepper** and **paprika**, to taste  
6 **egg yolks**  
3 cups **clarified butter**, melted  
**Lemon juice**, fresh squeezed, to taste

### Method:

1. In small saute pan, add 4 T. water, vinegar, pinch of salt, pepper and paprika. Reduce by half.
2. In stainless steel bowl, add reduction, remaining water and egg yolks. Whisk over double boiler until ribbons form. (Be careful not to overcook.)
3. Remove bowl from double boiler to towel.
4. Slowly whisk clarified butter into egg mixture, being careful not to separate. Add a little water while whisking in butter if too thick. Adjust seasoning, acidity and texture. Store in warm place until needed.

#### Method:

Cut English muffins in half. Spread with butter. Toast. Grill Canadian bacon to warm through. Place toasted English muffin halves on plate. Top each muffin with 1 piece grilled Canadian bacon. Place 1 drained poached egg on top of bacon. Top with hollandaise sauce; garnish with tomato and parsley.



## modern

It was natural for Tyler Mock to choose the culinary industry for his career. His mother has been a culinary arts teacher for 35 years in the Madison School District in Mansfield, Ohio. After attending Lorain County Joint Vocational School in Oberlin, Ohio, Mock went on to graduate from The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y.

While he is food and beverage director at Epic restaurant and executive sous chef at RiverMill Event Centre, he dreams of

someday becoming executive chef of a country club or of his own restaurant. He also has visions of being on the Food Network's "Iron Chef America."

Prior to his current job, he worked at Westchester Country Club in Rye, N.Y., as the garde manger chef and was a preparation cook at Lola's in Tremont, Ohio, under noted chef Michael Symon.

Working for a catering company, Mock most enjoys the variety. "It's a new experience every party you do.

It's not just about slapping out the same dish 24/7," he says.

In his modern spin on eggs Benedict, Mock says the most challenging part is not breaking the hollandaise or Choron sauce. "If the butter is too hot when you're adding it to the egg mixture, it will break. Also, make sure your bread proofs, and you don't use water that is too hot when you make the bread so it doesn't kill the yeast."

While he used crabcakes, spinach, brioche and Choron sauce, he can

picture many other adaptations to the classical recipe. He pictures pork belly that is sous vide and seared crispy for the protein. Instead of adding spinach for color, he suggests watercress or braised collard greens.

Deep-fried eggs or eggs fried sunny side up could work. Instead of an English muffin or brioche, he can picture challah dipped in a French toast batter to hold crispy pork belly topped with an egg and hit with hollandaise sauce. ■

## Contemporary Eggs Benedict

Yield: 18 servings

**Tyler Mock**  
Food and Beverage Director  
Epic restaurant, Columbus, Ga.  
Executive Sous Chef  
RiverMill Event Centre,  
Columbus

### Ingredients:

- 1 recipe **brioche**
- ¼ lb. **butter**
- 1 recipe **crabcakes**
- 1 recipe **sauteed spinach**
- 1 recipe **sous vide egg** fried
- 1 recipe **Choron sauce**

### Brioche

Yield: 4 loaves

### Ingredients:

- 2½ lbs. **bread flour**
- 1 t. **salt**
- 2 oz. fresh **yeast**
- 4 oz. warm **water**
- 2 oz. **sugar**
- 8 **eggs**
- 10 oz. **milk**
- 1 lb. soft **butter**

1. Sift flour and salt together.
2. In mixer with dough hook, add yeast to warm water. Stir until dissolved. Add sugar; stir until dissolved. Add eggs and milk.

Slowly add flour to wet mixture until all flour is incorporated. Gradually incorporate soft butter.

3. Place in greased bowl; refrigerate until set.
4. Remove dough from refrigerator; portion into 4 loaves. Mold into 4 loaf pans.
5. Let proof until double in size. Bake at 350°F until browned, 15-20 minutes.

### Sauteed Spinach

#### Ingredients:

- 2 T. **blended oil**
- 1 T. **butter**
- 2 **shallots**, minced
- 3 **garlic cloves**, minced
- 1½ lbs. fresh **spinach**

**Salt** and **black pepper**, to taste

#### Method:

In large saute pan, add oil and butter until hot. Add shallots and garlic; saute until starts to brown. Add spinach; cook until tender. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Reserve for service.

### Choron Sauce

Yield: 1 pint

- 6 T. **water**, divided
- 2 T. **white vinegar**
- Salt**, **pepper** and **paprika**, to taste
- 6 **egg yolks**
- 3 cups **clarified butter**, melted
- 4 T. **tomato paste**

**Lemon juice**, fresh squeezed, to taste

1. Add 4 T. water, vinegar, pinch of salt, pepper and paprika to small saute pan; reduce by half.
2. In stainless steel bowl, add reduction, remaining water and egg yolks. Whisk over double boiler until ribbons form. (Be careful not to overcook.) Remove bowl from double boiler to towel.
3. Slowly whisk clarified butter into egg mixture, being careful not to separate. Add a little water while whisking if too thick. Add tomato paste after all butter is incorporated. Adjust seasoning, acidity and texture. Store in warm place.

### Sous Vide Egg Fried

#### Ingredients:

- 18 whole **eggs**
- 2 cups **blended oil**
- Salt** and **black pepper**, to taste
- 1. Place eggs in thermo circulator bath set at 64°C for 1 hour.
- 2. Heat oil in small saucepot to 325°F.
- 3. Remove eggs from circulator bath. Crack open onto dry clean towel to drain.
- 4. Place drained eggs in hot oil until golden-brown. Remove. Store on dry paper towel. Season with salt and pepper. Reserve for service.

### Pan-Seared Crabcakes

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup **mayonnaise**
- 2 T. **Dijon mustard**
- 1 **lemon**, juiced
- 1½ t. **Worcestershire sauce**
- ½ t. **Tabasco sauce**
- 1½ t. **Old Bay seasoning**
- ¼ bunch **parsley**, chopped
- 1 lb. lump **crabmeat**
- ¾ cup **panko breadcrumbs**
- Blended oil**, as needed

1. In bowl, mix together mayonnaise, mustard, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco sauce, Old Bay seasoning and parsley.
2. In separate bowl, mix together crab and mayonnaise mixture. Add enough breadcrumbs to bind. Let sit in refrigerator until breadcrumbs soften.
3. Portion and form into 18 cakes. Saute in blended oil until golden-brown on both sides. Reserve for service.

#### Method:

Slice brioche in ½-inch slices. Spread with butter. Toast on both sides until golden-brown. Place two slices brioche on plate. Stack in order on top: crabcake, sauteed spinach, sous vide egg fried and Choron sauce. Garnish with pancetta and dill or fennel sprig if desired.

