

Baked Trout Almandine

Scott Gee

This is a healthier version of a classic pan-fried trout recipe. It originated in France but is not too difficult. A good choice for entertaining. It is gluten-free.



Ingredients (serves 2-4):

2 medium trout, scaled, gutted and gills removed, head on
4 thin sliced lemon slices (cut the lemon ends into wedges)
Salt and pepper
Olive oil spray
Heavy duty foil

Almandine Sauce

1/4 cup slivered almonds
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons dry white wine (Sauvignon Blanc or Pino Grigio)
1/4 cup low sodium chicken stock
1/4 teaspoon seasoning salt or Cajun seasoning
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 lemon juiced (cut the other half into wedges)
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1 teaspoon cornstarch dissolved in 1 tablespoon cold water

Garnish

Lemon wedges
2 tablespoons chopped parsley or 2 green onions, sliced



Directions:

Make 4 diagonal slashes on both sides of the fish. Tear 2 square pieces of heavy duty foil large enough to enclose each trout and place on a large baking sheet. Put each trout on a foil square. Season both sides of the trout with salt and pepper. Let rest at room temperature for 20-30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. While the fish is resting, toast the almonds.

Heat a fry pan over medium-low heat. Add the almonds and toast, stirring frequently, until they turn light tan, 3 to 5 minutes. Be careful not to burn them. Transfer to a small plate.

After 20-30 minutes, lightly spray both sides of the trout with olive oil. Put 2 lemon slices inside the trout cavity. Fold up the foil loosely, grabbing at the edges and crimping together tightly to make a packet. Bake for 10 minutes then remove from the oven and open the foil packets. Check the trout for doneness using a fork to flake the fish. Set an oven rack 6 inches below the broiler then turn the broiler on. Lightly, spray the top of the trout with olive oil. Broil until the skin is lightly browned and the trout easily flakes with a fork, about 3-5 minutes. Remove to a serving platter.

Heat a small saucepan on medium heat then add the butter. When the butter is lightly brown, and nutty smelling, add the wine, stock, seasoning salt and Worcestershire. Simmer for 2 minutes. Add the lemon juice and parsley. Stir in the cornstarch and water and cook for 1-2 minutes until slightly thickened. Add more chicken stock if too thick. Stir in the almonds. Taste and add additional seasoning salt if desired.

Spoon the sauce over the trout and garnish with parsley or onions. Bring the fish platter to the dinner table.

Optional: When at the dinner table, use 2 soup spoons to lift off the top fillet leaving the rib bones then remove the skeleton and head by lifting the tail. Then spoon the almandine sauce over the de-boned fillets. Removing the skeleton of a whole fish at the table in front of your guests preserves the initial presentation of the whole fish while making it easier for your guests to serve themselves. It also allows for better sauce distribution and reduces the risk of choking on a fish bone. It is a common presentation technique at Cantonese restaurants.