

EGGS & ENTREES

Egg poaching techniques vary as much as the recipes.

The easy way is to fill a skillet or saucepan with two or three inches of water, bringing it to a simmer. Avoid broken yolks by cracking the egg into a cup or saucer before sliding the whole egg into the simmering water.

Using a spoon, baste them for just three or four minutes to cook the yolks to the preferred softness. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain. Specific poaching pans or rubber cups are available. The eggs are prettier. The taste is the same.

The sous vide technique requires equipment and time. A large number of perfectly poached, shaped eggs result, still in the shell. The eggs can be ignored while they loll about in a controlled warm water spa. The whites have an almost translucent look, but are exquisitely cooked. The taste is superb.

For a small group, simply poach the eggs just before use. For a large group, expedite the process by poaching the eggs a day ahead. To pre-poach 12 eggs, bring 2 quarts of water to a simmer in a large saucepan and add 4 tablespoons of white vinegar.

Fill a large bowl with ice and water and place at the side of the stove. Working fast, crack an egg into a small bowl or saucer, then quickly slip it into the simmering water just above the water's surface and repeat. Try to keep track of the timing so the earlier ones do not overcook. Adding the eggs in saucers two at a time helps. Poach for three to four minutes, until the whites are just firm and the yolks are still quite soft to the touch.

Using a slotted spoon, gently retrieve the eggs in the order they were placed in the pan and lower them into the iced water. Repeat with the remaining eggs, two at a time. Leave the eggs in the ice bath until they are all poached. Gently retrieve the eggs and trim off any ragged edges with kitchen shears, returning them to the cold water. Cover the bowl securely and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. Place the cold poached eggs in simmering water for 30 seconds to reheat before serving.

Chef Leah Chase told me that soft-boiled eggs can be used to replace poached, if time or technique is a consideration. She is an exceptionally smart lady.



MISS ANNIE'S BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

MAKES 10 to 12

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup white granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg beaten
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup fresh blueberries, if frozen, keep frozen and drain

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Grease muffin cups or use muffin liners. Using a medium sized bowl, combine flour, 3/4 cup sugar, salt and baking powder. In a separate mixing bowl, combine the vegetable oil, egg, vanilla and milk. Stir egg mixture into the flour mixture; mix thoroughly. Carefully fold in blueberries. Fill muffin cups to the top, and place in oven.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes in the preheated oven, until done when a toothpick is inserted and comes out clean, or press top lightly with finger and it springs back. The medium or small size muffins will require less baking time, so adjust and check accordingly.

THE PONTCHARTRAIN

EGGS & CORNED BEEF HASH

The hotel's corned beef hash recipe required much research until we discovered the secret from a former colleague. How did it get so nice and crisp, we wanted to know. How did the flavor come through so elegantly? It was made from Hormel brand Mary Kitchen corned beef hash was the surprising answer. We suspect that Annie Laurie, the breakfast cook and baker was busy and saved delicious time with her shortcut. If you'd like to recreate a feast, also stir up her blueberry biscuit recipe, to the left.

SERVES 4

- | | | | |
|----------------|--|---|----------------------------|
| 1 tablespoon | olive oil | 4 | eggs, poached or over easy |
| 1 15-ounce can | Hormel Mary Kitchen brand corned beef hash | | |

Coat with olive oil and heat a griddle or large frying pan to almost smoking hot. The oil will have little ripples running across the top. While the oil is heating, divide corned beef hash evenly to make 4 large patties, each about 3/4 inch thick, and press down using a spatula, heating throughout while creating a nice crisp exterior. Turn and crisp the other side.

Meanwhile, poach the eggs in a skillet or medium sized pan by bringing 1 inch to 2 inches of water to a simmer. Crack each egg into a saucer first in case the yolk breaks. Slide the egg into the water, continuing to simmer until the whites are set and the yolk is done to medium soft, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Place a corned beef patty on each plate. Remove the eggs from the water using a slotted spoon.

Tip: Finely chop and saute an onion to mix into the corned beef hash before heating it. A splash of Louisiana hot sauce such as Crystal or Tabasco gives it a little Big Easy kick.





CHEF MICHELLE MCRANEY, MR. B'S BISTRO

EGGS & CRAB MEAT HASH

In the Brennan family tradition, Mr. B's Bistro makes brunch a weekly event. Chef Michelle McRaney works closely with Cindy Brennan to salute the classic dishes and create new ones.

SERVES 4

3 tablespoons	vegetable oil	1 pound	jumbo lump crab meat, picked over
3	russet potatoes, peeled and in 1/2-inch dice	3 tablespoons	fresh chives, minced
2 tablespoons	unsalted butter		Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/2	medium onion, diced	1 teaspoon	distilled white vinegar
1/2	medium red bell pepper, diced	8	large eggs
1/2	medium yellow bell pepper, diced	1 cup	orange hollandaise sauce (page 93)
1	garlic clove, minced		

In a large nonstick skillet heat oil over high heat until hot but not smoking. Add potatoes and sauté, stirring constantly, until golden brown, about 10 minutes.

In another large skillet melt 2 tablespoons butter over moderate heat. Add onion, bell peppers, and garlic and cook 3 minutes, or until just wilted. Add potatoes, crab meat, chives, and salt and pepper and keep warm.

Butter bottom of a 2-quart heavy saucepan and add 1 1/4 inches water. Add vinegar and bring to a simmer. Break 1 egg into a cup and slide into water. Repeat with remaining 3 eggs, spacing them apart, and poach at a bare simmer until whites are firm but yolks are still runny, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer eggs as cooked with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain and season with salt and pepper. Serve hash topped with poached eggs and hollandaise sauce.



Proprietor Cindy Brennan's friends who insist on her Bloody Marys for Mardi Gras parades. Anytime is a good time.

BLOODY MARY

MAKES 1 drink

1 1/2 ounces	vodka
1/3 cup	tomato juice
1/4 teaspoon	Worcestershire sauce
1/4 teaspoon	beef broth
1/4 teaspoon	horseradish
splash	Rose's lime juice
3 dashes	Tabasco
1 dash	freshly ground black pepper
1 dash	celery salt
	lime wedge, celery stick and two pickled green beans for garnish

Fill a tall glass two-thirds full with ice cubes. Add all ingredients. Cover and shake vigorously. Garnish with lime, celery, and green beans.

VIRGIN MARY

Simply exclude the alcohol and follow the recipe above.



CHEF TOMMY DIGIOVANNI, ARNAUD'S EGGS BENEDICT

Arnaud's Brunch and Jazz is an every Sunday event. Founded in 1918, the restaurant has always been family owned and operated. Exquisitely restored by the late Archie A. Casbarian, the grande dame's legacy continues with brother and sister Archie and Katy Casbarian as co-proprietors. Their elegant mother, Jane Casbarian, keeps everything in good taste.

SERVES 6

12	poached eggs (<i>page 11</i>)	1 1/2 cups	freshly-made hollandaise sauce (<i>page 93</i>)
6	English muffins		Dash of paprika
12 slices	Canadian bacon		Sprigs of fresh curly parsley, for garnish

Warm 6 dinner plates in a low oven and poach the eggs (or warm 12 pre-poached eggs). Place 2 toasted muffin halves on each plate, cut side up, and top each one with a slice of warmed Canadian bacon. Place a poached egg on top of the bacon and ladle about 1/4 cup of hollandaise sauce over each. Sprinkle with a little paprika for color and garnish each plate with a sprig or two of curly parsley. Serve immediately.

While Eggs Benedict does not call for creamed spinach, by adding it to the recipe, it becomes what is commonly recognized as Eggs Sardou, a different recipe than the one in this book created by Antoine's Restaurant.

FRENCH 75

MAKES 1 cocktail

The French 75 has always been so popular at Arnaud's that the bar is named in honor of the cocktail. It would be difficult to imagine a happier combination than fine champagne and excellent cognac.

1 1/2 ounces	cognac
1 teaspoon	fresh lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon	simple syrup (<i>page 23</i>)
4 ounces	Champagne
	Twist of lemon

Place the cognac, lemon juice and simple syrup in a shaker filled with ice and shake only long enough to chill. Pour into a frosted champagne glass, top with champagne and add a lemon twist. Serve immediately.





CHEF LAZONE RANDOLPH, BRENNAN'S

EGGS HUSSARDE

Brennan's legendary chef Paul Blangé, who also created Bananas Foster, modified Eggs Benedict to suit his tastes. The Canadian bacon is placed on Holland Rusks, then poached eggs layered between both Hollandaise and Marchand de Vin sauces. It is served accompanied by a broiled tomato.

SERVES 4

8	Holland Rusks (available in most grocery stores)	8	poached eggs (page 11)
2 cups	Marchand de Vin sauce (recipe below)	2 tablespoons	unsalted butter
2 cups	Hollandaise sauce (page 93)	8	slices Canadian bacon (or ham)

Prepare the Marchand de Vin sauce and the Hollandaise sauce. Keep warm. Poach the eggs and keep warm. Melt butter in a large sauté pan and warm the Canadian bacon over low heat. Place 2 Holland Rusks on each plate and cover with slices of warm Canadian bacon. Spoon the Marchand de Vin sauce over the meat, then set a poached egg on each slice. Ladle Hollandaise sauce over the eggs and serve.

MARCHAND DE VIN SAUCE

6 tablespoons	butter	2 tablespoons	Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup	onion, finely chopped	2 cups	beef stock
1 1/2 teaspoon	garlic, finely chopped	1/2 cup	red wine
1/2 cup	scallions, finely chopped	1 1/2 teaspoons	thyme leaves
1/2 cup	boiled ham, finely chopped	1	bay leaf
1/2 cup	mushrooms, finely chopped	1/2 cup	fresh parsley, finely chopped
1/3 cup	all-purpose flour		Salt and black pepper

Using a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium high heat, melt the butter and sauté the onion, garlic, scallions and ham for 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms, reduce the heat to medium and cook for 2 minutes. Blend in the flour and cook, stirring for 4 minutes, then add the Worcestershire sauce, beef stock, wine, thyme and bay leaf. Simmer until the sauce thickens, about 1 hour.

Before serving, remove the bay leaf and add the parsley. Season with salt and pepper.



ABSINTHE SUISESSE

Founder Owen Brennan made breakfast a wakeup call for New Orleans. The restaurant continues to be a family operation and one of the city's legendary great establishments. The old Creole home and patio are fine examples of classic French Quarter architecture.

SERVES 4

1/2 cup	Herbsaint (Absinthe, Ricard or Pernod may be substituted)
1 large	egg white
1/4 cup	half-and-half
1/4 cup	simple syrup (page 23)
1 cup	crushed ice

Put all the drink ingredients in a blender at high speed for 30 seconds.

Serve in chilled old fashioned or wine glasses.



"Dook," Edgar Chase IV, Leah and Dooky Chase's grandson, is now chef alongside Leah. "He graduated from Le Cordon Bleu in Paris," she says. "Now he's cooking at Le Cordon Noir in New Orleans."

A tiny sandwich shop was transformed into one of the country's most culturally significant restaurants through sheer hard work and necessity. Dooky Chase's became a political hub and haven in the 60s during the Civil Rights movement, and no one ever left hungry; Leah Chase made certain of it then, and still does. However, she did insist that the freedom riders shower (at a friend's place around the corner) before entering the restaurant, properly clean.

Today, race, creed or zip code do not matter a whit at Dooky Chase's restaurant but guests are still expected to be tidy.

CHEF DOOK CHASE, DOOKY CHASE'S EGGS NEW ORLEANS

Many brunch dishes are creative versions of favorites, given a personal twist by thoughtful chefs. As an original Chef Dook's grandmother Chef Leah Chase, is not only a master, but also an inventive one. Dook inherited her creativity and practicality, making this recipe his own

Eggs New Orleans is simple, and simply a delicious combination. Poached, or during busy times soft boiled eggs are placed atop a generous serving of Crab Meat Imperial.

SERVES 6

CRAB MEAT IMPERIAL

1 pound	fresh, jumbo, lump crab meat	1/4 cup	green onions, minced
1/2 cup	green bell pepper, diced	1 cup	Béchamel sauce
1/4 cup	red bell pepper diced or substitute pimento	to taste	Salt, white pepper, cayenne

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Using your fingers, gently pick through the crab meat without breaking any lumps to remove any tiny bits of shell. In a medium sized oven-proof baking dish, combine all of the ingredients, except the crab meat. Lightly stir in the crab meat so lumps are not broken.

Bake in 350°F oven for 15 minutes.

Poach two eggs per person, or, if in pinch, soft boil them.

Place a scoop of Crab Meat Imperial on each plate beside the eggs and serve.

BÉCHAMEL OR SAUCE BLANCHE (WHITE SAUCE)

White sauce is one of the five French mother sauces, the basis for innumerable variations of flavorings and use.

2 tablespoons	butter	1 cup	hot milk
2 tablespoons	all purpose flour (or cornstarch)	1/4 teaspoon	salt
		1/4 teaspoon	white pepper

In a heavy bottomed skillet, melt butter over a medium heat but do not let it brown. Blend in flour and stir continuously, making a smooth paste, while cooking 6 to 7 minutes. Slowly add warmed milk, season with salt and pepper continuing to stir while bringing it to a boil and the sauce thickens. Lower the heat and cook, stirring another 2 to 3 minutes.





CHEF CHIP FLANAGAN, RALPH'S ON THE PARK

EGGS & RED BEAN CAKES

Ralph Brennan is another of this generation's Brennan cousins who has made a significant impact on the hospitality scene. In addition to the old casino building next door to City Park, he created the popular Redfish Grill in the French Quarter, Heritage Grill, Café b, Café NOMA and Jazz Kitchen.

SERVES 12

RED BEAN CAKE

1 pound	dried red beans	2 cups	flour
1	jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped	2 cups	bread crumbs
1	onion, chopped	2 cups	egg wash (lightly beaten egg)
1 quart	chicken stock		Salt and pepper
			Oil for frying

Soak the red beans overnight in water and drain. Sauté the onions and jalapeno, add the soaked, red beans and cover with chicken stock. Allow to simmer on medium heat until the beans are soft. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Puree the mixture, and then allow to cool.

Scoop the bean mixture into 24 patties of 1/4 cup each. Bread each patty by dredging in the flour, egg wash then bread crumbs, then line up and set aside on a sheet pan. In a heavy-bottomed skillet, heat the oil until a drop of water spatters. Using tongs, fry each patty on both sides in the hot oil.

SWEET ONION ANDOUILLE SAUSAGE GRAVY

MAKES 1 QUART

1/2 cup	unsalted butter		Pinch of sugar
5	sweet onions, julienned	1 1/2 quarts	veal stock
1 1/4 pounds	andouille sausage, minced	1/2 quart	heavy cream
	Salt and pepper		

In a large pot over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onions and sauté until translucent. Add the andouille sausage and continue to simmer over medium heat. Season with a pinch of sugar and salt and pepper to taste, this will help bring out the flavors. Stir occasionally and continue to cook until it reaches a caramel color. Add veal stock and allow to reduce by 1/2. Add heavy cream and simmer for 15 minutes. Adjust the salt and pepper.

POACHED EGGS

24 eggs poached (page 11)

To serve, place 2 red bean cakes on each plate. Top each with a poached egg and ladle the Andouille gravy over them. Garnish and with serve with any extra gravy on the side.



MINT JULEP

SERVES 12

1 cup	muddled fresh mint leaves
3 cups*	bourbon
3 cups	simple syrup
12 sprigs	fresh mint leaves for garnish

Reserving 12 mint leaves for garnish, remove the leaves from stems and muddle (crush) the remaining mint leaves. Fill 12 glasses with crushed ice and divide the muddled mint between them. Add 2-ounces of bourbon and 2-ounces of simple syrup to each glass. Top with mint sprig.

SIMPLE SYRUP

2 cups	water
2 cups	granulated sugar

In a small saucepan combine water and sugar and bring to a boil over high heat until the sugar is completely dissolved. Allow syrup to cool, approximately 1 hour. It may be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator.

***NOTE:** More bourbon may be used if desired.



Antoine's is America's oldest family-run restaurant, started by young Antoine Alciatore. Rick Blount, the fifth-generation chief executive officer, uses the same front door as Antoine did in 1840.

Second generation Jules Alciatore created Café Brûlot Diabolique (devilishly burned coffee) in the 1890s. The flaming concoction of coffee, brandy, and spices became a sleight of hand to disguise alcohol during Prohibition.

Almost every guest is familiar with the jolly devil, or jester, as you choose to believe, who holds the brûlot bowl aloft. It is a traditional finale for a grand meal.

CHEF MICHAEL REGUA, ANTOINE'S EGGS SARDOU

An extravagant celebration dish, Eggs Sardou highlights artichoke bottoms, anchovies and hollandaise sauce. It was created at Antoine's and named after 19th century French playwright Victorien Sardou, in honor of his visit to New Orleans. A special Antoine's touch is fresh asparagus, lightly battered and fried then served crisscrossed on the plate.

SERVES: 6

12	freshly-cooked artichoke bottoms or two 13.5 ounce cans, drained and rinsed	1 1/2 cups	freshly-made hollandaise sauce (page 93)
1 tablespoon	unsalted butter (optional, only if using canned artichoke bottoms)	for garnish	dash of paprika
12	anchovies split in half lengthwise	for garnish	parsley, chopped
12	eggs or pre-poached eggs (page 11)	for garnish	red bell pepper, chopped

If using canned artichoke bottoms, melt the butter in a small sauce pan over medium heat. Add the artichoke bottoms and cook gently, turning over once, for about 2 minutes, just to heat through without browning. Remove the pan from the heat, cover, and set aside in a warm place. Warm the dinner plates in a low oven and poach the eggs. Place 2 artichoke bottoms on each plate, well side up, and crisscross 2 anchovy halves in artichoke bottom. Place a poached egg on top. Ladle about 1/4 cup of Hollandaise Sauce over the top of each egg, garnish and serve.

CAFÉ BRÛLOT

SERVES: 6

2	cinnamon sticks	4	sugar cubes
6	whole cloves	1/2 cup	brandy
1/4 cup	grated lemon or	3 cups	hot, strong black coffee
1	orange peel, curled in thin spiral or	1	long, fireplace match
1/4 cup	slivered orange peel		

In a copper Brûlot bowl or chafing dish, combine the cinnamon, cloves, citrus peel and sugar cubes. Place over medium heat and crush together, using the back of a large ladle. For safety*, add the brandy to the ladle, light with a long match, then pour the flaming liqueur into the pan. Never flame the brandy in the pan. Stir thoroughly and, simmer, stirring to dissolve the sugar. As the flames begin to die out, gradually add the black coffee. Ladle into Brûlot or demitasse cups, leaving the spices and citrus peels behind.

*Flambé cooking requires diligence, awareness, safety and caution. Never flame the liqueur in the bowl, always use a ladle. It is best to perform the ceremony on a side cart, away from the guests, intake vents and draperies. After all, you are playing with fire.





CHEF ALEX HARRELL, SYLVAIN

EGGS, BISCUITS & SAUSAGE GRAVY

Sylvain is one of the French Quarter's almost secret restaurants. Walking toward Jackson Square, it is tucked into a three-story carriage house built in 1796. It is named after Jean-Francois-Marmontel and Andre Getry's one-act comic opera Sylvain, performed in New Orleans the same year. Hidden behind the restaurant is an oasis, a lush courtyard, and perfect for shady afternoons under the trees.

SERVES 6 to 8

POACHED EGGS

2 eggs, poached per person (page 11)

CREAM BISCUITS

2 cups	all-purpose flour	2 teaspoons	granulated sugar
1 teaspoon	salt	1 cup	heavy cream
1 tablespoon	baking powder	2 tablespoons	melted butter

SAUSAGE MILK GRAVY

MAKES 2 1/2 cups

2 tablespoons	butter	2 cups	milk
2 cups	fresh ground sausage	1 teaspoon	fresh ground pepper
2 tablespoons	all purpose flour		salt and pepper to taste
1 cup	heavy cream		Chives for garnish

TO MAKE THE BISCUITS

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Sift the dry ingredients together and fold in the heavy cream until it makes a soft dough. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface, and knead to bring together. Roll out to a thickness of 1/2 of an inch, and cut with a round cutter. Place on a baking sheet and brush the tops with melted butter. Bake at 400°F for 15-18 minutes.

TO MAKE THE GRAVY

Heat the butter over medium to high heat and brown the sausage. Whisk in the flour and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Add the cream and milk and whisk until smooth. Reduce the heat and slowly simmer the gravy for 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

To serve, place 2 biscuits on each plate. Top each with a poached egg and ladle the gravy over them. Garnish with chives and serve any extra gravy on the side.



PIMM'S CUP

MAKES 1 drink

As Antoine's restaurant opened here in 1840, Pimm's was created in England. Their Pimm's mix claims to be the original—a closely held recipe. At the 200-year old Napoleon House classical music, including Eroiqua which Beethoven composed for Napoleon, enhances the old world ambiance. New Orleans creative community make a Pimm's Cup a summertime refresher.

Around the corner at Sylvain, instead of the Pimm's Mix, they make their own concoction by muddling fresh citrus: orange, lemon and lime, poured over ice and topped with either ginger ale or lemonade.

It can be a satisfying non-alcoholic beverage.

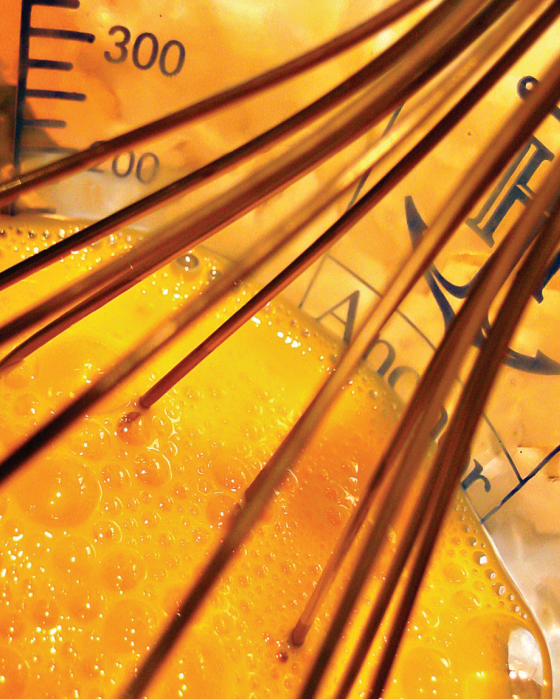
The easy way:

Napoleon House

1 1/4 ounces	Pimm's #1
3 ounces	lemonade
Splash	7UP
Garnish	slice of cucumber

Fill a tall 12-ounce glass with ice and add Pimm's and lemonade. Then top off the glass with 7UP.

Garnish with cucumber.



Billy has been a red bean aficionado since grammar school. His first red bean omelet was at the Coffee Pot in the French Quarter and he's been tinkering with the recipe ever since. There's no better way to use leftover red beans unless it would be for Billy's red bean soup recipe published in New Orleans Classic Gumbo and Soups. That tickled the Gourmet magazine editor's imagination and was embraced as a coveted Cookbook of the Month. He's been considering a red bean po boy with Andouille or hot sausage and gravy.

BILLY WOHL

RED BEAN OMELET

The use of a blender (or an immersion blender) forces air into the eggs by whipping, resulting in a light, fluffy omelet.

SERVES 6

1 pound	Andouille or smoked sausage (optional)	2 cups	grated cheddar cheese
10	eggs	1/2 cup	finely chopped green onion
2 cups	red beans, cooked or		Salt and pepper to taste
16 ounce	can of Blue Runner brand red beans		

In a 12-inch skillet brown and heat the sausage, remove from skillet, slice into diagonal pieces and return to the skillet. Cover to keep warm.

Whip the eggs until foamy and pale yellow. Add salt and pepper to taste. With a stove top griddle or large, heavy-bottomed skillet, heat to medium temperature and coat with clarified butter. When a drop of water hisses in the oil, it is ready. Pour in the eggs. Allow the eggs to set for about 1 minute.

Using a heat-resistant rubber spatula, carefully push the edge of the eggs into the center of the pan, while tilting the pan to allow uncooked egg to run underneath. Avoid browning by lowering the heat or moving the pan off the flame briefly to cool. Repeat until all of the egg mixture is cooked. If you prefer a well-cooked egg, flip the eggs and cook for another 30 seconds.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, warm the red beans.

Reserving a 1/2 cup each of the red beans and the cheese for garnish, add the red beans to the almost cooked eggs and then the cheese. Using a spatula, fold over into a half moon. Garnish by topping the omelet with the remaining red beans, cheese, and chopped green onions.

NOTE: To make a fluffy omelet at home that does not brown and cooks all the way through, use a low flame and cover the pan briefly to set the eggs, add the ingredients, return the lid until the cheese has melted, and using a spatula, flip over into a half moon.





CHEF MICHAEL RUOSS, CAMELLIA GRILL

CHILI-CHEESE OMELET

The use of a blender (or a hand immersion blender), rather than beating the eggs with a fork, forces air into the eggs by whipping, resulting in a light, fluffy omelet. Lower the heat immediately if the eggs begin to brown.

SERVES 1

1 teaspoon	clarified butter	3 slices	American cheese
3	eggs		Salt and fresh ground pepper
1/4 cup	chili (Hormel brand beef and bean chili is recommended.)		to taste

Using a blender, whip the eggs until foamy and pale yellow. Add salt and pepper to taste. With a stove top griddle or 9-inch, heavy-bottomed skillet, heat to medium temperature and coat with clarified butter. When a drop of water hisses in the oil, it is ready. Pour in the eggs. Allow the eggs to set for about one minute.

Using a heat-resistant rubber spatula, carefully push the edge of the eggs into the center of the pan, while tilting the pan to allow uncooked egg to run underneath. Avoid browning by lowering the heat or moving the pan off the flame briefly to cool. Repeat until all of the egg mixture is cooked. If you prefer a well-cooked egg, flip the eggs and cook for another 30 seconds.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, warm the chili.

Reserving a tablespoon each of the chili and the cheese for garnish, add the chili to the almost cooked eggs and then the cheese. Using a spatula, fold over into a half moon. Garnish by topping the omelet with the remaining chili and cheese. Add parsley or chopped green onions, if desired.

NOTE: This is not done at Camellia Grill, but for a fluffy omelet at home that does not brown and cooks all the way through, cover it briefly with a lid to set eggs, add the ingredients, return the lid until the cheese has melted. Remove the lid, and using a spatula, flip over into a half moon. Some may shout heretic, but it's easy and it works.



The oak tree out front is a New Orleans welcome. Camellia Grill is a time-honored custom for generations of New Orleanians, students from nearby universities, and visitors wearing blue jeans to black tie. It's a must-stop on the St. Charles Avenue streetcar line #43 at River Bend. The line outside is no concern—the wait is short, the friends are new. Service inside is brisk. Stools spin as stools should, starched linen napkins are folded, and straws served with a flourish underscore the old-fashioned diner.

FREEZE

MAKES 1 freeze

Along with omelets, hamburgers, and pecan pie, Camellia Grill is famous for freezes in chocolate, vanilla, orange, and coffee flavors. They're simple to whip up in a blender.

1 1/2 cups	milk
1 scoop	ice cream, chocolate, vanilla, coffee, or orange sherbet
1 teaspoon	chocolate, vanilla, or coffee extract
1 teaspoon	simple syrup (page 23)

Place all ingredients in a blender and pulse until foamy. Pour into a cold glass, and serve with a straw and spoon.



PETER'S PLANTERS PUNCH

A refreshing entry, this original placed in the national Tales of the Cocktail drink competition.

SERVES 1

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1 1/2 ounces | Old New Orleans 3 year rum |
| 1/2 ounce | cardamom syrup* |
| 3 dashes | Fee Brothers Orgeat syrup |
| 1/4 ounce | Navan vanilla liqueur |
| 1 ounce | fresh orange juice |
| 1 ounce | fresh lemon juice |

In a stemmed water glass filled with ice build the rum, cardamom syrup, orgeat and juices, and stir. Float Navan Vanilla on top and garnish with an orange slice rolled in cayenne and sugar.

*CARDAMOM SYRUP

In a medium size sauce pan, combine a half cup water, 1 cup sugar and one tablespoon cardamom seeds. Bring to a rolling boil. Allow to cool and strain.

CHEF DARIN NESBIT, PALACE CAFÉ OYSTERS POACHED IN CREAM

Dickie Brennan has made an important mark on the restaurant scene, successfully creating three signature restaurants. Palace Cafe, Dickie Brennan's Steak House, and Bourbon House each bear his name and creativity. He was schooled as a restaurateur by Dick Brennan, his father, and Ella Brennan, his aunt, at Commander's Palace. Active in community and hospitality associations, his commitments include the James Beard Foundation's board of directors, a high honor.

SERVES 4

OYSTERS POACHED IN CREAM

4 (2-inch) slices	French bread, bias cut	1 tablespoon	fresh rosemary, minced
1 tablespoon	unsalted butter, softened	1 tablespoon	shallots, minced
for seasoning	salt and pepper	2 dozen	fresh shucked oysters
4 tablespoons	bread crumbs	4 sprigs	fresh rosemary
2 tablespoons	freshly grated	1 tablespoon	parsley, finely chopped
	Parmesan cheese		for garnish
1 quart	heavy cream	to taste	salt and white pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Butter both sides of the French bread slices and season with salt and pepper. Place the slices on a baking sheet and toast in the oven until crisp.

In a small bowl, mix the bread crumbs and the Parmesan cheese and set aside.

In a heavy sauce pot, over medium-high heat, reduce the cream by half. Stir in the rosemary and shallots and continue to cook until it thickens a bit. Strain the sauce to remove the shallots and rosemary.

Ladle the cream into an oven-safe skillet and bring to a boil. Add the oysters and season to taste with salt and white pepper. Be careful not to over-salt the dish! Remember, the oysters are somewhat salty, as is the Parmesan cheese.

Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, or until the ends of the oysters start to curl, then remove from heat.

Sprinkle the bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese over the oysters. Broil in a 350° oven until the bread crumbs are toasted and golden brown.

To serve, place a French bread crouton in the center of each serving plate. Spoon the oysters and sauce around each crouton. Spear a rosemary sprig through each crouton and sprinkle the dish with parsley.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE: In the restaurant we serve this signature dish in individual 4-ounce French pans. For this pan roast presentation without all of the pans, serve your Oyster Pan Roast family style from a cast iron skillet





CHEF MATT REGAN, JOHN BESH'S LÜKE

FRIED CHICKEN & WAFFLES

The cast iron pan retains heat well, however it's important not to add but one piece of chicken to the pan every couple of minutes. The first piece will brown a good bit faster so add larger pieces first and likewise follow suit finishing with the smaller ones in the pan before the lid goes on.

SERVES 6

(double the amount of ingredients if 2 waffles per serving are desired)

TO FRY THE CHICKEN

1 whole chicken, cut into 8 pieces	2 tablespoons onion powder
Salt	2 tablespoons garlic powder
Freshly ground pepper	1 quart milk
3 cups flour	Canola oil

Salt and pepper the chicken pieces generously. Mix the flour, onion and garlic powder together. Dip the chicken in the milk and then dredge through the flour mixture to coat well.

Heat 2 inches of canola oil in a skillet to 350°F. Drop the chicken, in small batches, into the oil. Fry, covered, for 10 to 12 minutes and turn over, cooking for an additional 8 minutes. Place on paper towels to drain and season with salt and pepper immediately.

TO MAKE THE WAFFLES

1 tablespoon sugar	1 1/2 cups milk
2 cups sifted flour	2 egg yolks, beaten
4 teaspoons baking powder	6 tablespoons melted butter
1/2 teaspoon salt	2 egg whites, stiffly beaten

Sift together sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Add milk to yolks and stir quickly into sifted dry ingredients. Add butter. Fold in whites. Bake in preheated waffle iron.

GRAVY

2 tablespoons unsalted butter	2 cups chicken stock
1 shallot, minced	6 ounces slab or thick bacon, cut into match sticks
2 cloves garlic, minced	Salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons all purpose flour	Sage leaves for garnish
2 cups milk	Chives, chopped for garnish

In a heavy bottomed skillet, melt butter over a medium heat but do not let it brown. Add the minced shallot and garlic then stir until translucent, about 2 to 3 minutes. Blend in flour and stir continuously, making a smooth paste, while cooking 6 to 7 minutes. In a separate saucepan, combine the milk with the chicken stock and warm. Slowly add warmed liquid to the flour, continuing to stir while bringing it to a boil and the gravy thickens. Lower the heat and cook, stirring another 2 to 3 minutes. Fold the crisp bacon matchsticks into the gravy.

(recipe continued at right)



(recipe continued from left)

TO MAKE THE BACON

Cut the slab or thick bacon into matchstick-sized pieces. Using a separate skillet, fry the bacon until crisp. Remove from pan with a slotted spoon or spatula, drain and fold into gravy.

TO MAKE THE SAUTÉ OF MUSHROOMS (optional)

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 shallot, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 pint shitake mushrooms (or mushrooms of your choice), sliced
1/2 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped
Salt and pepper

Using a small skillet over medium heat add the olive oil. When hot, add minced shallot and garlic then stir until translucent. Add the mushroom slices and stir until soft, about two to three minutes. Stir in the chopped thyme, then salt and pepper to taste.

Serve by placing the chicken on each plate with 1 or 2 waffles as desired. Ladle gravy over the chicken and waffles, garnish each with a sprig of thyme, sautéed mushrooms, sage leaves and sprinkle with chives.



ABITA ROOT BEER FLOAT

We used to call it a brown cow. At her restaurant Mondo in Lakeview, Chef Susan Spicer has upscaled it for the Big Easy. Cheers.

SERVES 1

1 to 2 scoops best vanilla ice cream
12-ounce bottle Abita Root Beer, chilled

Using a large, chilled glass, add the ice cream first. Pour the root beer over the ice cream. Serve with a long ice tea spoon, a straw, and the remaining root beer in the bottle so any extra may be used to keep topping off the drink.

(recipe continued from right)

until the butter and Crisco are in quarter size pieces. Add buttermilk and knead gently until dough comes together. Wrap in plastic and let rest in refrigerator for 15 min. Roll out dough to 1/2-inches thick and cut 1/2-inch x 1/2-inch squares. Place on a greased baking sheet, put in the oven, and bake, watching carefully, until golden brown for about 10 minutes.

To serve, place stew in a bowl and top with a half roasted or quartered chicken. Cut the biscuits and place on top.

*bouquet garni on page 91

CHEF CINDY CROSBIE, SUSAN SPICER'S MONDO SMOTHERED CHICKEN & BISCUITS

Chef Susan Spicer had a comfortable neighborhood place in the back of her mind for years as a companion for Bayona, her famous French Quarter restaurant. With Mondo, she's realized yet another dream.

SERVES 4 to 6

ROASTED CHICKEN

2 whole chickens	1 lemon, halved
kosher salt	1 onion, rough chopped
rosemary springs	

STEW

1 leek diced	1 pound unsalted butter
1 yellow onion, diced	1/2 cup all purpose flour
1 stalk celery, diced	bouquet garni* of tarragon,
1 large turnip, diced	thyme and bay leaf
1 large carrot, diced	1/2 gallon chicken stock

4 TO 6 SMALL BISCUITS

2 cups all purpose flour	1/4 cup butter
3/4 tablespoon baking powder	1/4 cup Crisco
1/2 tablespoon sugar	3/4 cup buttermilk
3/4 tablespoon salt	

HOW TO ROAST CHICKEN

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Using whole 2-1/2 pound fryers, clean and trim excess fat and skin. Remove any packaged chicken parts from the cavity and reserve to make chicken stock at another time.

Rub the chicken with kosher salt. Stuff the interior of the cavity with rosemary sprigs, onion, and halved lemon, if desired. Tie the drumsticks together over the cavity and place breast side up in a roasting pan. Put in the preheated oven and roast for about 45 minutes to 1 hour based on the size of the poultry. Remove and allow to stand for about 10 minutes so the juices settle back into the bird before carving.

HOW TO MAKE THE STEW

Sweat the vegetables in butter until onions become translucent. Add flour and make a blonde roux, cooking on low for about 8 minutes. Add chicken stock slowly, while stirring. Add bouquet garni and cook for 20 minutes on low simmer.

HOW TO MAKE THE BISCUITS

Preheat oven to 375°F.

In a large mixing bowl, combine dry ingredients with Crisco and butter. Cut together with fingers *(recipe continued at left)*





ALIX & PAUL RICO

SPANISH TORTILLA

When he ran away from home as a teenager, Paul smuggled out this recipe in his country's time-honored Basque tradition. A chance meeting in Paris with a visiting restaurateur, the late Jimmy Brennan, lured Paul to New Orleans. Once here, like so many he stayed, smitten with the food, European flavors of the city and a beautiful woman. He charmed the city's artistic community, and courted Alix, preparing his tortilla for their first date. Adept at telling a good story in pictures and words, Paul prospered as the South's most talented photographer and raconteur.

With Alix, who become his wife, they are authorities and collectors of art and French antiques. An acclaimed and exacting designer, Alix notes that this is a Spanish recipe. A toast to New Orleans' Spanish and French heritage, and to their marriage, it is served to the Rico's favored guests.

SERVES 4

1 1/2 medium	russet potatoes	1/2 cup	olive oil
1 1/2 medium	yellow onions, chopped	5 large	eggs, beaten
6 cloves	garlic, thinly sliced		

Peel and cut the potatoes length-wise into thirds. Slice the potatoes into 1/16-inch or thinner pieces (a mandoline is great for this, but do be careful.)

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook only until it turns a roasted color, less than a minute. Add the onion and cook until translucent. Layer the potatoes on top of the onions and garlic, with a sprinkle of salt and pepper on each layer. Mix all together and continue to cook, stirring every 2 minutes until it begins turning a golden color. Remove the pan from the stove and drain off any excess oil.

Adjust the heat to medium and pour in the eggs. Mix to combine and continue to cook for 2 to 3 minutes, just until the eggs begin to set.

Place a lid on the skillet until the center of the eggs is set (jiggle the skillet as a good test) and no longer looks moist.

Remove the tortilla from the heat and allow cool for a few minutes. Give the skillet a good shake and run a spatula around the edge to help loosen the tortilla. To plate it, simply invert the tortilla onto a large platter or run a spatula underneath the tortilla to lift and tilt out of the skillet.

This dish is most often cut into wedges and served at room temperature. It is best served with music, a crisp salad, hot bread, and good company.



KATHLEEN NETTLETON

HIBISCUS COCKTAIL

MAKES 1 quart or
4 eight-ounce cocktails

Elegantly thoughtful for gracious entertaining is a non-alcoholic, ruby-colored cocktail.

1 quart	water (half can be sparkling)
1/2 plus 1/4 cup	granulated sugar
1/2 cup	dried hibiscus flowers (or dry hibiscus tea)
1/2	lime juice, freshly squeezed
1/2	cinnamon stick (optional)
	lemon slices as garnish
	lime slices as garnish
	mint or basil as garnish

In a medium saucepan, add 2 cups of plain still water and 1/2 cup of sugar. Boil until the sugar has dissolved. Remove from heat. Stir in the dried hibiscus flowers or add twice the recommended dry prepared tea.

Cover and stand for 20 minutes. Strain into a pitcher and discard the solids. The liquid is now a concentrate and may be stored refrigerated. To serve, chill the glasses. Place the remaining 1/4 cup of sugar in a small saucer, and rotate the glass rims in the sugar. Add the remaining 2 cups of water, using either sparkling water or club soda, to the concentrate and pour over ice. Garnish with a slice of lime, basil, or mint.

LOUISIANA
SEASONING
\$3.00 & \$5.00

CORN FLOUR
\$5.00-2 lb.
RICE FLOUR
\$5.00-2 lb.

OATMEAL
\$5.00-2 lb

STONE GROUND
CORN & RICE
SEASONING MIX
\$5.00

STONE GROUND
CORN MEAL
2LBS. \$5.00

STONE GROUND
GRITS
2LBS. \$5.00

PAPA TOM'S
LOUISIANA SEASONING

STONE

GUMBO FILE

GRO

YELLOW
& RICE
PEPPER JELLY
POLENTA
GRITS