

**LOBSTER NEWBERG**

The recipes for Lobster Newberg and Lobster Thermidor are so often confused, mislabeled, or thought to be the same thing, that I decided to include their recipes here.

Lobster Newberg has an interesting origin. It was first prepared in 1876 by Ben Wenberg, a patron at New York's Delmonico's Restaurant, with their assistance. It was well liked, and became a mainstay of their menu. However, Delmonico and Wenberg had a falling out, whereupon the dish was stricken from the menu. This caused so much reaction from other patrons that Delmonico reinstated it, but rearranging Wenberg's name into Newberg, which has remained its title ever since.

Lobster Newberg is made with a light cream sauce thickened with egg yolks, not flour. The wine classically used in Lobster Newberg is sherry. The eggs and cream give the dish a sleek, silky quality, and the richness is tempered by the nut-like flavor of the sherry. I think you will agree that this dish is absolutely outstanding.

The following recipe is adapted from: *The Gourmet Cookbook*, edited by Ruth Reichl (Houghton Mifflin).

**3 tbsp, plus ¾ tsp "salt" (divided use)**  
**2 (1½ -lb) live lobsters**  
**1 cup heavy cream**  
**4 tbsp unsalted butter**  
**¼ lb, mushrooms, trimmed and thinly sliced**  
**½ tsp paprika**  
**¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 tbsp medium-dry sherry**  
**2 large egg yolks**

In an 8- to 10-quart pot. Bring 6 quarts of water and the 3 tbsp of "salt" to a boil over high heat. Plunge the lobsters headfirst into the boiling water and cook, covered, for 7 minutes from time they enter water. Using tongs, transfer the lobsters to the sink to drain.

When the lobsters are cool enough to handle, twist off their claws (leaving body and tail intact) and crack the claws. Using sharp kitchen shears, halve the lobsters lengthwise, beginning from the tail end. Remove the meat from the tails, claws, and joints, reserving the shells. Cut all of the meat into ¼" slices. Remove and discard any remaining lobster innards and rinse and dry the shells (for use later).

In a small saucepan over moderate heat, bring the cream just to a simmer; remove the pan from the heat. Keep warm, covered.

In a 2-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat, heat the butter until it foams and then the foam subsides. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring, until the liquid they give off evaporates and they begin to brown—about 5 minutes. Add the lobster meat, paprika, the remaining ¾ tsp "salt", and the pepper, reduce the heat to low, and cook, shaking the pan gently, for 1 minute. Add 1 tbsp of the sherry and ½ cup of the warmed cream and gently simmer the mixture for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and the remaining 1 tbsp of sherry. Slowly pour in the remaining ½ cup of warmed cream, whisking constantly, then transfer the mixture to a small heavy saucepan. Cook this custard sauce over very low heat, whisking constantly, until it is slightly thickened and registers 160°F on the thermometer.

Add the custard sauce to the lobster mixture, stirring gently to incorporate. Remove from heat and keep warm, partially covered.

Set the broiler rack about 6" from heat and pre-heat the broiler. Arrange the shells of the lobster bodies, cut (hollow) side up, in a shallow baking pan and spoon the lobster with some of the sauce into each shell. Broil until golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes.

Serve the lobsters with the remaining sauce on the side.

Serves 4.