

Holiday Entertaining

Celebrate The Bounty Of The Season With Dishes Featuring Maine Lobster

(NAPSA)—The holidays are a time for special meals—meals meant to nourish the soul as much as the body. Meals that celebrate the good things in life—family, friends, health, prosperity. There's ritual in their preparation—trips to find special ingredients, the afternoon warmth of the kitchen, intoxicating aromas of spices and other ingredients.

For people looking to make a real statement at the holiday table this year, Maine lobster is the ideal choice. It's a premium ingredient that adds flavor, color and texture to a dish. A little bit goes a long way, so Maine lobster can be surprisingly affordable to use, and most places that sell lobster will cook them for you, making preparation easy. Whether as an appetizer, salad or as the main course, lobster from Maine is the ideal centerpiece of any holiday meal.

According to Kristen Millar, executive director of the Maine Lobster Promotion Council, "Lobster dishes are the perfect way to celebrate the holiday season."

For more information on Maine lobster, visit www.lobsterfrommaine.com.

Maine Lobster and Peasant Bread Stuffing With Caramelized Shallots, Pancetta, and Flageolet Beans By Chef Nathan Beriau, Harraseeket Inn, Freeport This recipe is for 6.

- ½ pound flageolet beans (soak 3 hours in water at room temperature)
- ½ gallon water
- 4 Tablespoons salt
- ¼ cup white distilled vinegar
- 2 bay leaves



Lobster can be part of a holiday meal to remember.

- 2 each 1¼-lb. Maine lobsters
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 shallot, diced
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 4 peppercorns
- ¼ cup white wine
- 3 cups ice cold water
- ¼ pound pancetta, medium dice
- 6 whole shallots peeled, large dice
- ½ loaf of peasant bread—Pain de champagne (reserve other ½ for eating)
- ½ cup cognac
- 8 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 bunch flat parsley, chiffonade
- 2 teaspoons fresh grated nutmeg
- To taste, salt and pepper
- 3 Tablespoons unsalted butter

For the Beans

Remove beans from soaking liquid. Place in a pan and cover with water. Bring to a boil and let simmer until *al dente*. Drain and let cool on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.

For the Lobster

Add the water, salt, white distilled vinegar, and bay

leaves to a pot and bring to a boil. Blanch the lobsters for 3 minutes. Remove and place into ICE WATER for 1 minute. Pick the claw, knuckle, and tail meat from the shells, saving the shells. Keep the knuckles and claws whole, cut tails into medallions.

For the "Quick" Lobster Stock

Using thick-bottom sauté pan, over medium heat, cook the reserved lobster shells in a little bit of olive oil (or clarified butter if you have it). Sauté the lobster shells over medium to high heat until the shells have turned red. Add the shallot, thyme and peppercorns. Sauté for an additional minute, then carefully deglaze the pan with white wine, reduce by ⅔ and add the ice-cold water. Simmer for 20 minutes, strain and set aside. I recommend straining this twice.

To Assemble

Using a thick-bottom sauté pan over medium heat, render the pancetta until it starts to become crisp around the edges, then add your large dice of shallots and slowly caramelize them. Cut the bread into 1" x 1" cubes or tear it for a more rustic look, add to the shallots and pancetta, turn up the heat and begin to toast the bread, stirring constantly.

Turn the heat down to low, add the cognac, ½ cup of the Quick Lobster Stock, and the beans. At this stage, your "dressing" should be starting to cook down. Add your lobster, herbs, seasonings and butter. Cook for an additional 20 minutes and serve.