
KITCHEN CONNAISSEUR

Curried Ham and Asparagus Strata



The beauty of this brunch dish is that it can be made a day ahead and baked just before you are ready to eat. A perfect combination for weekend guests! The name *strata* is simply a fancy term for layering. The recipe below is a modern twist on the classic egg and cheese version, which we really like because it includes fresh asparagus and smoked ham! Serves 6 healthy portions.

ingredients

1 Tbsp	Butter - unsalted, melted
36 spears	Asparagus, fresh
12 slices	French or Italian bread - day old, loaf size, crusts removed
1 pound	Smoked ham - shaved; or 12 slices pea-meal bacon, cooked according to the package instructions
2 cups	Cheddar cheese - medium age, shredded
2 cups	Mozzarella cheese - shredded
1/2 cup	Parmesan cheese (preferably Parmigiano-Reggiano) - finely grated
1/2 cup	Curry and Cream Sauce
10 whole	Eggs - large, room temperature
4 cups	Cream - 10%
1 Tbsp	Herbs from Provence
1 tsp	Fleur de sel
1/2 tsp	Black pepper - freshly ground
1/2 cup	Pomegranate Chutney or Mango Chutney

instructions

1. Butter a deep baking dish. The ingredients above fit nicely into a 12"x 9"x 2-1/2" oven to table ware dish.
2. Place the asparagus in a saucepan with 1/4 cup of water. Cover and cook on high heat, until just tender but still firm. Drain and place the asparagus in a cold water/ice bath to

chill it quickly. Drain and set aside.

3. Break the eggs into a large mixing bowl. Whisk the eggs together and gradually whisk the cream into the mixture. Add the Herbs from Provence, fleur de sel, and pepper. Whisk together and set aside.

3. To assemble the strata:

- spread a thin layer of Curry and Cream Sauce on the top of each slice of bread
- place 6 slices of bread – curry side up – on the bottom of the baking dish(avoid overlapping the bread to leave room for expansion)
- place 1 slice of pea-meal bacon or equal parts of ham on top of each slice of bread
- place 3 spears of asparagus on top of each slice of bread
- spread ½ of the 3 cheeses over the top
- repeat the process, using a teaspoon of Curry and Cream Sauce on top of the ham on the next layer

4. Pour the egg mixture over the strata. With saran wrap tightly cover the dish and place it in the fridge overnight or up to 48 hours.

5. Remove the dish from the fridge and allow to sit at room temperature for 30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake the strata, uncovered, in the middle of the oven until it is puffed, golden brown and cooked through – approximately 55- 60 minutes. Remove from oven and let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

6. To serve, cut the strata into the desired portion sizes. Serve hot with Pomegranate or Mango Chutney and an array of fresh fruit.

Culinary tip!

With this dish I find that the top layer of asparagus becomes weathered after 1 hour in the oven. I like to save 18 of the steamed spears and place them on the top during the last 5 minutes of cooking. This guarantees an eye appealing and delicious result.