



Madras Lobster Chops, Claw Pilau **AAA Basmati, Courgette, Broad Beans, Apricot & Scorched Herbs**

A fantastic, impressive looking and delicious dish to cook for a party or outdoor event. It's my take on a pilau dish, combining freshest ingredients; spanking lobsters, sultry spices, fruits and green herbs. Once the lobster prep is done, the rest's a doddle. Not for everybody the preparation of lobsters, it really is best done at the same time as cooking the dish. I've described below how I would manage the lobsters.

Serves 16 – 20

You'll need

- 1 Heavy chopping knife
- 1 Cast iron skillet
- 1 Paella pan, 60cm diameter
- 1 Pair poultry shears or heavy kitchen scissors

Ingredients

Lobsters

3 x 850-900g blue lobsters, must be lively and heavy

Madras Butter

- 200g butter, unsalted
- 2 sachets of *Green Saffron Madras* spice blend
- 4 tsp, 15g *Green Saffron Chapata chilli* flakes
- 2 oranges, zested

Pilau

- 3 prepared lobsters, *please see below*
- 150g Arun's Madras butter, *as above*
- Splash of grapeseed oil, about 25ml
- 500g banana shallots, chopped medium brunoise
- 2 sticks, 100g celery de-stringed, then sliced 6mm thick
- 1 head garlic, peeled, finely diced
- 1kg *Green Saffron's AAA Basmati* rice
- 2 to 3½ ltrs very light chicken, warmed
- 200g, 1 medium courgette, diced 10mm
- 150g broad beans, blanched refreshed & peeled OR 1 cob of corn, outer leaves peeled, cleaned and sliced into 6 wedges
- 3 baby leeks, halved through their lengths
- the reserved lobster juices

Garnish

- Tarragon - long soft pluches
- Dill - picked pluches
- Chives - cut 40mm
- Marjoram - picked pluches
- Italian, flat leaf parsley - picked pluches
- Baby basil - picked pluches
- Mint - picked leaves
- Celery leaf picked
- You're aiming to have about 8 tablespoons full of herbs
- 10 semi dried apricots – each one cut into 3 even slices
- 200g cottage cheese, full fat

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For handy hints and compliments contact us on:

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Method

1. Add 150g of your butter and the splash of oil to the pan, when foaming add the shallots and gently fry until soft then add the celery, the garlic. Fry for another minute
2. Add the rice, the lobsters' claws, the retained head meat and stir with 2 ltr of the stock, then allow to cook, gently bubbling. Keep an eye on the rice, don't stir it but gently push it to check how it's cooking, adding more stock as necessary. After about 10 minutes, add the courgette dice the broad beans or corn, the leek halves, any retained lobster juices and gently stir to combine. The rice will take about 25 minutes to cook, maybe a little longer depending on the diameter of the pan you're using
3. Meanwhile in the heavy skillet, dry fry the lobster chops. They need only about 1½ to 2 mins per side, then remove from the pan and set aside.
4. Using the same hot pan, scorch the herbs for only just 20 to 30 seconds so as to blacken some leaves, some not. Set aside

Assembly

- In a small saucepan, make a quick butter sauce by gently heating a little stock and whisking in any remaining butter. Pour into a small jug. Pop the lobster chops on the cooked rice, gently pushing them into the pilau. Pop random dollops of the cottage cheese over the rice, scatter over the apricot slices, then place on the 'herb bunches'. Take the pan, dinner plates and butter sauce to table with lots of paper serviettes, spoon generously onto guests' plates and enjoy!

Lobster Mise en Place

Please ensure you dispatch, kill the lobster cleanly. There are plenty of videos on-line showing how this can be best achieved.

1. Dispatch each lobster with a pointed heavy knife on the cross mark at the base of the head cut down and away direction the head so you effectively kill them even if moving about
2. Then twist off the claws and the smaller larger feelers from the body - reserve
3. Twist and pull the 'tail' away from head "over a tray to catch all those delicious lobster essences"
4. Then cut the head properly in half, remove the sac from head, the rest you spoon into a small bowl reserving all the juices as well.
5. Pull off the dead-mans' fingers from inside the head discard remove and any other tasty bits
6. Rinse and reserve the head sections. Trim them with poultry shears then blanch for 3 minutes so bright red rub a little light oil on head sections so they glisten so these look amazing reserve until final assembly
7. Then take your tail turn it onto its 'back', so the fleshy parts are exposed, flatten it, take your knife and cut between the carapace so you create individual chops "one shell width wide" keeping the tail section with two "joints" so a reasonable amount of meat then split this into two cutting vertically through the tail.
8. Clean up the 'Lobster chops' with a pair of fish scissors so no feelers etc discard these
9. Trim the last chop nearest the head so that it's neat and tidy reserve the trimmings for adding to the rice as before
10. The feelers leave as is adding to rice 10 minutes before end of the cooking - *you suck these to gain access to the meat inside*
11. Now crack the claws, ditto the knuckles with a measured but confident blow with the fat end of your chopping knife, the part closest to its handle.
12. You will have 9 'Lobster chops', 6 half tail chops, a number of small feelers as well as the meat from the head, juices and claws & knuckles.

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