



Recipe Corner

by Dorothy Johnson

Although the origin of asparagus is lost in history, it has been cultivated in the eastern Mediterranean area for more than 2000 years. The Greeks and Romans both prized it for the medicinal qualities they attributed to it long before they used it for food. They believed it would prevent bee stings and cure toothaches. As early as 200 B.C. the Romans gave detailed gardening instructions for asparagus and in addition to eating it fresh, told how to dry it for later use.

Fresh asparagus is a chef's delight. It goes well with meat - particularly ham, fish and poultry. Asparagus may be served hot with a sauce or cooked and chilled with a French dressing.

There are a number of pots in which asparagus may be cooked and a number of different methods. Here is one suggested by the Department of Agriculture. Bend the stalk and snap - off the tough section. Then wash the stalk. Bring 1/2 cup of water with 1/4 tsp. salt to boiling in a skillet or shallow pan. Add the stalks 1 layer deep. Let the water return to boil. Then cover and cook 5 to 8 minutes. Check tenderness with a fork. Do not over cook.

GLAZED HAM SLICES

6 fully cooked boneless slices
1/2 in thick
1/4 cup orange marmalade
2 tbsp. honey
1/8 tsp. hot pepper sauce

Place ham in large shallow baking pan. Blend together marmalade, honey and pepper sauce. Spread over ham slices. Bake at 325 degrees 20 to 25 minutes, or until heated through. Makes 6 servings.

ASPARAGUS WITH HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

Wash 3 lbs. of asparagus. Break off each stalk as far as it snaps easily. Cook, covered in boiling salted water in a large skillet, 5 to 10 minutes, just until crisp - tender drain. Serve with Hollandaise Sauce. Makes 6 servings.

HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

3 egg yolks
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. dry mustard
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. hot pepper sauce
1/2 cup butter

Put egg yolks, lemon juice, mustard salt and hot pepper sauce in top of double boiler. Mix well. Divide butter into 3 equal portions. Add 1 portion of the butter to egg mixture. Cook and stir over very low heat or simmering water. When butter is melted, add second portion and when this is melted, repeat with the third. Continue cooking and stirring until butter melts and sauce is thickened. Remove from heat, serve immediately. Makes approximately 3/4 cup.

ASPARAGUS HAM ROLLS

16 asparagus stalks, cooked
4 thin slices boiled ham
1/2 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
1 cup medium white sauce toast points.

Put 4 asparagus stalks on each ham slice. Roll up. Fasten with wooden pick. Broil 5 minutes on each side. Add cheese to heated white sauce. Stir until cheese is melted. Pour over ham rolls. Broil until sauce over rolls is golden brown. Garnish with toast points. Makes 4 servings.



HAM & ASPARAGUS WITH HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

ASPARAGUS QUICHE

3 1/2 cups flour
2 1/2 tsp. salt
3/4 cup butter or margarine
7 eggs
7 tbsp. cold water
2 cups shredded Swiss cheese
1 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen cut asparagus, thawed drained
2 cups heavy cream
2 cups milk
1 medium onion, minced
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. nutmeg

In large bowl, combine 3 cups flour and 1 tsp. salt. Add butter and cut in with pastry blender or with mixer until small crumbs form. Add 1 egg, slightly beaten and water. Mix until dough holds together. On lightly floured board, roll dough into 17 x 13 inch rectangle. Place pastry in 15 x 10 x 1 inch jellyroll pan. Crimp edges. Sprinkle cheese and asparagus over bottom of pastry lined pan. In large bowl, combine cream, milk 6 eggs, onion, 1/2 cup flour, 1 1/2 tsp. salt, pepper and nutmeg. Mix well. Pour over cheese and asparagus. Bake at 400 degrees 35 to 40 minutes. Makes 12 servings.

ASPARAGUS TOPS HALIBUT CASSEROLE

2 lbs. halibut salt
2 slices onion
2 slices lemon
1 sprig parsley
5 or 6 pepper corns
3 cloves
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup flour
1 cup half and half
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
1/4 tsp. dry mustard
2 hard - cooked eggs, chopped
2 tbsp. chopped capers
1 cup long - grained rice - cooked
1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen asparagus cooked

Cut halibut in chunks. Place in simmering salted water with onion, lemon, parsley, pepper corns and cloves.

Cover and simmer 6 to 8 minutes or just until halibut flakes when tested with a fork. Drain halibut, reserving 1 cup stock. Melt butter or margarine. Blend in flour. Add reserved stock and half and half. Cook over low heat stirring constantly, until thick and smooth. Add 1/2 tsp. salt, pepper, mustard, eggs and capers and heat through. Place a mound of rice in 4 or 6 individual casseroles. Arrange chunks of poached halibut on rice and asparagus on each side. Spoon egg and caper sauce over top. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Asparagus

SNOWCAPPED ASPARAGUS

Mix 3/4 cup Best Food Mayonnaise 1 egg white, stiffly beaten
Pour over 1 pkg. cooked frozen asparagus (while hot) top evenly with, Parmesan cheese.

ASPARAGUS WITH SOUR CREAM

2 1/2 lbs. asparagus
1 cup dairy sour cream
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
3 tbsp. butter or margarine
salt and pepper

Wash and trim asparagus. (Cook as directed in recipe above) Drain arrange spears in a shallow baking dish. Combine sour cream, salt and pepper to taste and lemon juice in sauce pan. Heat until just warm and pour over asparagus. Brown crumbs in butter and sprinkle over cream. Bake at 400 degrees 4 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

CHICKEN BREASTS ARGENTEUIL

4 whole chicken breasts
soft type margarine
salt and pepper
tarragon
2 pkgs. (10 oz. each) frozen asparagus, defrosted
3 egg yolks
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. dry mustard

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Have butcher bone and remove skins from each chicken breast. Cut each breast in half. Place each half between 2 pieces of aluminum foil and pound with flat side of cleaver or rolling pin. Spread inside of each chicken breast with margarine and sprinkle lightly with salt, pepper and tarragon. Place 3 or 4 asparagus spears cross - wise in center of each breast and fold over. Fasten with skewer or wooden tooth picks. Place fold side down in shallow pan. Spread tops of chicken breasts with margarine. Bake 45 minutes, or until chicken is tender and lightly browned. When chicken is almost done, combine egg yolks, lemon juice 1/4 tsp. salt and dry mustard in top of a double boiler. Add 1/2 cup soft type margarine. Place over hot, not boiling, water and cook stirring with a wire whisk until sauce thickens. Remove from heat and serve over chicken breasts. Makes 8 servings.

GRILLED ASPARAGUS

2 1/2 cups boiled asparagus (cut in pieces)
1 cup buttered bread crumbs
1/4 cup sour cream

Drain asparagus. Lay in a single layer greased baking dish, cover with crumbs. Add cream. Bake in moderate oven until crumbs are golden brown.

Suggestions for St. Patrick's day dinner. There will be wearing of the green at all the usual places. There will be watercress soup. Corned beef, Irish stew and key lime pie. There will be Irish singalongs green beer, green martinis - Some mexican resturants will serve fresh green corn tamales and green enchiladas. Green carnations Irish coffee will be served every where. Green creme de menthe will be the after drink of the day. The more posh places will serve Gaelic Beef Irish stew in Guinness stout. Will name their chicken, Chicken Erin, also Irish Coffee souffle. Wouldn't be surprised if some places will have an Irish Quiche.

I will have Irish soul food corned beef mixed greens with leprechaun sauce (hot sauce color my corn bread green and a good lemon pie with green coloring. Try it you might like it.