

serves 4 | prep 15 minutes, plus 30 minutes' standing | cook 40 minutes

SOLE FLORENTINE



2½ cups milk
 2 strips of lemon rind
 2 fresh tarragon sprigs
 1 fresh bay leaf
 ½ onion, sliced
 3½ tbsp butter, plus extra
 for greasing
 generous ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
 2 tsp mustard powder
 ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan
 cheese
 ¼ cups cream
 pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
 1 lb/450 g spinach leaves
 4 Dover sole or sole quarter-cut fillets
 (two from each side of the fish),
 about 1 lb 10 oz/750 g in total
 salt and pepper

TO SERVE
 crisp green salad
 crusty bread

Preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C. Put the milk, lemon rind, tarragon, bay leaf, and onion in a pan over medium heat and bring slowly to a boil. Remove from the heat and set aside for 30 minutes for the flavors to infuse.

Melt the butter in a separate pan over medium heat and stir in the flour and mustard powder until smooth. Strain the infused milk, discarding the lemon, herbs, and onion. Gradually beat the milk into the butter and flour until smooth. Bring slowly to a boil, stirring constantly, until thickened. Let simmer gently for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the cheese, cream, nutmeg, and salt and pepper to taste. Cover the surface of the sauce with parchment paper or plastic wrap. Set aside.

Lightly grease a large baking dish. Bring a large pan of salted water to a boil, add the spinach, and blanch for 30 seconds. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Drain again and pat dry with paper towels. Put the spinach in a layer in the base of the dish.

Wash and dry the fish fillets. Season to taste with salt and pepper and roll up. Arrange on top of the spinach and pour over the cheese sauce. Bake in the preheated oven for 35 minutes until bubbling and golden. Serve at once with a green salad and crusty bread.