VINAIGRETTE, EMULSIFIED VINAIGRETTE, SAUCE VIERGE, AND PICKLED CHOW CHOW VINAIGRETTE

Chef Thomas Keller / Chapter Nineteen

MASTERCLASS

VINAIGRETTE, EMULSIFIED VINAIGRETTE, SAUCE VIERGE, AND PICKLED CHOW CHOW VINAIGRETTE

"When we're making our vinaigrettes and our different sauces we can use olive oil or we can use any other oil that we like. . . There's all different kinds of vinegars and oils that you can use. So don't take anything as a rule."

CHAPTER REVIEW

In its simplest form, a vinaigrette is a mix of oil and vinegar—something to dip our bread in, or toss as dressing in our salads. But vinaigrettes are varied and versatile. They can be made with myriad ingredients, and put to nearly endless uses. Here, Chef Keller offers a taste of their range, making an assortment of vinaigrettes, including a basic oil-and-vinegar vinaigrette; a creamy vinaigrette, emulsified with a raw egg yolk and mustard; and a chow chow vinaigrette, from a medley of chopped and pickled vegetables. He also shows you how to make a sauce vierge, which, though technically a vinaigrette, is elegant enough to deserve its name. Different culinary traditions have given rise to different vinaigrettes. In Italy, a traditional vinaigrette is made with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. In France, the traditional combination is a neutral oil, such as grapeseed, with red wine vinegar. Typically, a vinaigrette has a ratio of three-parts oil to one-part vinegar. But Chef Keller says not to be confined by rules. He encourages you to balance and season your vinaigrettes to your taste, and to experiment with different oils and vinegars. If you'd rather use citrus as your acid instead—lemon or lime or grapefruit, to name just a few—go ahead. Try marrying your vinaigrettes with different dishes. They're delicious with meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, and eggs. And yes, they're also great as salad dressings, or for dipping bread.

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EMULSIFIED VINAIGRETTE

Mise en place

½ liter yield

Ingredients

1 egg yolk, raw*
2.5 grams garlic
10 grams shallots, minced
1 gram fresh thyme
375 grams olive oil
100 grams balsamic vinegar
Dijon mustard (to taste)

**Ingredient note:* If you're uncomfortable eating raw egg, you can make the emulsified vinaigrette without the egg, as the mustard acts as the binding agent.

Equipment

Chef's knife
Cutting board
Mixing bowl
Spoon
Whisk
Rasp grater

METHOD

Combine egg yolks, mustard, shallots, and thyme leaves in a mixing bowl. Begin drizzling in the oil while whisking constantly. Continue doing so until the ingredients begin to emulsify. A single egg yolk can absorb a large quantity of oil. Drizzle in vinegar and continue whisking. Taste as you go, and adjust the flavors to your liking.

A vinaigrette can be stored in your refrigerator in a sealed container for a week.

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SAUCE VIERGE

Mise en place

½ liter yield

Ingredients

125 grams of tomatoes, peeled, cored, and diced
15 grams vinegar of your choice*
5 grams shallots, minced
35 grams extra virgin olive oil
Maldon salt, to taste
Pinch of parsley, minced
Lemon, to taste

****Ingredient note:*** In this lesson, Chef Keller uses balsamic vinegar. In his first MasterClass, he uses champagne vinegar when he makes sauce vierge. You can use either vinegar, according to your preference.

Equipment

Mixing bowl
Spoon

METHOD

Place the diced tomatoes and minced shallots into a mixing bowl. Add enough olive oil to thoroughly coat and absorb into the tomatoes. Gently fold in the chopped parsley and season with Maldon salt, balsamic vinegar, and a squeeze of fresh lemon juice.

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CHOW CHOW VINAIGRETTE

Mise en place

Ingredients

150 grams pickled vegetables (recipe below)
Whole grain mustard, to taste
10 grams minced shallot
60 grams olive oil
35 grams pickling liquid from pickled vegetables
Juice from half a lemon, about 20 grams
Kosher salt, to taste
Minced chives, to taste

Equipment

Cutting board
Chef's knife
Spoons
Mixing bowl
Fork
Whisk

FOR THE PICKLED VEGETABLES

Note: The quantity of vegetables is proportional to the size of pickling jar used; both can be varied according to your needs.

Ingredients

200 grams sugar
400 grams water
200 grams white wine vinegar
Thyme sprigs
Mustard seeds
4 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly crushed
85 grams cauliflower florets
Red pearl onions, halved
100 grams cucumbers, oblique cut
75 grams radishes, quartered
35 grams jingle bell peppers or other small variety

Equipment

Cutting board
Paring knife
Canning jar
3-quart saucepot

METHOD

FOR THE PICKLED VEGETABLES:

When preparing your vegetables, cut them to a size that is as uniform as possible for consistent pickling. Add the mixed vegetables to the canning jar. Combine water, vinegar, sugar, thyme, mustard seeds, and garlic in a saucepot and bring to a simmer. Pour the hot pickling liquid over vegetables to submerge them and seal the jar. Chill and store the jar in the refrigerator.

FOR THE CHOW CHOW VINAIGRETTE:

Remove the pickled vegetables from jar and chop. Place in bowl with mustard, olive oil, shallots and vinegar, and mix gently. Add a squeeze of lemon juice, sprinkle with salt, and stir. Garnish with chives.

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LEARN MORE

Sauce vierge was created and popularized by the great French chef Michel Guérard, and is a famous example of his *cuisine minceur*, a lighter spin on traditional nouvelle cuisine. Guérard began developing cuisine minceur in the early 1970s at a spa and resort that he and his wife ran in Eugénie-les-Bains, about 500 miles outside of Paris. In keeping with the health-conscious ethos of the property's ethos, Guérard's food was characteristized by bright, vivid flavors that drew on far less butter, cream, and other fats than many French dishes of the past. A pioneering figure, Guérard was also part of a vanguard of talented French chefs, led by Paul Bocuse, that included Roger Vergé, Alain Chapel, Raymond Oliver, among others.

Sauce vierge is incredibly versatile. Chef Keller suggests dressing a salad with it or using it atop melted zucchini, as he demonstrates in Chapter 15: Roasting: Zucchini of his first MasterClass. You could also garnish chicken paillard with it, as shown in Chapter 3: Chicken Paillard of this class, or use it with fish or eggs.