



Aioli Garni (Garlic Mayonnaise with Accompaniments)

This is a classic Provençale preparation, which we could not ignore in a month celebrating the “Stinking Rose.” The name comes from its two main ingredients, “ail” meaning garlic and “oli” meaning olive oil in the langue d’oc, the ancient dialect of Southern France. Eating too much of the spicy garlic mayonnaise can be unsettling, so it is usually paired with lighter accompaniments, such as vegetable crudités or lightly boiled fish or meat. A Provençale rosé would be the libation of choice.

“Aioli epitomizes the heat, the power, and the joy of the Provençale sun, but it has another virtue - it drives away flies.” Frédéric Mistral

8-10 servings

Ingredients

For the aioli:

2 egg yolks
4 cloves of very fresh garlic, peeled
½ teaspoon coarse sea salt
3 cups extra virgin olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon

For the accompaniments (according to your preference):

Poached fish
Boiled meats
Blanched asparagus spears
Boiled eggs
Haricots verts
Blanched broccoli florets
Peeled fava beans
Peeled baby carrots
Boiled new potatoes
Tomato wedges
Celery stalks

Equipment

Blender or food processor -or-
Mortar and pestle and hand whisk

Preparation

Prepare the aioli:

Place the 4 cloves of garlic and the sea salt in a blender or food processor and pulse until diced small. With the motor running, add the 2 egg yolks and purée continuously while slowly drizzling in 2 cups of olive oil. Add the juice of 1 lemon and pulse again until thoroughly incorporated.

[Chef’s Note: The technique for making aioli, or any mayonnaise, is simple. However, it is easily possible that the sauce will break. It is essentially an emulsion, where the yolks are suspended in the oil. In the old days, one needed a mortar and pestle, and a strong arm for whisking in the oil. Now we have the electric blender to help us. The most important thing is to add the oil in a slow, thin drizzle, rather than dumping it all in at once. This will keep the mixture from breaking. Using a blender, it is unlikely that your sauce will break, just be sure to add the oil very slowly at first.

June 2006

We have used the classic recipe here, which includes raw egg yolks. If this is a concern, use “pasteurized in the shell” eggs. We prefer to use the freshest possible eggs from a known and trusted source.

It is equally important to use the freshest garlic possible. Choose cloves which are firm and tightly wrapped in their paper. Any green shoots will render the final product extremely bitter.]

Service

Spoon the aioli into a bowl and place it on a platter surrounded by your chosen accompaniments. Since we feast with the eyes first, pay attention to color contrast and shape when arranging the platter.

You can store the aioli in a tightly covered container for up to two weeks.

Copyright © 2006 The Gilded Fork™. Recipe by Mark Tafoya. All rights reserved.

June 2006