

Emma's Spinach and Smoked Salmon Benedict with Artichoke-Caper-Lemon Butter

From *Notes from a Maine Kitchen* (Down East Books, 2011) by Kathy Gunst.

Emma's recipe omits the heavy bacon and hollandaise sauce traditionally served with Eggs Benedict and replaces them with smoked salmon, baby spinach, and a light sauce made with artichoke hearts, capers, and fresh lemon juice mixed with a touch of butter. Serve with hot coffee, iced tea, and a spring fruit salad.

The Artichoke-Caper-Lemon Butter:

4 tablespoons butter

½ cup jarred artichoke hearts, drained, and chopped

¼ cup capers, drained

Pinch of sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoon grated lemon peel

The Eggs, Salmon, and Spinach:

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 cup packed baby spinach

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 English muffins, or whole wheat English muffins, or four 1-inch thick slices of your favorite bread

8 thin slices smoked salmon

4 large eggs

Make the butter: Melt the butter in a small saucepan. Add the artichokes, capers, just a touch of salt, pepper, lemon juice, and lemon peel and cook 2 minutes. Set aside or keep warm over very low heat.

In a medium skillet, heat the oil over high heat. Add the spinach and stir until wilted, about 2 to 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Keep warm over very low heat.

Bring 4 cups water to a boil in a medium skillet.

Separate the muffins and place in the toaster.

When the water is boiling, reduce the heat to moderate so the water is at a gentle simmer. Crack the eggs into a bowl, one at a time, and add to the skillet. Use a spoon to swirl the water around

the eggs, to keep them moving, and cook 2 1/2 to 3 minutes, depending on how firm you like your eggs.

Toast the muffin until golden brown. Place a muffin half (or 2 muffin halves) on 2 to 4 plates and top each with 2 slices of salmon making sure they overlap the muffin slightly so you'll see the color once the egg goes on top. Divide the spinach between each muffin half and place on the salmon.

Warm the Artichoke-Caper-Lemon Butter over low heat. Drain the eggs well and place one on each muffin. Spoon about 1 to 2 tablespoons of the warm butter on top and serve hot.

Serves 2 to 4.