

An Easter Brunch to Remember ...

On Sunday I joined forces with the very talented and creative people behind [The Sweetest Things](#), [Darren Bester Photography](#) and [Pop! Events](#), to bring you our Easter inspired Breakfast Brunch Table!

The Sweetest Things lived up to it's name by providing a decadent carrot cake with cream cheese icing complete with a spun sugar topping! Melt in your mouth Meringues and chocolate ganache tarts in a biscuit base topped with fresh raspberries – talk about decadent! And a big thank you for my doggy bag ;)

Pop! Events provided all the beautifully made paper decorations you see in the photographs, from the expertly laser cut place settings, to the festive cut out white bunnies, the cutlery & napkin holders, to the food description cards eloquently placed on pegs. Having recently hired Pop! Events services for a very special Baby Shower I hosted, I can vouch for their professionalism and ability to make things happen at very short notice.

Of course, no styled table is worth its weight in 'style' if you don't have Darren Bester Photography there to snap up some gorgeous pictures and capture the moment! Thankfully for us, Darren is becoming more and more passionate about food photography, which is creating many an opportunity for us to work together. Choosing the photographs to use on this blog post has left me salivating as all the images are droolicious!



So what did I bring to this party? My favourite breakfast of all times of course ...the one, the only, Smoked Salmon Eggs Benedict!!! Yummy Decadent soft poached eggs on a bed of smoked salmon a top an English toasted muffin, drenched in Hollandaise Sauce (possibly the most indulgent sauce of all times) and garnished with chives. I'm not going to go into how devastating it was to watch the others tuck in after the shoot, whilst me and my pregnant belly had to settle for an English muffin with cream cheese ... the memory is too painful. Nor am I going to tell you about how ever since Sunday, all I can think about is Eggs Benedict ... No, I will not waste your time with the list of all my favourite foods that I cannot enjoy now, whilst pregnant. Instead, I will quietly remind myself that in just 5 short months our bambino will arrive and after meeting him for the first time, Hubby will be off on a Sushi run and then returning the following morning again, to the hospital with eggs Benedict! Yes... only 5 more months ... I can do this!



The long Easter weekend is upon us, I hope we have inspired you with our Easter Brunch Table and hope that you will lay your own ... if you would like to serve up Salmon Eggs Benedict for your nearest and dearest ... here is the recipe and if you find me knocking at your door, just as the Benedict's are served, DO NOT open the door!

Smoked Salmon Eggs Benedict

Yield: 4

Ingredients:

4 English Muffins cut in half and toasted

100g Smoked Salmon

4 Eggs Softly Poached

250 grms Unsalted Butter

5 Egg Yolks

10 ml White Wine Vinegar

Fresh Lemon Juice (just a squeeze or 2)

Salt & Pepper

Chopped Chives for Garnishing

Method:

To clarify your butter, place the 250g block of butter in a pot and put on a very low heat – allow to melt completely and the ‘foam’ to rise to the top. Once it seems that no more foam is rising to the top, you can switch off the heat (give it about 20 minutes). Use a spoon to scoop up and discard as much of the foam as possible. Then line a sieve with a piece of muslin cloth and gently pour the butter mixture through the muslin cloth sieve and into a clean bowl. (If you don’t have muslin cloth you can use a simple coffee filter paper instead – just to trap all the milk solids behind. If you don’t have a coffee filter paper, then use the finest sieve you can find to strain the butter mixture).

Set the clarified butter aside for a few minutes and poach your eggs according to the cooking tips provided [here](#) and set aside until required.

Right so your eggs have been poached and are resting in cold water, quickly toast your English muffins and place on each plate.

Time to make the hollandaise sauce, once you get started with this, you cannot pause in between – Bring about 500ml of water to a gentle simmer in a small pot. In a separate heat proof bowl such as stainless steel or glass, whisk your egg yolks quickly, adding the 10ml vinegar and pinch of salt, add 2 Tbsp of the hot water from the pot to the egg mixture and whisk for a further 15 seconds or so, now place this egg mixture bowl over the pot with the simmering water in it (water level must not be able to reach the egg mixture bowl) and whisk continuously until the egg mixture forms ribbon stage (meaning that when you lift the whisk over the mixture the batter should fall slowly, forming a ribbon that will hold its shape for a few seconds. The colour of the mixture would have also lightened once ribbon stage has been reached). To prevent scrambling your eggs, lift it from time to time off the heat, while you continue to whisk awaiting ribbon stage. Remove from the heat and slowly drizzle by drizzle add your clarified butter, the whole time stirring with your whisk as you add it. You might not require all the clarified butter, you need to taste as you go along, I would say once you have added just over half the amount of butter, add the squeeze or 2 of lemon juice and another pinch of salt and then taste, add more butter if necessary and adjust the seasoning until you are happy with the flavour.

Time to plate up – gently place your poached eggs in hot salted water for 30 seconds to heat through, and then drain.

On top of each muffin slice, place a generous amount of salmon, top with a poached egg, spoon Hollandaise Sauce over the top and garnish with chopped chives. Place the other half of the muffin

alongside the dressed one (Or perhaps double up on the eggs and Salmon quantities listed under ingredients so that each person receives 2 poached eggs & salmon for both sides of the English Muffin).

Notes: You clarify your butter to get rid of the milk solids and moisture content found in butter. For this sauce we want the flavour of butter but not the oiliness that usually comes with it. Clarifying the butter enables this. Another reason one would clarify butter is it allows you to cook with it over a higher heat or for an extended period of time. Leftover clarified butter can keep, in a well sealed glass container for a few weeks.

Wet a dishcloth and place it on your work counter, then place your bowl on top of it. The damp dish cloth creates a steady work surface, allowing you to free up the hand that would be keeping your bowl in place, which you can then use to pour the clarified butter in slowly while continuing to whisk. If the flat cloth does not seem to steady it, then twirl your dish cloth and place it down in a circular form, and nestle your bowl on top of this 'nest'.

This is not a traditional Hollandaise Sauce recipe - you will note some small discrepancies but it tastes the exact same and is less the fuss !