

Trout Meunière Amandine

By Tom Dickson

Preparation time: 20 minutes | Cooking time: 20 minutes | Serves 4



INGREDIENTS

- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 2 trout fillets, or 1 whole or 2 whole smaller trout (gutted)
- Vegetable oil
- 2 T. plus 6 T. butter
- Black pepper and kosher salt
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme, leaves stripped and chopped, or ½ t. dried thyme
- 2 T. fresh lemon juice
- ¼ c. finely chopped flat-leaf (Italian) parsley
- ½ c. sliced almonds, lightly toasted

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 200 degrees F.

Place flour in a pie dish. Rinse fish and pat dry with paper towels. Generously coat a large sauté pan with vegetable oil and bring to a high heat. Once the oil is shimmering, add 2 T. butter. Quickly season the fillets or whole trout with salt and paper. Dredge in flour, shake off excess, and immediately place fish in the pan with the hot, shimmering oil and butter. If you're cooking whole trout, repeatedly spoon the heated oil-butter mixture into the cavity to speed interior cooking.

After three minutes for fillets (five to seven minutes for whole trout depending on size), flip and cook for the same amount of time. Transfer the fish to a baking rack set in the oven.

Brown butter

Pour drippings from pan and wipe clean with a paper towel. Turn heat to medium-high and add the remaining 6 T. butter along with the thyme. Stir frequently with a rubber spatula to prevent scorching. Once the butter starts to foam, watch it carefully. The butter is browning when the browned milk solids start to appear as dark golden flecks in the melted butter, which gives off a nutty, toasty aroma. Pour hot butter into a heat-proof container (like a Pyrex measuring cup) so it stops cooking. Add the lemon juice and whisk to combine. Season with salt and whisk in the chopped parsley. Remove fish from the oven, spoon sauce over fish, and sprinkle with toasted almonds. ■

Like many anglers, I release most of the trout I catch, but sometimes I'll harvest one or two to make a meal. Consuming my catch is a way to deepen my outdoor experience, in the same way that eating deer, elk, pronghorn, waterfowl, and game birds enriches my hunting season.

One way to honor a harvested rainbow or brown is by preparing Trout Meunière Amandine. Served in high-end restaurants worldwide, this classic French dish is fancy but not difficult. And the results! Oo-la-la.

The French word *meunière* (man-YARE) refers both to the sauce—brown butter, chopped parsley, and lemon—and the method of cooking, which is to dredge a fish in flour and pan fry it. *Amandine* (AH-mahn-deen) means prepared with almonds.

Brown butter is butter cooked until it has melted into a liquid, the water has cooked off, and the remaining milk solids begin to toast and brown to a delicious and nutty flavor.

I toast the almonds in the microwave. It's much faster than using the stove and requires far less monitoring than stovetop toasting. Put sliced almonds on a plate, cook for one minute on high, stir, and cook for another minute. 🐘

Rice cooker revisited

In the March-April issue I recommended a cooker for making rice to accompany Venison Stir Fry. Several readers have pointed out that the cooker costs a whopping \$139. I had no idea. When my wife and I bought ours, it was one-third that price. I did some research and found that *Cook's Illustrated* "highly recommends" the Aroma 8-Cup Digital Rice Cooker and Food Steamer. The price? Just \$30.



—Tom Dickson is editor of Montana Outdoors.