

Asparagus: The versatile favorite spring vegetable

By Jerry Marlowe
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What all can I say about the very wonderful spring vegetable asparagus? It's great hot or cold. You can steam it, boil it ... or even roast it. It's all very good. Personally, I lean toward the salted water boil approach but be sure to take your own poetic license and enjoy it however. Try grating some Parmesan cheese on it. How about some extra-virgin olive oil, or Hollandaise sauce? The possibilities are endless but I also enjoy a tablespoonful of wine vinegar mixed with 2 to 3 tablespoons of good extra-virgin olive oil. Please let me share a Pan-roasted Asparagus soup with Tarragon with you.

1½ pounds of peeled thick asparagus, 2 tbs butter or extra virgin olive oil, fresh tarragon about 10 leaves or ½ tsp dried leaves then 1 quart of good chicken stock. Plus salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Now here we go.

First, break off the bottom of each stalk of asparagus and discard. Coarsely chop the rest of the stalk leaving 16 of the flower ends whole. Put butter or oil in broad saucepan or deep skillet and up the heat.

Add the asparagus and tarragon and cook about 10 minutes. Remove those flowered ends and set aside.

OK, now add your chicken stock and some salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and reduce heat and simmer until asparagus is very tender, about 10 minutes. Cool it for a few minutes.

Now use a blender to puree very carefully in batches.

Return it to the pan and reheat gently over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally. When soup is hot, taste and adjust seasonings. Put four of the cooked flower ends in each of four bowls.

Now ladle the soup and serve with a flair and a gracious smile. At this point you may deserve a very large glass of Sauvignon blanc or Chardonnay wine. You



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■ Jerry Marlowe offers up a soup featuring his favorite spring vegetable. Asparagus.

have earned the praise of your famished four guests and a round of deafening applause.

And by the way, if my supreme Chef friend Toni Schlabach is standing nearby give her a taste just before serving. She will tell you what it might need.

Bless you all for trying it. Oh and by the way don't give up on me starting the cooking classes again. If any interest call me at 330-243-2211. My guest chefs in that endeavor will be Toni Schlabach and Matt Ridgeway, if I can lure them in to add a very

professional touch to each class.

Thank you for your

continued culinary interest. Your devoted foodie, Jerry Marlowe.