

Globe Artichokes with Honey Dressing

The Globe artichoke is almost a symbol of Mediterranean cooking photography and the art world is also very fond of this splendid stately spring vegetable. It is fair to say though the artichoke can prove a little mysterious when placed in front of a cook for the first time.

The easiest way to experience an artichoke is to simply boil it until it is tender and eat by hand, pulling away each petal, dipping them in a sauce and scrapping the soft flesh of each by sort of pulling them through your teeth, like you would take the chocolate off a biscuit as a child. have a bowl close by to put in all of your spent outer petals in
When you have finished the outer petals you will have left a round base on the short stem and on top of this is the choke, This is the fibrous part that will if left growing turn into the purple centre of the flower, Remove this by scraping out with a teaspoon, You are then left with the heart or fond, This is the really good bit and makes the whole process worth it. Persevere, if you are not sure of the taste the first time, try them again somewhere along the tracks as the flavour is unique and will grow on you.

To serve 4 as an entrée

- 4 firm freshly picked artichokes
- 1 lemon
- 2 teaspoon salt
- 4 litres water

With a pair of scissors trim of the small prickles on the edges of each outer petal, trim off the stalks leaving about a couple of cm, place in a saucepan along with the lemon and salt, bring to the boil and boil for around ½ an hour to 40minutes or until the outer petals can be easily pulled away., drain and leave to cool a little, eat warm with your favourite dressing.

Honey vinaigrette

- One good teaspoon honey 7-8ml
- 1 teaspoon whole grain mustard
- 2 dessertspoons red wine vinegar
- 4 dessertspoons grape seed oil

Mix together the honey, mustard and vinegar, whisk and gradually add the oil, season with a pinch of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.