

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Braised Artichokes with Creamy Dipping Sauce

Serves 3 to 6 as a first course, depending on how big your artichokes are and how big your appetite is

Trimming artichokes isn't hard, but you might want to watch a youtube video or two if you're not familiar with the process.

99% of artichoke recipes call for transferring the trimmed 'chokes to a bowl of water with a lemon squeezed into it to keep them from browning. Not only does it not work, but they look and taste the same after cooking, so I've skipped this step. (But a recent issue of Cook's Illustrated tested it and found it the lemon water worthwhile.)

If your artichokes are really big, you might need to use a 12-inch sauté pan instead of a Dutch oven to fit them in a single layer.

If you're mayonnaise-adverse, crème fraiche would be a great substitute. Greek yogurt or sour cream would work if you stir it in off the heat so the dairy doesn't curdle.

3 medium artichokes
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white wine
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 tablespoon parsley leaves, minced

1. Working with one artichoke at a time, cut off the top 2 inches of the artichoke. Working around the artichoke, use scissors to cut off the sharp tips of the leaves. Trim the base of the stem, then trim off the outside millimeter or so of the stem. Cut the artichoke in half from top to bottom and use a paring knife to cut out the sharp purple leaves and fuzzy choke from the center. Rinse the artichoke under running water to remove any remaining fuzz.

2. Heat the olive oil in a 5- or 6-quart Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Arrange the artichokes cut-side down in the pot, overlapping the stems in the middle. Add the water, wine, pepper, and salt. Cover the pot, reduce the heat to medium-low, and braise artichokes until tender when pierced with a knife, about 30 minutes for small artichokes and 40 minutes for very large artichokes. (If you're not ready to serve the artichokes right away, remove the pot from the heat and leave the cover on; the 'chokes will stay hot for up to 30 minutes.)

3. Transfer artichoke halves to a serving platter or plates. There should about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup liquid remaining in the pot. Add the mayonnaise and parsley to the liquid; whisk to combine and pour into individual dipping containers.