

Everyday Sauces

In French cooking, demi-glace is the foundation for many sauces that are the perfect accompaniment to sautéed foods. You can start with any flavor demi-glace and create a delicious everyday sauce in a matter of minutes. Or try one of these easy variations.

<p>Everyday Sauce</p> <p>¾ cup water ¼ cup demi-glace 2 Tbs. unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into small pieces Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste</p> <p>In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the water and demi-glace. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer briefly. Whisk in the butter and season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.</p>	<p>White Wine and Dijon Mustard Sauce</p> <p><i>Prepare this sauce using chicken, veal or vegetable demi-glace and serve with roasted or sautéed poultry, pork or veal.</i></p> <p>In a saucepan over medium-high heat, combine 1 chopped shallot with ½ cup dry white wine. Bring to a boil and cook until almost all of the wine has evaporated. Add the Everyday Sauce and return to a boil. Remove from the heat and whisk in 2 tsp. Dijon mustard and 2 Tbs. finely chopped cornichons. Serve immediately.</p>
<p>Diablo Sauce</p> <p><i>Use any of the demi-glace flavors for this sauce and serve with grilled meats or poultry.</i></p> <p>In a saucepan over medium-high heat, combine 1 chopped shallot with ½ cup dry white wine. Bring to a boil and cook until almost all of the wine has evaporated. Add the Everyday Sauce and return to a boil. Season with cayenne pepper, to taste. Serve immediately.</p>	<p>Red Wine Sauce</p> <p><i>To make this sauce, use beef or veal demi-glace and serve with roasted, grilled or sautéed meats.</i></p> <p>In a saucepan over medium heat, melt 1 Tbs. unsalted butter. Add 1 chopped shallot and 1 chopped garlic clove. Cook until tender and translucent. Add ½ cup red wine, increase the heat to high and bring to a boil. Cook until almost all of the wine has evaporated. Add the Everyday Sauce and return to a boil. Serve immediately.</p>
<p>Fines Herbes Sauce</p> <p><i>Make this sauce using chicken demi-glace and serve with chicken, other poultry or pork.</i></p> <p>In a saucepan over medium-high heat, combine 1 chopped shallot with ½ cup dry white wine. Bring to a boil and cook until almost all of the wine has evaporated. Add the Everyday Sauce and 2 Tbs. heavy cream and return to a boil. Remove from the heat and whisk in 1 tsp. <i>each</i> chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, tarragon, chervil and chives. Serve immediately.</p>	<p>Port Wine Sauce</p> <p><i>Use beef, veal or vegetable demi-glace to prepare this sauce and serve with roasted, grilled or sautéed meats or duck.</i></p> <p>In a saucepan over medium heat, bring the Everyday Sauce to a boil. Remove from the heat and add 1 Tbs. port. Serve immediately.</p>

September 16, 2012

Prep School: Learn to Sauté

Four related techniques—sautéing, panfrying, deep-frying and stir-frying—are used to cook various cuts of meat and vegetables quickly. They all involve oil or butter as the cooking medium, which browns the ingredients, creating crisp crusts over moderately high to high heat. A common theme with these techniques is a pan sauce, which brings all the flavors together in harmony.

What Is Sautéing?

Sautéing is an ideal technique for today’s busy home chefs because it cooks food quickly, preserving its flavors, and by not diluting them in liquid, preserving its nutrients. By intensifying the flavors in food, sautéing increases the pleasure of eating healthy vegetables, fruits and even grains. Although generally used for main dishes, this cooking method is also good for making starters, sides and even desserts.

Sautéing calls for cooking food rapidly over high heat in a small amount of fat. The technique—the name of which derives from the French word for “jump”—has been traditionally described as tossing and stirring small pieces of food in a hot pan. The definition has expanded to include larger pieces of fish, poultry and meat, which are sometimes cut or pounded thin to keep the cooking time short. These larger pieces don’t need to be kept moving constantly, though are sometimes turned several times.

Since there is no water involved, sautéing is known as a dry-heat cooking method, like grilling and roasting. The dry heat and fat create appealing and delicious browning. As food browns, its juices concentrate and caramelize. Adding liquid to the pan at the end of sautéing dissolves these juices and produces a delicious sauce in minutes.

As a rule, start sautéing over medium-high or high heat, to ensure a nice browned surface, and then lower the heat so that the food will cook through without burning. To lessen the risk of foods sticking to the pan, always heat the pan before you add the fat and then heat the fat before you add the food. Swirl the pan to coat it evenly with the fat. When sautéing a larger piece of poultry or meat, let it cook undisturbed for a few minutes to brown well on the first side.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma New Healthy Kitchen Series, *Sautéing*, by Dana Jacobi (Weldon Owen, 2006).

Visit williams-sonoma.com to search our extensive recipe collection, find menus and tips for entertaining, and browse an expanded selection of products in every category.

What Is Panfrying?

Panfrying is used to cook food over moderate to high heat in hot oil, producing a crisp exterior and a moist interior. Also called shallow frying, this technique uses more fat than sautéing but far less than deep-frying, which involves fully submerging the food in hot oil. Because larger pieces of meat, such as bone-in chicken parts, as well as vegetables, can be panfried, the cooking times can be longer than with sautéing.

When panfrying, it is critical to use an oil that has a high smoke point. Choose a heavy-bottomed pan that retains heat well to ensure the oil stays at an even temperature. A good rule of thumb when pan-frying: fill the pan with up to 1 inch of oil (or about halfway up the sides of the food that you are cooking).

As with sautéing, be sure to allow enough room between the pieces of food when panfrying to prevent sudden drastic dips in the oil's temperature as well as the release of the natural juices in the food.

How to Sauté

1. Choose the correct size pan. The pieces of food should fit easily in the pan with about 1 inch of space on all sides. More space could cause the oil to burn. Packing the food too tight could trap moisture, resulting in steaming rather than browning.
2. Preheat the pan over medium-high heat or the heat level specified in the recipe. This ensures that a nice crust will form on the food when it is added to the pan.
3. When the pan is hot, add a small amount of oil. The more natural fat present in the food, such as oil-rich fish, the less oil will be needed. Well-seasoned or nonstick pans may not need added fat. When the oil is hot—rippling will be visible on the surface—add the food to the pan, starting presentation side down if indicated in the recipe.
4. Let the food sit undisturbed for 30 seconds or so, depending on its size and thickness. Larger pieces of food are usually ready to turn when they are golden brown on the underside.
5. As foods are sautéed, they release their natural juices into the pan. You can make an easy pan sauce by adding liquid and deglazing the pan.
6. Searing, a variation of sautéing, calls for browning foods quickly over medium-high heat or high heat. It has two main uses in a healthful cooking repertory: to develop a flavorful caramelized surface on foods that will be sautéed, braised, stewed or roasted and to cook foods, such as salmon or tuna, that are meant to be served rare. When searing meat or fish, it is advisable to pat it dry with paper towels; this removes moisture that will hinder browning.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Essentials of Healthful Cooking*, by Mary Abbott Hess, Dana Jacobi & Marie Simmons (Oxmoor House, 2003).

3 Tbs. olive oil, plus more for serving

1 tsp. ground cumin

½ yellow onion, halved and thinly sliced

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

3 bell peppers (mixed colors), trimmed, halved and cut into ½-inch strips

½ tsp. grated lemon zest

2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice

¼ cup roughly chopped walnuts, toasted

Bell Pepper Sauté with Toasted Walnuts

An update on basic sautéed bell peppers, this recipe is just as simple to prepare but has a more intriguing mix of flavors and textures. The dish becomes more flavorful as it sits so feel free to make it up to two days in advance and refrigerate. Then rewarm and top with the walnuts just before serving.

In a large, heavy fry pan over medium-low heat, warm 2 Tbs. of the olive oil. When it shimmers, add the cumin and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in the onion, season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is golden brown, about 5 minutes.

Stir in the bell peppers and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 8 minutes. Stir in the lemon zest, lemon juice and the remaining 1 Tbs. olive oil. Scrape up any browned bits in the pan, stir to coat, and adjust the seasonings with salt and pepper. To serve, drizzle with olive oil and scatter the walnuts over the top. Serves 4.

Adapted from *Aida Mollenkamp's Keys to the Kitchen*, by Aida Mollenkamp (Chronicle Books, 2012).

¾ lb. boneless turkey breast

2 Tbs. canola oil

¾ cup chopped yellow onion

2 Tbs. chopped shallot

¼ cup all-purpose flour

1 cup hard apple cider

½ cup Dijon mustard

1 Tbs. ground coriander

1 Bosc pear, peeled, cored and diced

2 medium kohlrabi, peeled and diced

½ lb. white mushrooms, stemmed and quartered

Turkey Fricassee with Kohlrabi, Pears and Mushrooms

Made with boneless turkey breast, this fricassee is delicious served with green beans and steamed brown rice.

Cut the turkey into bite-size pieces. In a large sauté pan over medium-high heat, warm the oil. Add the turkey and cook, stirring occasionally, until white on all sides, 3 to 4 minutes, reducing the heat if necessary to avoid scorching. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the turkey to a plate.

Return the pan to medium-high heat, add the onion and shallot and sauté until translucent, about 4 minutes. Reduce the heat, stir in the flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Add the cider, which will splatter, and stir to combine with the flour. Add the mustard, coriander, pear, kohlrabi, mushrooms and turkey and stir well. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the turkey is opaque at the center and the vegetables and pear are tender, about 20 minutes.

Transfer to a warmed serving bowl and serve immediately. Serves 4.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma New Healthy Kitchen Series, *Sautéing*, by Dana Jacobi (Weldon Owen, 2006).

1 tsp. hoisin sauce

1 Tbs. fresh lime juice

2 tsp. cornstarch

2 tsp. canola oil

12 oz. pork tenderloin, sliced on the diagonal ½ inch thick

½ cup apple juice

¼ tsp. grated fresh ginger

1 small jalapeño chili, seeded and cut lengthwise into thin strips

2 large black plums, halved, pitted and cut into ½-inch wedges

Sautéed Pork with Black Plums

Serve this quick-cooking dish with sautéed or steamed spinach.

In a small bowl, stir together the hoisin sauce, lime juice and cornstarch. Set the hoisin mixture aside.

In a large fry pan over medium-high heat, warm the oil. Add the pork slices and brown, turning once, 6 to 8 minutes total. Transfer the pork to a plate. Add the apple juice, ginger and jalapeño to the pan and stir to scrape up the browned bits. Boil until the liquid is reduced by one-third, about 3 minutes. Add the plums and hoisin mixture and return the pork to the pan. Stir until the sauce thickens, coating the meat, about 3 minutes.

Arrange the pork on a warmed platter, spoon the sauce over the meat and serve immediately. Serves 4.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma New Healthy Kitchen Series, *Sautéing*, by Dana Jacobi (Weldon Owen, 2006).