



ANSON MILLS

Creamed Pearl Onions and Farro with Bacon

Yield

6 to 8 side dish portions

Time

About 1½ hours, top to bottom

Cooking Remarks

The onions peel most easily, in our experience, after they've had a very short (30-second) blanch. This blanching is not tantamount to a pre-cook: the onions will remain raw, but their skins will loosen slightly and you won't have to maul them to remove their skins.

We suggest you lay in some nice smoked bacon for this dish. There are so many choices! We used Nodine's, but Nueske's, Schaller & Weber, Vande Rose, and Flying Pigs Farms are all excellent as well.

And speaking of the bacon, do keep its garnishing properties crisp by holding it in a 200-degree oven after frying.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a heavy-bottomed 9- or 10-inch sauteuse or straight-sided sauté pan, a slotted spoon, a sharp paring knife, two medium saucepans, a baking sheet, a wooden spoon, a warmed mixing bowl, a fine-mesh sieve, and a warmed shallow serving bowl.

Ingredients

18 ounces red or white pearl onions (the smallest ones you can find)

2½ cups Good Old-Fashioned Beef Stock

3 tablespoons port wine

Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

6 ounces (1 cup) Anson Mills Farro Piccolo

2 cups heavy cream

1 whole clove or a pinch of dried cloves

3 ounces good-quality smoked bacon, thickly sliced

½ teaspoon sugar

2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Directions

1. Fill a 9- or 10-inch sauteuse or straight-sided sauté pan with water and bring it to a boil over high heat. Drop the onions into the boiling water, stirring to move them about, and blanch for 30 seconds. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the onions to a bowl of cold water. When the onions are cool, transfer them to a paper towel-lined baking sheet to dry. Peel them using a small, sharp paring knife. You should have 1 pound of peeled onions. Set them aside.

- 2.** Place 2 cups of the beef stock, the port, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper in a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Stir in the farro. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to low, and simmer very gently until the farro absorbs the liquid and is tender, but not mushy, about 45 minutes. Do not allow the farro to boil vigorously or it will become tough! Pull the saucepan off the heat when the farro is done.
- 3.** While the farro is cooking, combine the cream, the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup beef stock, and the clove in second medium heavy-bottomed saucepan. Bring the mixture to a simmer over low heat and simmer until reduced by half. Pull the saucepan off the heat.
- 4.** Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 200 degrees. Place the bacon in the sauteuse or sauté pan used to blanch the onions, and cook over low heat, stirring with a wooden spoon, until the bacon renders its fat and becomes crisp, about 10 minutes. Transfer the bacon to paper towels to drain. Break it into pieces when it is cool enough to handle, and then transfer the bacon to the oven to remain crisp. Pour off all but 1 teaspoon of fat from the pan. Add the peeled onions to the pan and brown them over medium-high heat, shaking the pan regularly to allow the onions to roll across the bottom of the pan and take on color, about 10 minutes. As they are browning, sprinkle them with the sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper. Pour in the reduced cream mixture and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook the onions gently in the cream until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Using the slotted spoon, transfer the onions to a warmed mixing bowl and cover loosely with foil. Boil the cream over high heat until it is thick enough to lightly coat the onions. Taste for seasoning, and then strain the cream over the onions. Sprinkle with parsley and toss with a spoon.
- 5.** To serve, spoon the farro into a warmed shallow serving bowl. Arrange the onions on top and sprinkle with the bacon.