

Peppercorn Sauce

From YouTube Video of America's Test Kitchen

Prep: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Makes: about 1 cup

Serves: 2 to 4

Ingredients

1 large shallot

1/2 bunch fresh chives

1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns

1 1/2 tablespoons whole green peppercorns in brine

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, divided

1/2 cup brandy or cognac

1 cup beef stock or broth

1/3 cup heavy cream

2 teaspoons cornstarch (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mince 1 large shallot. Finely chop 1/2 bunch fresh chives until you have about 3 tablespoons. Place 1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns in a mortar and pestle or spice grinder and coarsely crush. Drain and rinse 1 1/2 tablespoons green peppercorns in brine.
2. Place the shallot, 1 tablespoon of the unsalted butter, and 1/4 of the teaspoon kosher salt in a medium skillet over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until shallots have softened and are lightly browned at the edges, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Remove the skillet from the heat. Carefully add 1/2 cup brandy or Cognac. Return to medium-high heat and cook until reduced by half, about 1 minute.
4. Whisk in 1 cup beef stock, green peppercorns, and 1/4 teaspoon of the black peppercorns. Bring to a rapid simmer. Simmer until reduced by half, about 3 minutes.
5. Add 1/3 cup heavy cream and the remaining 1 tablespoon unsalted butter and whisk to combine. Bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until slightly thickened, 4 to 5 minutes. If you would like an even thicker sauce, mix 2 teaspoons cornstarch with 2 tablespoons water and add to sauce, whisking continuously. Cook for 1 minute more.
6. Add the remaining 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt. Taste and add season with more kosher salt and crushed black pepper as needed. Serve sauce spooned over steak, chicken, or grilled mushrooms. Garnish with the chives.

RECIPE NOTES

Substitutions: You can omit the green peppercorns in brine and use dried whole black (or mixed) peppercorns. Increase the black peppercorns to 2 teaspoons. In Step 4, add 1 1/2 teaspoons coarsely crushed pepper, then taste and season with more coarsely crushed pepper if needed.

Storage: Leftover sauce can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 days.