

Bechamel Sauce

Amount	Measure	Ingredient - Preparation Method
2 1/4	cups	milk
4	tablespoons	unsalted butter
3	tablespoons	all-purpose flour
1/4	teaspoon	salt
1/8	teaspoon	nutmeg - freshly grated

Heat milk to just below boiling point and keep warm.

Melt butter in a heavy saucepan. Working over low heat, add the flour and stir with a wooden spoon or whisk to get rid of lumps. Let the flour and butter paste heat through for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Do not let the paste brown.

Add the hot milk, a tablespoon at a time, stirring constantly to incorporate it thoroughly. Continue to add the milk very slowly, just a few tablespoons at a time, until 1/2 cup is used up.

Add the rest of the milk in a very slow and gradual trickle, stirring all the time. Hold back a little of the milk if sauce is being used as a binding. If lumps appear, you are using too much milk, the heat is too high, or the milk is being added too quickly. Press the lumps against the side with the wooden spoon should this happen.

When all the milk has been added, simmer the sauce very gently for another 15 minutes or so, stirring constantly. Add the salt and nutmeg during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

Yield: "2 cups"