Sauces / France

Mornay Sauce

Béchamel's richest child: the velvet base melted through with Gruyère and Parmigiano and bound glossy with an egg yolk. This is the sauce under a croque-monsieur's bronzed lid and inside every great gratin.

Time 30 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 10 parts Whole milk (warmed)
- ☐ 1 part Unsalted butter
- ☐ 1 part All-purpose flour
- ☐ 0.2 part Fine sea salt
- ☐ 0.02 part Freshly grated nutmeg
- ☐ 0.04 part White pepper
- ☐ 3 parts Gruyère (grated)
- ☐ 1 part Parmigiano-Reggiano (grated)
- ☐ 0.5 part Egg yolk

Let's make it.

01 Melt the butter over medium-low heat until it foams but does not brown. Whisk in the flour all at once and cook, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes to cook out the raw-flour taste while keeping the roux pale. Keep it white — a Mornay should taste of cheese, not toasted flour.

02 Stream in the warm milk, whisking hard and constantly — the first third slowly to build a smooth paste, then the rest in a steady pour. Constant whisking is what keeps it lump-free.

03 Simmer gently 8-10 minutes, whisking often, until the sauce thickens to nappe consistency — thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Build it slightly thicker than a plain béchamel; the cheese will loosen it later. Season lightly with salt, nutmeg, and white pepper, remembering the cheeses bring their own salt.

04 Off the heat — and this matters, because boiling cheese turns greasy and stringy — whisk in the Gruyère and Parmigiano a handful at a time until each melts. Temper the yolk: whisk a ladle of the warm sauce into the yolk, then whisk that back into the pot. The residual heat cooks and thickens the yolk without scrambling it. Adjust salt last.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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