CONCOCTIONS / FRENCH-INSPIRED

Creamy Braised Leeks with Anchovy & Tarragon



4 side servings · Prep 15 min
Cook 40–50 min · Total 55–65 min
Preheat overlaps prep; allow longer if needed

Bronzed cut faces, silky layers and a loose wine–cream sauce. Anchovy melts into the base; tarragon and lemon keep the finish bright.

LEEKS & SAVORY BASE

- 4 medium leeks (about 2¼ lb / 1 kg whole; 1 1/3 lb / 600 g trimmed)
- 2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter (14 g)
- 4 oil-packed anchovy fillets (12 g), drained and finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ¼ tsp fine salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

WINE–CREAM BRAISE & FINISH

- ½ cup dry white wine (120 ml)
- ¾ cup low-sodium vegetable stock (180 ml)
- ½ cup heavy cream (120 ml)
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh tarragon, divided
- 2 tsp fresh lemon juice (10 ml)

EQUIPMENT. 12-inch (30 cm) ovenproof lidded braiser; tongs or thin spatula; knife and board; shallow storage containers; thermometer for reheating.

METHOD

1. Clean & heat. Heat oven to 350°F (180°C); wash hands. Trim dark tops, leaving 6–7-inch (15–18 cm) white/pale-green lengths. Shave root hairs but keep root plate; halve lengthwise through root. Fan layers under running water, rubbing away grit without separating halves. Rinse tarragon and lemon. Drain; blot leeks very dry. [3]

2. Sear two batches. Heat braiser over medium-high 2 min. Add 1 tbsp oil and 4 halves, cut-side down; press once. Sear 5–6 min until bronze, reducing heat if scorching. Lift out browned-side up. Repeat with remaining oil and halves: 12–14 min total.

3. Build the base. Over medium-low heat, stir butter, anchovies and garlic in empty braiser 2 min, mashing fish to dissolve; do not brown garlic. Add wine, scrape up browned bits and simmer over medium heat 3–5 min to reduce by half.

4. Braise. Stir in stock, cream, bay, 2 tsp tarragon, salt and pepper. Nestle all 8 halves in one layer, browned-side up, liquid halfway up. Bring just to a simmer; cover and oven-braise 20–25 min until a knife slips through the thickest pale-green part. If firm, cook in 5-min increments.

5. Finish. With mitts, return braiser to stove; handles stay hot. Uncover; simmer gently 3–4 min until sauce lightly coats a spoon. Discard bay. Off heat, stir lemon juice into sauce; scatter remaining 1 tsp tarragon.

6. Serve. Lift with a spatula. Serve 2 halves and one-quarter of the sauce per person as a side, keeping bronze cut faces visible. No extra garnish is needed.

KEEP COLD. Refrigerate promptly in shallow containers at 40°F (4°C) or below; use within 3–4 days. This is general cooked-leftover guidance, not a validated dish-specific shelf life. Discard after over 2 hr cumulative time unrefrigerated, or 1 hr above 90°F (32°C); do not wait for room temperature. [4][5]

REHEAT & DIETARY. Reheat covered over medium-low heat with a splash of water if needed to 165°F (74°C) throughout; check several places. Lift out leeks, briefly rolling-boil sauce while stirring, then spoon over. Contains milk and fish; not vegetarian. Wine cooking does not make this alcohol-free. [4]

Original adaptation, not kitchen-tested; AI-generated serving illustration, not a prepared-batch photograph.

Inspired by Cocolarkincooks / Corre Larkin’s public caption and article introduction [1][2]; our measures, seared halves and lemon finish are independently developed.

[1] Creator caption · [2] Creator intro · [3] FDA produce · [4] USDA leftovers · [5] FDA handling