Beurre Blanc (Classic and Citrus)

Quick · Makes about ¾ cup (serves 4)

Ken's note: TBD

A butter sauce: a sharp reduction of wine, vinegar, and shallot with cold butter whisked in until it is creamy and glossy. The key is to keep the heat low and the butter cold, and never let it boil. Serve warm over fish, scallops, shrimp, asparagus, or chicken.

Ingredients

Classic

- ½ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup white wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp finely minced shallot
- 8 Tbsp (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, in small cubes
- Salt
- A squeeze of lemon juice

Citrus (for sea bass)

- ½ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup white wine vinegar
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 2 Tbsp finely minced shallot
- 8 Tbsp (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, in small cubes
- Salt

Method

1. Simmer the wine, vinegar, (juices,) and shallot in a small saucepan over medium heat until reduced to 2–3 Tbsp of syrupy liquid, about 8–10 minutes (10–12 for the citrus).
2. Lower the heat to very low. Whisk in the cold butter a few cubes at a time, letting each addition melt into the sauce before adding more, until it thickens and turns glossy. Don't let it boil. Season lightly with salt, add a squeeze of lemon to the classic, and strain through a fine sieve if you want it perfectly smooth. Keep warm in a small pan on the lowest heat or in an insulated container until serving, up to 20–30 minutes.
3. If it breaks (turns oily), take it off the heat and whisk in an ice cube or a tablespoon of cold water to bring it back together.