



Crisp Croquetas with Sardines and Parmesan

Whip up a taste of the Mediterranean with these crispy little tapas bites

Serves: 4

Prepare: 20 Minutes

Cook: 5 Minutes

Difficulty: easy

Ingredients

- 120g can of [sardines](#), drained
- 30g unsalted butter
- a generous handful of chives, finely chopped
- 30g cornflour
- 250ml full-fat milk brought to just below the boil
- freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 egg, beaten
- 100g panko breadcrumbs
- 20g parmesan, finely grated
- vegetable oil for frying
- salt and pepper to season

Method

1. Gently melt the butter over a medium heat until it is frothy, taking care not to let it go brown. Remove from the heat and quickly whisk in the flour, making a smooth paste. Return to the heat for a couple of minutes, stirring constantly, to cook the flour through.
2. Still on the heat, add a splash of hot milk to the flour mixture, whisking briskly to slacken it off. Gradually add the rest of the milk, whisking constantly to avoid lumps, until the sauce is smooth and quite thick. Season with nutmeg, salt and pepper then remove from the heat. Flake the sardines and stir them through the sauce along with the chives. Set aside to cool, laying cling film over the surface of the sauce to stop a skin forming.
3. Set out 3 bowls: 1 for the cheese, 1 for the egg and 1 for the breadcrumbs. Once cooled, the sauce will have set to a mould-able consistency. Divide it into 8 portions and roll them into cylinders. Roll each cylinder firstly in cheese, then in egg, then in breadcrumbs. Lay on a tray lined with greaseproof paper and pop into the fridge.
4. When you're ready to cook your croquetas, pour a layer of oil about 6cm deep into a saucepan and heat to 180°C (at which point a cube of bread will sizzle and turn brown). Cook in a couple of batches and serve while still warm.