

SOFT SHELL CRABS WITH OREGON ORGANIC HAZELNUTS



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SERVES: 4 as an appetizer

INGREDIENTS

4 each soft shell crab (hotel or prime)
1 cup Wondra flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Oregon organic Hazelnuts, chopped
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup clarified butter or olive oil
2 oz butter
4 tsp fresh lemon juice
Fresh chopped Italian parsley
Fine sea salt
Espelette pepper or fresh ground white peppercorn

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Clean the soft shell crabs (see TIPS)
3. Lightly toast the hazelnuts (see TIPS)
4. Season the crabs with salt and pepper, then lightly dredge them in flour.
5. Sauté crabs in a pre-heated pan with olive oil or clarified butter for 3 minutes on each side.
6. Increase oven temperature to 400°F.
7. Discard the grease and continue with the same pan if it is oven-proof. If it is not, transfer the crabs to an oven-proof dish, add the fresh butter and hazelnuts, and finish cooking in the oven for another 3-5 minutes.
8. Add the lemon juice just before serving.
9. Serve alone or with a nice fresh mesclun, coleslaw, or raw vegetable salad.

TIP: How to clean soft shell crabs

1. To clean soft-shell crabs, hold the crab in one hand, and using a pair of kitchen shears, cut off the front of the crab, about 1/2 inch behind the eyes and mouth. Squeeze out the contents of the sack located directly behind the cut you just made.
2. Lift one pointed end of the crab's outer shell; remove and discard the gills. Repeat on the other side.

3. Turn the crab over and snip off the small flap known as the apron. Rinse the entire crab well and pat dry. Once cleaned, crabs should be cooked or stored immediately.

TIP: To toast hazelnuts, spread evenly in a single layer on a rimmed sheet pan and toast in a preheated 350°F. oven for 3-5 minutes or until golden brown and fragrant, taking care not to burn. To remove the excess skins, rub the hazelnuts in a clean kitchen towel and discard the skins.