

Pan Bagnat Recipe

You will need the following:

- A good quality large flattish ROUND loaf of crusty WHITE bread. A Pan Bagnat does not work with brown bread.
- Unsalted butter
- Pepper ground from a mill
- A little flaky sea salt, not granular or table salt. [Salt neurotics are warned: the salt MUST NOT be left out of this dish!]
- Several slices of best-quality ham (your choice) avoid packets and get it cut from the bone.
- A handful of finely sliced Parmesan cheese. Finely grated will not do!
- 1 large ripe tomato finely sliced. Aim for “on the vine” varieties.
- 1 bunch of fresh Basil leaves, stems removed
- 1 small jar of Pimentos. NOT in any sauce. Look for those in olive oil. A jar of red Capsica is a poor substitute but acceptable.
- Handful of capers.
- 12 pitted Black Olives
- 3 cloves of garlic
- A pinch of table salt
- Some Red Wine Vinegar
- Olive Oil
- Teaspoon of dry mustard powder. e.g. English mustard.

Method

- Make the Sauce:
 - Peel and finely chop the garlic then crush with a pinch of table salt [The salt absorbs the juice and prevents it being left to waste on the chopping board]
 - Then, with the flat of a knife, scrape this into a small jar with a screw top lid.
 - Add to this about ½ inch of red wine vinegar and 1 ½ inches depth of Olive Oil. [Larger or smaller amounts may be used just maintain proportions of 1:3]
 - Add mustard powder
 - Screw lid in tightly and shake vigorously for about 45 seconds. The sauce should emulsify to an opaque lemon colour. Set the jar aside and shake at regular intervals during preparation.
- Lay the bread flat and slice sideways. The bottom half should be deeper than the top. Discard the soft contents of both halves leaving only the thin layer of soft on the crusts.
- Shake the sauce and sprinkle about 3 dessertspoons of sauce onto each half.
- Generously butter each half.
- Layer the ham over the bottom of the bottom half.
- Sprinkle a layer of Parmesan over the ham
- Layer the Tomato over the Parmesan

- Lightly season over the tomato with some sea salt and ground pepper
- Drain, cut and flatten the Pimentos and lay over the tomatoes.
- Coarsely tear the Basil with your hands and scatter over the Pimentos.
- Drain and then stud the black olives over the basil.
- Sprinkle the Capers between the olives
- Season with pepper and salt [it pays to be generous with the pepper]
- Sprinkle another 3 dessertspoons of the sauce over it.
- Place 'lid' top half onto the bottom half and there you have it... a Pan Bagnat!
- Tightly seal with cling film [Be careful]
- Unseal just before eating

Once sealed it will happily keep overnight DO NOT put in the fridge, leave at room temperature.

A large sharp serrated-edged knife is required to carve. Hold firmly and gently saw down through the contents until the bread parts cleanly.

A Pan Bagnat is not suitable for knife and fork eating. Use your hands and ensure a supply of napkins.

Drink a nice robust country red with your Pan Bagnat. Chianti or a red from Languedoc.

Enjoy!