Steamed Artichokes with Creamy Garlic Aioli Sauce

Nature rarely provides such a conspicuous opportunity to share as that of the globe artichoke. Large enough for a small group, the steamed artichoke is the perfect prelude to a night of fine dining, with its flavorful meat and incredibly high level of antioxidants--the highest per serving of any other vegetable. This recipe features a classic aioli sauce, seasoned with fresh lemon, that has been a favorite at my restaurant for years. For the best quality artichokes, be sure to check your local farmers market during the peak growing season, from March to May.

Ingredients:

2 globe artichokes

2 cloves of garlic, peeled

1 egg yolk

1 cup olive oil

1 tsp. fresh ground pepper

Juice from one small lemon

Method:

1) Place a steamer basket in a large pot. Add enough water to fill the area just below the basket. Remove the basket, mix in 1/2 teaspoon of salt, and bring to a boil.

3) Slice one inch off the tip of the artichokes and remove any remaining stem.

2) Cut off any thorny tips of the artichokes' leaves.

4) Rinse the artichokes in cold water.

5) Place the artichokes, tips facing up, in the steamer basket over the boiling water and let steam for 35 minutes.

6) Prepare the aioli mixture:

a) Mix garlic, lemon juice, egg yolk, and pepper in food processor for 20 seconds.

b) Drizzle olive oil into sauce and continue to mix as the sauce emulsifies.

7) Once the artichoke has steamed for 35 min, try to remove a leaf. If it pulls off easily, the artichoke is ready to eat.