



## Croustade d'oeuf 'Maintenon'

**4 very fresh large eggs**  
**splash of malt vinegar**

### for the pastry

**120g plain flour**  
**pinch of salt**  
**90g butter, frozen in a block**  
**2-3 tbsp ice-cold water, mixed with a generous squeeze of lemon juice**  
**a little soft butter for greasing the tins**

### for the mushroom duxelles

**50g butter**  
**4 shallots, peeled and chopped**  
**350g mushrooms, chopped, stalks and all salt and freshly ground pepper**  
**2 tbsp Madeira**  
**150 ml dry white wine**  
**squeeze of lemon juice**  
**2 tsp chopped tarragon**

### for the hollandaise sauce

**3 large egg yolks**  
**splash of water**  
**225g unsalted butter, melted, left to settle in the pan and kept warm**  
**juice of 1/2 a lemon**  
**salt and freshly ground white pepper**



*This is based upon a superb dish created by the great Michel Bourdin when he was Chef at The Connaught Hotel, London. The original was made using quail eggs: 'Croustade d'oeufs de cailles Maintenon' was its name, then.*

### serves 4

To make the pastry, put the flour and salt into a large bowl and, holding the butter with its paper, grate it into the flour; dipping the butter into the flour occasionally so that it doesn't become too sticky. Then, gently turn the flour and butter around with a knife until all the flecks of butter are coated with flour and the mixture resembles lumpy breadcrumbs. Now incorporate the lemon water, 1 tbsp at a time, until the mixture gently comes together as a mass and leaves the bowl clean. Roll in a little extra flour and slip into a plastic bag. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 4. Lightly butter 4 individual 10 cm flan tins, about 3 cm deep. Roll out the pastry as thinly as you dare and use to line the flan tins. Prick with a fork, line the pastry cases with foil and dried beans and blind bake in the oven for 20 minutes, or until crisp and a light golden colour. Remove the foil and beans and leave the pastry cases in the tins for 5 minutes after removing from the oven. Carefully un mould and keep warm on a plate in the residual heat of the switched-off oven, door ajar.

To make the duxelles, melt the butter in a pan and fry the shallots until golden. Add the mushrooms, season and stew together until fairly dry, any juices from the mushrooms having been driven off. Add the Madeira and wine and simmer until they have reduced to almost nothing. Squeeze in the lemon juice, add the tarragon and briefly pulse in a food processor to an evenly coarse purée; the mixture should not be smooth. Tip into a bowl, cover with a plate and keep warm over a pan of simmering water.

To make the hollandaise, whisk the egg yolks with a splash of water until thick in a small stainless steel pan over a thread of heat, or a bowl over a pan of barely simmering water. Remove any scum from the surface of the butter and then add to the eggs in a thin stream, whisking constantly, until the consistency is similar to mayonnaise. Add the lemon juice and season. Keep warm.

Poach the eggs in simmering water with the vinegar added until slightly undercooked. Switch on the grill.

To assemble, carefully spoon the duxelles into the pastry cases and smooth the surface. Pop a poached egg on each and spoon over the hollandaise. Glaze for a few seconds under the hot grill. Serve at once.