

Lesson Plan: Making Avgolemono Soup with Chicken

Subject: Culinary Arts / International Cuisine

Grade Level: High School Culinary Students

Duration: Approximately 2.5 hours (can be adjusted based on class schedule)

YouTube Video Link: [Watch the Avgolemono Recipe Demonstration](#)

Objectives

- **Knowledge:** Understand the cultural significance of Avgolemono soup in Greek and Cypriot cuisine.
- **Skills:** Master culinary techniques such as making homemade broth, tempering eggs, and combining ingredients to create a traditional dish.
- **Attitudes:** Develop appreciation for international cuisines and the importance of precision in cooking.

Materials Needed

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken (about 1.5 kg), cut into pieces, or 4 chicken breasts/thighs
- 10 cups water
- 1 cup uncooked short-grain rice or orzo
- 2 large eggs
- 3 large lemons, juiced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 bay leaf (optional)
- Fresh parsley or dill for garnish (optional)

Equipment

- Large pot
- Medium mixing bowl
- Whisk
- Ladle
- Strainer or colander
- Cutting board
- Knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Stove or cooking range

- Serving bowls and utensils
- Sanitized workspace and utensils

Lesson Outline

1. Introduction (15 minutes)

- **Icebreaker Discussion:**
 - Ask students about their favorite soups and what makes them special.
 - Introduce Avgolemono soup, highlighting its origins and unique flavor profile.
- **Objective Overview:**
 - Explain the goals of the lesson and what students will achieve.

2. Safety and Sanitation Briefing (10 minutes)

- **Key Points:**
 - Importance of handwashing before and after handling raw chicken and eggs.
 - Proper use of knives and handling hot liquids.
 - Preventing cross-contamination in the kitchen.

3. Cultural and Culinary Background (10 minutes)

- **Presentation:**
 - Share the history of Avgolemono soup in Greek and Cypriot cultures.
 - Discuss the role of soups in different cuisines around the world.

4. The Science of Avgolemono Soup (15 minutes)

- **Lecture:**
 - Explain how to make a flavorful broth from scratch.
 - Discuss the process of tempering eggs to avoid curdling.
 - Highlight the role of acid (lemon juice) in balancing flavors and affecting protein structure.

5. Cooking Activity

a. Preparing the Chicken Broth (60 minutes)

- **Instructions:**
 - Place chicken pieces in a large pot and add 10 cups of water.
 - Add a pinch of salt and the bay leaf (if using).
 - Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.

- Reduce heat to low and simmer for about 45 minutes until the chicken is cooked and tender.
- Skim off any foam that appears on the surface.

- **Discussion:**

- Importance of simmering vs. rapid boiling for clear broth.
- Techniques for skimming impurities.

b. Handling the Cooked Chicken (10 minutes)

- **Instructions:**

- Carefully remove chicken pieces from the broth and set aside to cool.
- Strain the broth to remove any remaining impurities and return it to the pot.

- **Activity:**

- Demonstrate safe methods for handling hot items.
- Discuss options for using different parts of the chicken.

c. Cooking the Rice or Orzo (15 minutes)

- **Instructions:**

- Add 1 cup of uncooked rice or orzo to the strained broth.
- Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 15 minutes until tender.

- **Discussion:**

- Compare the textures of rice and orzo in soups.
- Explore how starches thicken the soup naturally.

d. Preparing the Egg-Lemon Mixture (Avgolemono) (10 minutes)

- **Instructions:**

- In a medium bowl, whisk 2 large eggs until frothy.
- Gradually add the juice of 3 large lemons, whisking continuously.

- **Discussion:**

- The emulsifying properties of eggs.
- Balancing acidity and richness in soups.

e. Tempering the Eggs (10 minutes)

- **Instructions:**

- Slowly add a ladleful of hot broth to the egg-lemon mixture while whisking vigorously.
- Repeat with 2-3 more ladlefuls, one at a time.

- **Explanation:**
 - Tempering prevents the eggs from cooking too quickly and curdling.
 - The science behind coagulation and protein denaturation.

f. Incorporating the Avgolemono into the Soup (5 minutes)

- **Instructions:**
 - Slowly pour the tempered egg-lemon mixture back into the pot with the rice and broth, stirring constantly.
 - Heat the soup on low for 2-3 minutes without boiling.
- **Discussion:**
 - Importance of gentle heating to maintain a smooth, creamy texture.
 - How overheating can affect the final dish.

g. Final Touches and Serving (15 minutes)

- **Instructions:**
 - Shred or chop the cooled chicken into bite-sized pieces.
 - Add the chicken back into the soup or serve it separately.
 - Season the soup with salt and pepper to taste.
 - Ladle the soup into serving bowls.
 - Garnish with fresh parsley or dill if desired.
- **Activity:**
 - Encourage students to present their dishes attractively.
 - Taste the soup and discuss flavor profiles.

Assessment

- **Participation:** Engagement during discussions and cooking activity.
- **Skills Demonstration:** Proper execution of techniques such as tempering and safe food handling.
- **Knowledge Check:** Ability to answer questions about the cooking process and cultural background.
- **Reflection:** Write a brief summary of what was learned and any challenges encountered.

Closure (10 minutes)

- **Recap:**
 - Summarize key techniques and concepts learned.

- Highlight the importance of each step in achieving the final result.
- **Student Sharing:**
 - Invite students to share their thoughts on the dish and the cooking process.
- **Application:**
 - Discuss how these techniques can be applied to other recipes.

Extensions

- **Homework Assignment:**
 - Research another traditional Greek or Cypriot dish and prepare a short presentation.
- **Culinary Project:**
 - Create a recipe that incorporates the Avgolemono technique into a new dish.

Resources

- **Handouts:**
 - Detailed recipe with step-by-step instructions.
 - Glossary of culinary terms used in the lesson.
- **Recommended Reading:**
 - Articles on Mediterranean cuisine and its health benefits.
 - Videos demonstrating tempering and other key techniques.

Notes for the Instructor

- **Preparation:**
 - Ensure all ingredients and equipment are ready before class.
 - Check for student allergies (e.g., eggs, gluten in orzo) and adjust ingredients as necessary.
- **Safety Considerations:**
 - Monitor students closely when they are handling hot liquids and raw ingredients.
 - Reinforce proper knife skills and heat safety.
- **Adaptations:**
 - For limited class time, prepare the chicken broth in advance.
 - Offer vegetarian alternatives by substituting chicken with vegetable broth and mushrooms.



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