

Croque Monsieur & Croque Madame

Hot ham and cheese sandwiches with a French twist.

Adapted from <http://frenchfood.about.com/library/weekly/aa010403a.htm>

The croque-monsieur, a hot ham and cheese sandwich served in the bistros and cafés of Paris, has provided quick, cheap nourishment for thousands of students and budget minded travelers.

The origin of the name "croque-monsieur" is shrouded in mystery. The word *croque* comes from the verb *croquer* which means to crunch or to munch, thereby the translation frequently given as "crunchy mister" or "crunchy sir" or "mister crunch." In some provinces of France a "croque" is a sandwich that has been dipped in egg and then broiled, which shows similarities to some recipes for croque-monsieur.



A croque-madame is the same sandwich, served with the addition of a fried egg on top. You will also see some sandwiches labeled croque-madame that are made with chicken and cheese.

Very simple Croque Monsieur

From Debra F. Weber,

<http://frenchfood.about.com/od/frenchcuisinebasics/r/cmsimple.htm>

Makes 1 serving.

INGREDIENTS:

2 slices bread of your choice
1 Tablespoon unsalted butter
slice of cooked ham

2-3 Tablespoons grated Gruyère or swiss cheese

PREPARATION:

Preheat broiler.

1. Spread the butter thinly on both sides of the bread.
2. Lay the ham on one slice and sprinkle on the cheese.
3. Cover with the second slice of bread. Place under broiler for about 1-2 minutes.
4. Turn sandwich and broil on the other side and serve immediately.

For a variation:

While the sandwich is broiling, fry an egg sunnyside up or over easy and place it on the finished sandwich. Voilà a croque-madame.

Classic Croque Monsieur with béchamel sauce:

(more like the picture)

From Debra F. Weber,

<http://frenchfood.about.com/od/frenchwines/r/cmbechamel.htm>

Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS:

8 slices bread, from a rustic round loaf
Dijon mustard
1/2 pound ham, thinly slices
1/2 pound Gruyère cheese, thinly sliced
1 cup grated Gruyère
butter for spreading

For the béchamel sauce:

2 Tablespoons unsalted butter
2 Tablespoons flour
2 cups whole milk
salt, pepper, nutmeg and cayenne pepper to taste

PREPARATION:

To make the béchamel sauce:

1. Melt butter in small saucepan until it just starts to bubble. Add flour, and cook, stirring constantly until smooth but not brown.
2. Whisking constantly, add the milk, continuing to cook until thick.
3. Remove from heat and add the seasonings. Transfer to a bowl and cover by placing a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface of the sauce.

Preheat the broiler and have a griddle or skillet ready.

4. Spread the mustard on one side of the bread. Top with ham and cheese slices and cover with remaining bread.
5. Generously butter both sides of the bread. Place sandwiches on hot griddle or skillet and cook about 3-4 minutes or until golden brown on both sides.
6. Transfer the sandwiches to a broiler pan or baking sheet. Spread some of the béchamel on top of each sandwich and then top with the grated cheese. Broil about 2 minutes or until the top is golden and the cheese has melted. Serve immediately.