



FRENCH-SPANISH FUSION · PRECISION-COOK · SUMMIT-TIER · MAIN · CELEBRATION · DINNER-PARTY SHOWPIECE

Lobster Butter-Poached SV · 55°C / 30 min · Beurre Monté in the Bag

Two live Maine lobsters shocked + shelled raw, tails and claws transferred to vacuum bags with a silky beurre monté (cold butter emulsified into warm water), cooked sous-vide at exactly 55°C for 30 minutes. The muscle flesh sets to pearly opaque but stays tender and translucent-edged; the butter emulsion penetrates every fiber without the risk of breaking that plagues stovetop butter-poaching. Served whole tail on a plate with clarified butter pooled alongside, claws cracked, knuckle meat tucked into the plate, a squeeze of Meyer lemon, a few grains of fleur de sel. The classical French beurre-monté technique solved by sous-vide. A summit-tier dish — lobster alone is \$40/kg by the time it reaches a Miami kitchen — but one worth every cent for a celebratory dinner.

Protein Maine or Mediterranean spiny lobster (langosta)

Serves 4 as main · 6 - 8 as small-plate

Difficulty Advanced

Active 45 min active (including live-lobster dispatch + shelling)

Total 1 h 15 min

Butter-Poached Lobster, Without the Heartbreak

Beurre monté — the classical French technique of emulsifying cold butter into a small amount of warm water to produce a stable, thick, silky butter sauce — is one of the most leveraged techniques in French cuisine. It's the foundation of sauce bearnaise, sauce hollandaise, and the butter-poaching method that makes lobster one of the great restaurant dishes in the Western repertoire. It's also one of the most fragile techniques in cooking. Held above 88°C, the emulsion breaks into clear yellow fat + cloudy milk solids. Held below 50°C, the butter solidifies and the emulsion seizes. The correct window — 82-88°C — requires constant thermometer attention + careful temperature modulation. Most home cooks who try butter-poached lobster break the emulsion at least once per attempt.

Sous-vide solves this problem absolutely. At 55°C in a sealed vacuum bag, a beurre monté emulsion cannot break because there's no surface to evaporate from, no mechanical agitation to separate it, and the temperature is precision-stable. The lobster itself cooks at exactly the temperature you want — 55°C internal, which holds lobster muscle at the sweet spot between undercooked-resistant and overcooked-rubbery. The 30-minute cook penetrates the butter flavor throughout the flesh, something stovetop poaching can only approximate. When you open the bag, the liquid is a unified silky butter-water suspension coating every millimeter of lobster.

The one genuine challenge is shelling the lobster raw. It requires confidence and a sharp knife. Live lobsters are dispatched by a quick knife through the cross mark on the head (instant, humane, traditional French method), then disassembled — claws separated, tail split from body, tail shell cracked and flesh pulled out. It sounds more daunting than it is. Ten minutes of practice per cook and it becomes routine. The alternative — cooking lobster in shell — works but produces a less refined result, because the shell's thermal resistance makes the SV timing less precise and the butter can't fully penetrate the muscle.

This is a summit-tier dish. Lobster in Miami costs \$35-50/kg (live at Casablanca, Pao Gourmet, or Whole Foods specialty); two lobsters for four people runs \$80-100 before anything else. It has no Tier A path that meaningfully cheapens the ingredient without

abandoning the technique. Instead, this recipe ships as ● Tier B only — acknowledged as such, priced as such, served as a celebratory-occasion dish. For Pablo's Saturday night when something needs to be the entire event.

AT A GLANCE

Specs

<p>YIELD</p> <p>2 × 700-900 g live lobsters → 4 tail portions + 4 claws + knuckle meat</p>	<p>SV TEMPERATURE</p> <p>55 °C / 131 °F — lobster muscle sweet spot, beurre monté stability</p>	<p>SV TIME</p> <p>30 minutes exactly (tails); 20 min for claws (or bag separately)</p>	<p>BUTTER RATIO</p> <p>150 g unsalted butter + 30 ml water per 2 lobsters</p>
<p>LOBSTER SIZE</p> <p>2 × 700-900 g live lobsters (Maine) OR 1 × 1.2-1.5 kg Mediterranean spiny (langosta)</p>	<p>DIFFICULTY</p> <p>Advanced</p> <p>●●●●○</p>	<p>ACTIVE TIME</p> <p>45 min (dispatch 5 min, shelling 15 min, bag prep 10 min, finish 10 min)</p>	<p>KEY RULE</p> <p>Lobster MUST be alive at shelling; the dispatch-to-bag window should be under 5 minutes for optimal texture</p>

UMAMI ADAPTATION

What Changed & Why

This recipe is ● Tier B only. Lobster is a premium ingredient with no meaningful Tier A path — you can't make this dish on a weeknight budget without abandoning the entire technique. It's shipped as a celebratory-occasion recipe for Saturday night when

the dinner is the event. The source: **live Maine lobsters from Casablanca Seafood (Hialeah)** or **Pao Gourmet** or **Whole Foods specialty seafood counter** — order 24 hours ahead. Mediterranean spiny lobster (langosta) substitutes excellently if available through a Spanish importer. Paired with **European cultured butter** (Vermont Creamery Cultured, Kerrygold Grass-Fed, or Échiré AOP for the splurge), Meyer lemon, fleur de sel. The tier split noted in other recipes is: take Tier B as the baseline; all ingredient tiers are "best available."

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Boil lobster 8-10 min then remove meat from shell and serve with drawn butter	Dispatch + shell raw; vacuum-bag tail + claws with beurre monté; SV 55°C/30 min (tails), 20 min (claws)	Boiling lobster is a valid technique but produces a textural compromise: the shell insulates unevenly, the flesh can overshoot in thin sections, and the butter is applied post-cook rather than integrated during. SV at 55°C with butter in the bag reverses both problems — the cook temperature is precisely controlled at the protein's ideal point, and the butter penetrates during the cook rather than being drizzled on top. The result is a more unified, more refined dish. The tradeoff: raw-shelling requires technique; boiling does not. For a once-a-year dinner party, the SV path is worth learning.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Beurre blanc or beurre monté made on the stovetop in a saucepan	Beurre monté made directly in the vacuum bag, emulsified by the water-butter ratio + SV temperature	Stovetop beurre monté requires constant attention — 5-8 minutes of temperature-modulated whisking to emulsify cold butter into warm water. In the SV bag, the same emulsion forms spontaneously during the 30-minute cook: the butter melts slowly into the water at 55°C, the vacuum prevents any air-layer separation, and the gentle heat + prolonged time produce a perfectly stable emulsion with zero risk of breaking. The technique is almost fool-proof. 150 g butter + 30 ml water + vacuum + 30 min at 55°C = beurre monté, reliably.
ADD	—	Score each lobster claw shell along its natural seam before bagging — makes the post-SV cracking effortless	After 20 minutes at 55°C, claw shells soften enough to crack easily but are still structurally solid. A pre-cook score along the claw's natural longitudinal seam (use a sharp kitchen knife or lobster shears, make a shallow cut through the shell along the top and bottom ridges) allows the cooked claw to be pulled open with minimal force, releasing the meat in clean whole pieces. Skip this step and you'll fight each claw with a cracker, producing shell fragments in the meat. Restaurant prep trick.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ADD	—	Include 2 thyme sprigs + 1 piece of tarragon + the shaved zest of ½ Meyer lemon in the bag with the butter	<p>The butter poaching liquid becomes a served sauce (spooned from the bag over the lobster at plating). Including fresh herbs + citrus zest infuses the butter with a refined aromatic profile during the 30-minute cook. Thyme + tarragon is the classical French lobster-butter combination; Meyer lemon (sweeter than regular lemon, nearly orange-like) adds brightness without acidity sharpness. These aromatics are delicate enough that 30 min at 55°C extracts their flavor without muddying it. Skip if unavailable — the dish works without them — but inclusion is the dinner-party flex.</p>

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ELEV	Standard grocery unsalted butter	European cultured butter — Vermont Creamery Cultured, Kerrygold Grass-Fed, or Échiré AOP	Butter is 40% of the finished flavor profile of this dish. The difference between commodity butter (Land O' Lakes, Challenge) and cultured butter is real and dramatic: cultured butter has higher fat content (82-84% vs 80%), slower-ripened probiotic culture (producing subtle tang + caramel depth), and richer color (grass-fed versions). Échiré AOP is the French summit — the butter Michelin kitchens specify. Kerrygold is the widely-available premium compromise. Vermont Creamery Cultured is the American made-correctly version. Any of the three transforms this dish compared to commodity butter.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
SKIP	Traditional accompaniments — drawn butter, lemon wedge, cocktail sauce, hot cracker bread	Just the lobster + the bag-butter sauce + fleur de sel + Meyer-lemon wedges + good bread	The SV butter-poach has already integrated butter + lemon + aromatics into the lobster during the cook. Additional condiments are redundant and confuse the plate. The bag liquid — a thick, golden, infused beurre monté — IS the sauce. Spoon it generously. The dish as designed needs: lobster (with bag-butter poured over), a lemon wedge on the plate (optional additional acid), fleur de sel (bursts of salt that the SV cook can't provide), and good bread for sopping up the butter + lemon pool. That's the complete plate.

INGREDIENTS

What You Need

● Everyday

Note

- This dish is ● Tier B only. See the ● ingredients section below. The ● path would be 'don't make this dish' — there's no cheaper ingredient substitute that preserves the technique.

No Limits

The Lobster

- 2 × **live Maine lobsters, 700-900 g each** (~1.5-2 lb) — **Casablanca Seafood (Hialeah), Pao Gourmet, Whole Foods specialty seafood counter, or Mazzaro's (St. Pete)** with 24-h pre-order. See [sourcing/03-seafood](#). Alternative: 1 × 1.2-1.5 kg **Mediterranean spiny lobster (langosta)** from a Spanish importer if available.

The Butter

- 150 g **European cultured butter** — **Vermont Creamery Cultured Unsalted** (Whole Foods, grocery), **Kerrygold Grass-Fed Pure Irish** (grocery), or **Échiré AOP** (specialty, summit). Must be unsalted — you season the finished dish, not the sauce.

The Bag Liquid

- 30 ml filtered water (cold)
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 small sprig fresh tarragon
- Shaved zest of ½ **Meyer lemon** (regular lemon is a fine substitute)

The Finish

- 1 **Meyer lemon**, cut into wedges for service
- **Fleur de sel de Guérande** or **Sal de Ibiza**
- Fresh-cracked black pepper (minimal)
- Optional: 1-2 tsp finely minced chives or tarragon for green garnish
- Crusty country bread (pan de payés from Batch 7) for sopping

EQUIPMENT

Your Kit

- Sous-vide circulator capable of 55°C stable
 - Heavy-gauge vacuum-sealer bags — 2 bags (separate bag per lobster works; or one large bag)
 - Vacuum sealer
 - Large SV container (~6-8 L)
-

- Heavy chef's knife — for the dispatch cross-cut

- Kitchen shears OR lobster shears — for shell work

- Instant-read probe thermometer

- Warm dinner plates (pre-heated in 50°C oven)

- Small ramekins — for pouring reserved bag butter as a side sauce

MISE EN PLACE

Before You Start

- Lobsters alive in a bowl covered with damp paper towels (do NOT submerge in fresh water — freshwater kills them quickly and the flesh deteriorates)

- Butter cut into 1 cm cubes, kept cold until moment of bagging

- Water measured (30 ml cold)

- Herbs + citrus zest prepped

- SV bath at 55°C, stabilized 15 min before bags enter

- Plates warming at 50°C

- Meyer lemons cut into wedges + chives chopped for final plating

- Bread sliced + ready

- Heavy knife sharp; cutting board stable (wet paper towel under it)

MAKE - AHEAD

Timeline

- undefined
- undefined

METHOD

The Cook

1 Phase 1 · Dispatch + Shell — 15 minutes

1. Lobsters should be cold + lethargic (a brief 20 min in the fridge before dispatch makes them calmer + reduces reflex movement).
2. To dispatch: place the lobster on a cutting board, belly-down. Look for the cross-mark on the top of the head, about 2 cm behind the eyes. Hold the body firmly with one hand; drive the knife tip straight down through the cross-mark, pressing all the way through to the board. This is the humane, traditional French method — instantaneous nerve-center severance.
3. Wait 30 seconds for any residual reflex movement to stop.
4. Separate claws from body: hold the body with one hand, twist each claw where it joins the body. They release cleanly.
5. Separate tail from body: hold body with one hand, tail with other; twist + pull. The tail detaches cleanly, leaving the green tomalley + head in the body half. Discard body + head (or reserve for lobster stock — freezes well).
6. Shell the tail: place tail shell-up on board. With kitchen shears, cut along the underside of the shell on both sides, lengthwise. Crack the shell open like a book. Use fingers to lift the whole tail-meat out in one piece. Remove the black intestinal vein running down the center (pull it out from one end; it comes out like a thread).
7. Prep the claws for cooking: with the tip of a kitchen shears or a sharp knife, score a shallow cut along the top and bottom ridges of each claw shell. These scores make post-cook cracking effortless. Do NOT crack the claws open yet — they cook in their shells.
8. Rinse all pieces briefly under cold water; pat dry with paper towels.



WHY THIS WORKS

Raw-shelling preserves lobster texture dramatically better than post-cook shelling. Shell thermal resistance during cooking creates uneven heat gradients — the thinnest parts of the tail overshoot while the thickest parts are still undercooked. Shelled lobster flesh cooks uniformly in the SV bag. The raw-shelling also means the butter can penetrate the muscle fibers directly during the cook, not just coat the surface after. The intestinal vein removal is essential — unremoved, it adds a grainy texture + mild off-flavor to the cooked tail.

2

Phase 2 · Bag Setup + Beurre-Monté Preparation — 10 minutes

1. Have two vacuum-sealer bags ready.
2. Bag 1 (Tails): Place tail meat (from both lobsters) in the bag. Arrange in a single layer.
3. Add: 100 g cold butter cut into 1 cm cubes + 20 ml cold water + 2 thyme sprigs + 1 tarragon sprig + the zest of $\frac{1}{4}$ Meyer lemon (pull strips with a vegetable peeler, avoid the pith).
4. Bag 2 (Claws): Place all 4 claws in the second bag. Add: 50 g cold butter cubes + 10 ml cold water + zest of $\frac{1}{4}$ Meyer lemon.
5. Vacuum-seal both bags. Important: seal slowly + watch for liquid (water) being pulled toward the sealing strip. If too much liquid approaches the strip, stop the vacuum + seal immediately. Modern 'moist-food' vacuum settings or chamber sealers make this easy; old FoodSaver vacuums require attention.
6. If using water-displacement method (no vacuum sealer): use heavy-duty zip bags, seal almost completely, lower slowly into water, water pressure displaces air from the bag, seal the last corner above water.



WHY THIS WORKS

The beurre monté doesn't need to be pre-made on the stovetop for SV — it forms spontaneously inside the bag during the 30-minute cook. The water-butter ratio (30 ml water per 150 g butter total, roughly 20% water by weight) is the classical beurre-monté ratio. At 55°C in a vacuum bag, the butter melts + the water proteins (casein) + the lobster's own released moisture combine to form a stable emulsion. No whisking required. This is one of the most elegant modern applications of SV technique — you get restaurant-quality beurre monté without the emulsion-breaking risk.

3

Phase 3 · Sous-Vide Cook — 30 minutes (tails) / 20 minutes (claws)

1. Verify SV bath at 55°C stable.
2. First: submerge the claw bag. Start 20-minute timer for claws.
3. 10 minutes later: submerge the tail bag. This times the claws to finish 10 min after tails start — but tails cook 30 min total, so claws come out 20 min before tails. Set second timer for tails.
4. OR simpler alternative: Put both bags in simultaneously. Pull the claw bag at 20 min, let the claws hold in the warm bag (off-heat, on the counter) for 10 min while tails finish.
5. Do not disturb the bags. Do not open. The 55°C bath + the vacuum do everything.
6. At 20 min: Remove claw bag. Set aside.
7. At 30 min: Remove tail bag.



WHY THIS WORKS

Lobster muscle protein (primarily tropomyosin + myosin) sets at 50-52°C; at 55°C it's fully cooked but retains maximum moisture + tenderness. Above 58°C the muscle starts to overcook rapidly — rubber-territory at 62°C+. The 55°C target is the exact sweet spot, which traditional boiling cannot hit with precision (the outer millimeters of boiled lobster usually overshoot to 70°C+). 30 min for tails gives full-muscle cooking + butter penetration; 20 min for claws is sufficient because claw muscle is thinner + already more tender than tail.

4

Phase 4 · Open Bags + Plate — 5 minutes

1. Warm 4 dinner plates in the 50°C oven.
2. Carefully open the tail bag over a bowl — the bag will be hot + full of melted butter sauce. Lift the tail meat out with tongs.
3. Pour the bag-butter into a small warm pitcher or ramekin for serving. This is your sauce — do NOT discard. Keep warm.
4. Slice each tail into 3-4 thick medallions on a bias (across the grain, showing the pink-white cross-section).
5. Open the claw bag. The claws should pull apart at the score marks with minimal effort. Extract the meat in whole pieces (the claw's 'thumb' often pulls out first, leaving the main meat in the main shell half — pull it out carefully with fingers or a small fork).
6. Arrange on warm plates: 3-4 tail medallions per plate, 1 whole claw per plate, any knuckle meat tucked in the center.
7. Spoon the warm bag-butter generously over each portion. The butter will pool on the plate — that's intentional.
8. Fleur de sel on top. Fresh-cracked pepper (light). Meyer lemon wedge on the edge of each plate. A few snipped chives or tarragon leaves for color.
9. Serve immediately with bread on a separate small plate.



WHY THIS WORKS

The bag-butter is the single most important element of the plating — it's a full-strength beurre monté that's absorbed the lobster's salinity + the herbs' aromatics + the citrus zest. Spooning it over the lobster IS the dish. Cold plates would solidify the butter; warm plates hold the sauce fluid for the entire meal. The lemon wedge is optional — the Meyer lemon zest in the bag already provides brightness; the wedge is a guest-choice additional acid.

QUICK REFERENCE

Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Circulator to 55°C	T- 1 h 3 0 m	Stabilize 15 min before bags
Lobster rest on counter	T- 1 h 1 5 m	5 min relax before dispatch

STEP	TIME	CUE
Dispatch + shell	T- 1 h 1 0 m to T- 5 5 m	Knife cross-cut, then shell tails + score claws
Bag tails + claws	T- 5 5 m to T- 4 8 m	Cold butter cubes, cold water, herbs, zest
Submerge both bags	T- 4 5 m	Simultaneous in; pull claws at T-25m
Claws out	T- 2 5 m	Hold in warm bag off-heat
Warm plates	T- 1 5 m	50°C oven
Tails out; open bags	T- 0	Pour bag-butter into pitcher, keep warm
Slice + plate + sauce + garnish	T+ 1 m to T+ 2 m	Spoon bag-butter over, fleur de sel, lemon, herbs
Serve	T+ 2 m	Bread on the side; eat immediately

TROUBLESHOOTING

Emergency Protocols

 UNDEFINED

undefined

 UNDEFINED

undefined

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DEEP DIVES

Technique Notes

● **Universal: The Beurre-Monté Window (82-88°C Stovetop vs. 55°C SV)**

EMULSION SCIENCE · FRENCH FOUNDATION

Classical stovetop beurre monté requires holding temperature in the 82-88°C window while whisking cold butter into warm water — 5-8 minutes of careful temperature modulation + constant whisking. Break the window and the emulsion separates; slip below and the butter seizes. SV at 55°C bypasses the window entirely: the vacuum-sealed environment + long cook time allow the emulsion to form gently, stably, without any attention. This is one of the single most elegant modern applications of SV technique. The lesson transfers: any emulsion sauce that's historically temperature-fragile (hollandaise, sauce béarnaise, sabayon, pil-pil) can be stabilized or auto-formed via SV-style precision-temperature approaches. Reference: Emulsion Encyclopedia §Beurre Monté; Sauces and Condiments §French Foundations.

● **Universal: The 55°C Lobster Sweet Spot**

CRUSTACEAN PROTEIN SCIENCE · UNIVERSAL

Lobster muscle protein sets at 50-52°C internal; it retains maximum moisture + tenderness at 55°C; it starts firming above 58°C; it's rubber-territory at 62°C. Traditional boiling (100°C water, 8-10 min) has no precision — the outer millimeters overshoot while the center approaches target. SV at 55°C is precision hold at the ideal temperature. This same window logic applies to other crustaceans: langoustines at 53-55°C × 15 min, shrimp at 55°C × 15 min, crayfish at 56°C × 20 min. All produce precision-tender crustacean flesh that boiling cannot match. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia §Crustaceans; Sous Vide §Temperature Tables.

● **Universal: Humane Dispatch — The Knife Cross-Cut**

ANIMAL HANDLING · TRADITIONAL FRENCH TECHNIQUE

The humane method for dispatching live lobster is a single swift knife-cut through the cross-mark on the head, severing the primary nerve center instantly. This is the restaurant-kitchen standard in France, UK, and increasingly in the US as animal-welfare standards evolve. It's significantly more humane than boiling alive (which takes 2-3 minutes for nervous system response to stop). For home cooks: watch the technique 2-3 times on video before attempting; practice on the first lobster; by the second it's routine. The brief chill in the fridge (20 min) before dispatch reduces reflex activity. Reference: Animal Welfare §Cephalopods + Crustaceans; Traditional Techniques §French Kitchen.

● **Universal: Raw-Shell Before Cook, Not After**

PREPARATION PHILOSOPHY · CROSS-PROTEIN

Raw-shelling (lobster, shrimp, crab) before cooking eliminates shell-induced thermal gradients during the cook, allows sauce/marinade penetration into the muscle fiber, and produces more refined final presentations. Post-cook shelling (boiled lobster, boiled shrimp) is easier on the cook but sacrifices precision. For any SV protein: shell first, cook second. This applies to: this recipe (lobster), SV shrimp (55°C × 15 min), SV langoustines, SV crab-leg meat. The skill learning curve is real but flat — 3-4 cooks and raw-shelling becomes routine. Reference: Cross-Technique Workflows §Pre-Cook Prep; Protein Encyclopedia §Crustaceans.

● **Universal: Cold Start — Butter Cubes Into Cold Water**

SV EMULSION SETUP · UNIVERSAL

Counter-intuitively: the beurre monté works best when everything goes into the bag COLD. Cold butter cubes + cold water + cold protein = slow, gentle emulsion formation during the 30-min cook. Warm or melted butter at bag-seal time risks phase separation during vacuum sealing + rapid temperature shock when the bag enters the bath. This 'cold start' principle applies to any SV emulsion cook: sauce hollandaise in the bag, sabayon in the bag, lemon-curd SV. Always cold in, slow rise to target temp. Reference: Sous Vide §Emulsion Techniques; Food Science Core §Emulsion Chemistry.

● **No Limits: European Cultured Butter — Why It Matters Here**

INGREDIENT QUALITY · FAT SOURCE

When butter is 40% of the finished dish, butter quality is 40% of the dish. Cultured European butter (Vermont Creamery, Kerrygold, Échiré AOP) differs from commodity American butter in three measurable ways: higher fat content (82-84% vs 80%), cultured ripening (probiotic culture develops subtle tang + caramel depth), and grass-fed source (rich yellow color from beta-carotene, additional complexity). Échiré AOP — the French butter Michelin kitchens specify — is the summit-tier splurge; Kerrygold is the widely-available premium compromise; Vermont Creamery Cultured is the American 'made correctly' version. For this recipe, any of the three transforms the dish. Commodity butter works, but it's the one ingredient change that shows up immediately in the finished sauce. Reference: Dairy Encyclopedia §Butter; Sourcing §Specialty Dairy.

● **No Limits: Mediterranean Spiny Lobster as the Spanish Substitute**

INGREDIENT QUALITY · REGIONAL VARIATION

Maine lobster (*Homarus americanus*) is the widely-available Atlantic variant; Mediterranean spiny lobster (*Palinurus elephas*, known in Spain as langosta) is the classical Spanish + French Mediterranean equivalent, with a different body structure (no large front claws; all meat is in the tail + smaller legs) and a sweeter, more delicate flavor. Spiny lobster is less common in Miami but occasionally available through Spanish-import channels (La Tienda, Marky's Aventura specialty days) — call ahead. Same SV protocol (55°C × 30 min) works identically; just bag the whole tail. The regional authenticity match for a Spanish-themed meal. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia §Lobster Varieties; Sourcing §Mediterranean Seafood.

What to Drink

Wine — The Classic Pair

Chablis Premier Cru (Fourchaume, Montmains) or a top Chardonnay from Rías Baixas (Pazo de Señoráns Selección de Añada)

Buttery lobster needs a white with enough acidity + minerality to cut the richness without competing with it. Chablis (unoaked Chardonnay from Burgundy's northernmost vineyards) is the textbook match — mineral, taut, citrus-driven. The Spanish substitute: aged Albariño (Pazo de Señoráns Selección) has similar structure. Avoid oaky New World Chardonnay (too buttery, layers with the butter); avoid reds entirely with this dish.

Wine — The Celebration Bubble

Champagne blanc de blancs (Laurent-Perrier Blanc de Blancs Brut, or Krug Grande Cuvée for the full splurge)

Celebration dish, celebration bubbles. Blanc de blancs (100% Chardonnay Champagne) has the Chablis-like acidity + structure with the added complexity of Champagne method. Krug is the Michelin-kitchen pour for lobster dishes. Laurent-Perrier is the accessible premium. Either elevates a Saturday night into a memorable one.

Wine — The Spanish Option

Pazo Baión Albariño (Rías Baixas) or a well-aged Txakoli (Txomin Etxaniz reserve bottling)

If Pablo wants to keep the whole meal Spanish-identified, the Rías Baixas Albariño route works beautifully. The ocean-saline + citrus profile echoes the lobster's marine origin; the structure holds against the butter. Slightly less 'textbook-correct' than Chablis but emotionally right for a Spanish-theme dinner.

Bread — The Sopping Vehicle

Pan de payés Catalán (Batch 7 · this workspace) OR Baguette ordinaire (French-tradition match)

The butter-sauce on the plate is the best part of the meal, and bread is the tool for reclaiming every drop. Pan de payés is the Spanish choice; a simple baguette is the French choice; both work. Slice thick, serve on a separate plate. Non-negotiable.

Side — Spare and Green

A bright green salad — frisée or butter lettuce with a simple sherry-vinegar dressing — OR blanched asparagus with lemon + flake salt

The dish is rich, buttery, concentrated. Side should be acidic + cool + minimal. A sharp vinaigrette salad is the classical French lobster-accompaniment; asparagus is the spring-seasonal alternative. Avoid: potato anything (bread handles starch), cream-anything (duplicate richness), tomato-anything (competes with the flavor finish).

Menu Context — The Event Dinner

Open: oysters on the half shell + mignonette + Champagne. Main: this lobster. Close: a small fruit tart or simple sorbet.

This dish as the centerpiece of a 3-course dinner. Oysters set up the buttery richness without duplicating it. Dessert is light because the main is heavy. Champagne carries through or switches to Chablis mid-meal. Serves 4 as an event dinner; scale to 2 lobsters per 4 people for a 3-course meal.

CONTEXT

Menu Ideas

Anniversary / Birthday / Celebration · 4 guests

1. Oysters on half shell + mignonette + Champagne (opener). 2. Butter-poached lobster (this recipe, main). 3. Simple green salad with sherry-vinegar. 4. Small fruit tart or lemon sorbet (dessert). The event meal; 90 min start to finish at the table. Around \$250 ingredient cost for 4 — the worth-it night.

SV Technique Dinner Closer · 4 guests · Batch 9 Arc

1. Yema curada SV + truffle toast (Batch 9 · opener). 2. Pulpo SV-plancha (Batch 9 · small plate). 3. Presa SV + fire (Batch 9 · meat course). 4. Lobster butter-poached (this recipe · final protein course). A full Batch 9 SV-technique tasting menu across four temperatures (63°C → 77°C → 57°C → 55°C). Educational + indulgent. 3-4 hour evening.

Spanish-Themed Dinner · 4 guests

Swap lobster for spiny lobster (langosta) if sourceable. 1. Gildas + jamón (arrival). 2. Mejillones escabeche (Batch 5 tapa). 3. Langosta butter-poached SV (this recipe, main). 4. Tarta de queso vasca (Batch 6, dessert). Spanish-Basque-French arc with the butter-poach as the cross-cultural centerpiece.

Valentine's / Anniversary For 2

Scale to 1 × 1 kg lobster (single). Same protocol, just smaller bag. Serves as full main for 2 people with bread + salad. Total cost around \$60-80; 45 min active. The intimate version of the event dinner.

YOUR NOTES

Cook Log

Session Notes

Date: _____ · Serves: ____ · Rating: __ / 5

Use this space to record what you changed, what worked, and what you'd do differently next time. Your future self will thank you.