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Lobster with Lagavulin butter

Serves 4

By Mark Hix

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Barbecuing fish requires some careful attention so I would recommend keeping half of your barbecue a little cooler with less charcoal so that the fish doesn't burn and you can control the cooking.

A few weeks ago I was invited up to Islay to visit the Lagavulin distillery. We were invited to a seafood lunch at the distillery but somehow we roped ourselves into cooking the seafood feast. Anyway, one of our party suggested doing a whisky butter with the lobster – and delicious it was, too.

2 x 800g-1kg lobsters

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the whisky butter

3 large shallots, peeled, halved and finely chopped

100ml fish stock

1tbsp cider vinegar

1tbsp double cream

150g cold unsalted butter, diced

2tbsp chopped chives

2 measures of whisky

Salt and freshly ground white pepper

Put the lobsters in the freezer for an hour to put them to sleep. To make the whisky butter, put the shallots in a saucepan with the fish stock and cider vinegar and simmer until you have less than a tablespoon in the pan. Add the double cream, bring to the boil then whisk in the butter to create a smooth sauce. Whisk in enough whisky to taste then stir in the chives and season. Cover the pan with clingfilm.

With a heavy sharp knife, cut the lobsters in half by pushing the point of the knife through the head then pushing with the palm of your hand through the shell. Crack the claws with the back of a knife so the heat can get into the claw. Season the lobster flesh and cook flesh side down first for about 5-6 minutes on each side. Serve with the sauce poured over or separately.

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