

Braised Asparagus

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Ingredients:

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 pound asparagus, trimmed* (and peeled, if desired)

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock

(For smaller pans, which cannot fit asparagus comfortably in a single layer, use 1/2 cup stock instead)

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

Instructions:

Heat oil in a 12-inch straight-sided sauté pan over high heat until lightly smoking. Add asparagus in as close to a single layer as possible, season with salt and pepper, and cook without moving until lightly browned, about 1 1/2 minutes. Shake pan and cook until browned again, 1 1/2 minutes longer. Add stock and butter to pan and immediately cover.

Continue to cook until asparagus is completely tender and stock and butter have emulsified and reduced to a shiny glaze, 7 to 10 minutes. If stock completely evaporates and butter starts to burn before asparagus is cooked through, top up with a few tablespoons of water. Serve immediately.

Notes

*The easiest way to trim asparagus is by snapping it with your hands. Grip the middle of the asparagus stalk with one hand, and the very bottom with the other; bend it and allow it to snap at the point where the firm woody section meets the tender section of the spear.

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