

Five Mother Sauces – as coined by Auguste Escoffier

In the days before refrigeration, when foods took longer to get from source of supply to the kitchen, sauces were richer and more highly concentrated than they are today, the reason being they were often used to disguise the staleness of the meat or fish. Present day requests for more of a complementary sauce or one to aid digestion such as that of apple sauce with pork.

Anyone with Dysphagia knows that pretty much everything you consume orally needs a “sauce” of some description. When you undertake traditional cooking lessons you will be taught the basics, which includes the creation of sauce. There are five French sauces that every cook should know. It will add to your cooking repertoire and if you suffer from dysphagia, will add a whole new dimension to what you can potentially eat.

These five sauces are the basic building blocks of all other sauces and it is imperative to master these (well at least a couple) so that you can build on your ability to improve & increase the array of food you can potentially eat orally.

The ingredients required are basic, and in mastering them, you open yourself up to the creation of many great classic dishes. The building blocks of sauces should enable you to dollop and drizzle your way through eating by creating a medium that clings and smothers your food. Sauces should be ‘stable’ meaning they don’t separate.

A sauce is a liquid which has been thickened by one or a combination of the following: -

- Roux – equal parts flour and fat (butter)
- Starch – i.e. cornflour or arrowroot
- Egg yolks – a liaison
- Butter

The 5 mother (basic) sauces are : -

1. Bechamel (roux + dairy normally milk or cream)
2. Veloute (roux + fish stock)
3. Espagnole (roux + brown stock normally beef or veal)
4. Hollandaise (egg yolks + clarified melted butter and acid ie vinegar or lemon)
5. Tomato (roux + tomatoes – often the roux is omitted and we can just reduce tomatoes)

Bechamel & Tomato – the two sauces I tend to use as my ‘go to’ for everyday eating.