

# Cook's Country

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## Bringing Eggs Benedict Home

*Who ate the first eggs Benedict? Was it Wall Street broker Lemuel Benedict, said to have cobbled the dish together from a poached egg, toast, ham, and hollandaise at the breakfast buffet at the Waldorf-Astoria? Other sources trace the recipe to New York City's famed Delmonico's restaurant and a loyal customer named Mrs. LeGrand Benedict. The notion of combining hollandaise sauce and poached eggs is a venerable one, probably dating back to a traditional French recipe, oeufs benedictine, where brandade (salt cod and potatoes) replaces the ham. Eggs Benedict is easy enough for a restaurant—it is just a question of last-minute assembly—but the home cook needs to master both perfect timing as well as two classic—and, yes, fickle—French recipes.*

BY DIANE UNGER



### **EGGS BENEDICT** Serves 6

The test kitchen's favorite Canadian bacon is Applegate Farms. If you like, you can toast the English muffins and warm the bacon 20 minutes in advance. Reheat them in a 200-degree oven just before serving.

- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 12 large eggs
- 6 English muffins, split
- 12 slices Canadian bacon (see note)
- 1 recipe Foolproof Hollandaise (recipe follows)

**1. POACH EGGS** Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat broiler. Fill large skillet nearly to rim with water. Add vinegar and salt and bring to boil over high heat. Following photos at left, crack 3 eggs each into 4 teacups and carefully pour eggs into skillet. Cover pan, remove from heat, and poach eggs until whites are set but yolks are still slightly runny, 5 to 7 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer eggs to paper towel-lined plate.

**2. TOAST MUFFINS** While eggs are poaching, arrange English muffins, split side-up, on baking sheet and broil until golden brown, 2 to 4 minutes. Place 1 slice bacon on each English muffin and broil until beginning to brown, about 1 minute.