

Barney Haughton's Omelette

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A poetic recipe, written and introduced by Barney himself, reflecting on the meditative nature of cooking. Find the recipe on the back...



When I first wrote this recipe 12 years ago, it began: *The first thing you need to do to make an omelette is to get out of bed.*

At that time, every morning, I was struggling to do just that. Depression comes in many forms, but one most people who suffer from it recognise is its capacity to be like an anaesthetic. To disconnect you from feeling and from the world around you. And if food – that most visceral and primary of all life's experiences – is also your work, the everyday business of being a chef becomes fairly surreal.

But I went on cooking. I went on putting whatever I made on to plates for people to eat. I didn't think about it or like it, I just did it. The act of cooking became a kind of therapy. I began to see that cooking could, in a certain context, also be a meditation and that making an omelette, the most simple of all dishes, could illustrate this perfectly. (recipe on back)

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Barny Haughton's Omelette

It takes five minutes. You need to do it on your own and in silence.

You need three eggs, a frying pan and some heat. You need a bowl and a fork, a knife and a chopping board. And a warm plate to put the omelette on. And some herbs, perhaps tarragon, dill and chives – because this is going to be a herb omelette – salt and pepper, a nob of butter and some olive oil. And we're going to put a little fresh goat's cheese in this omelette too.

Have everything ready.

The herbs on the chopping board, the crumbly white goat's cheese and the green olive oil... the light through the kitchen window. Allowing a little time to pass...

Break the three eggs into the bowl, add the salt and pepper and a swirl of green olive oil. Chop the herbs and beat them with the fork into the egg mix. Add a little more olive oil in the almost smoky hot pan. Slip the egg mixture swiftly in one movement into the pan.

Sizzle for 4 seconds, beating gently with a fork

One, two, three, four

Sprinkle the crumbly white goat's cheese onto the mix

One, two, three

Tip the pan slightly away from you and with the fork, fold the mix from the far edge back towards you, letting the liquid egg follow gravity back down the slope of the pan

One, two, three, four

While still sloppy on the upper side and just brown underneath, fold the mix away from you

One, two, three

Gently slide onto a warm plate.