

## The 5 Basic Steps for Cooking in the Sous Vide

### SEASON

The sous vide cooking method locks in the flavor of foods, bringing out their particular character more fully. Vacuum-sealing the food and any seasonings or oils tightly together in the pouch magnifies the flavours of spices and herbs somewhat. Seasoning can be as simple as a sprinkle of salt and pepper, but adding fat or oil to herbs and spices can improve flavour quality. Here are some simple techniques:

#### Compound butters

Mix fresh or dried herbs, spices, salt, and pepper with unsalted butter. Use to coat the inside of the empty cooking pouch, then add the meat or vegetables, and seal.

#### Herbed broths

Mix fresh or dried herbs, spices, salt, and pepper with vegetable, mushroom, beef, seafood, or chicken broth. Freeze in small portions (in an ice cube tray or a zip-closure bag) and add the frozen seasoned broth to the cooking pouch with the meat, poultry, fish or vegetable prior to sealing. The broth will melt and envelope the food.

#### Chilled herbed oil

Mix fresh or dried herbs, spices, salt, and pepper with olive oil (do not use extra virgin olive oil, as it will sometimes develop a bitter metallic flavor.) chill to oil until it is semi-solid and add by the tablespoon (or more) to the cooking pouch along with the food, then seal.

DO NOT use wine or distilled spirits in the seasoning, without first heating it on the stovetop for a few minutes to drive off the alcohol, leaving only the flavor of the wine or spirit. Alcohol, especially from wine, can impart a peculiar metallic flavour to meals cooked sous vide.

### SEAL

Use only food-grade cooking pouches to package foods from the sous vide. Seal according to manufacturer's instructions. Use only pouches certified by the manufacturer as suitable for cooking under vacuum. Do not use standard zip-closure bags meant for food storage.

1. Fold back the opening of the pouch before filling to prevent seasonings or debris from becoming trapped in a zip track, if present. This debris can hamper successful sealing of the pouch.

2. Place food and desired seasonings into the pouch.
3. Do not overfill the pouch. Try to keep food clear of the vacuum membrane area, if present.
4. Vacuum seal the pouch. If for any reason, pumping does not evacuate air from the pouch, discard pouch and begin again, placing food into a new pouch.
5. If using a zip-closure pouch, zip the pouch closed and check to see that it made a good seal.

NOTE: Do not use standard or thin zip-closure bags, not designed for sous vide cooking.

## HEAT

Place the sealed pouch into the water bath once the water has reached the target temperature for cooking. If using multiple pouches, place them vertically in the pouch rack in the water bath. Be sure the food in all pouches is completely under the water surface for cooking. Do not place large pouches horizontally in the sous vide, as this will impede the convection circulation of water around the perimeter of the water bath.

## SEAR

Some foods, such as steak, chops, tenderloin, fish, seafood, or poultry with the skin are commonly served with a caramelized or crisp exterior, which is not possible in the moist environment of the sous vide cooking pouch. After coming to the proper temperature, these foods require a quick finishing sear that can only be provided by a brief exposure to a very hot temperature.

The Sear step can be done by putting the meat, fish, poultry, or seafood into a very hot, lightly oiled skillet (taken to the smoking point) or onto a hot grill, under the broiler of an oven, or by using a kitchen torch to caramelize the surface of the food. Take care just to caramelize/brown the surface (1 to 2 minutes) to enhance color and flavor.

## OR SAUCE

Another option is to sauce your food. Foods such as fish, seafood, or chicken are quite delicious plated directly from the pouch and topped with a favorite sauce.

## SERVE

You are now on your way to exploring the delightful benefits of sous vide cooking with your sous vide.

NOTE: Raw or unpasteurized food must never be served to highly susceptible immune compromised individuals.

Food Standards recommend that for safety, food should not be consumed if kept between 5C and 55C for longer than 4 hours.