

# Steak Au Poivre

Serves 2 : Steak & sauce recipe by Molly Baz

## Ingredients:

### Steak & Sauce:

- 1 large shallot
- 4 garlic cloves
- 3 thyme sprigs
- 3 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 2 (1½-inch-thick) New York strip steaks (about 1½ pounds total)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
- 2 tablespoons high heat oil of choice (I used avocado oil)
- ⅓ cup cognac, dry sherry, or brandy
- Flaky sea salt

### Fries:

- 3 large russet potatoes
- 5-6 inches frying oil of choice
- ½ tsp fine sea salt

## Instructions:

### Prep Fries:

- Fill a large bowl with ice and water.
- Peel the potatoes and slice them lengthwise into ⅓-inch thick sticks (they will look a little thick, better than being too thin & risking burning them).

- Add the potatoes to the ice water and soak for 15 minutes.
- Meanwhile, attach a deep-fry thermometer to the side of a large, heavy pot. Add the oil to the pot over medium high heat. You want it to reach 300°F.

#### Prep Steak:

- While the oil is heating & fries are chilling, pat steaks dry with paper towels.
- Season all over with 2½ teaspoons kosher salt and a generous amount of ground black pepper. Set aside.
- Finely chop 1 large shallot.
- Thinly slice 2 garlic cloves.
- Firmly smash 2 additional garlic cloves to really break them open so that they are able to release a lot of flavor when they hit the skillet.
- Place 1 tablespoon whole peppercorns in a sealable plastic bag, seal the bag, place it on your countertop, and crush with the bottom of a small saucepan to coarsely crack them. Set aside.

#### First Fry:

- Drain cut potatoes and pat completely dry.
- Once the oil reaches 300°F (working in batches) carefully add the potatoes to the hot oil, and cook until beginning to soften but not browned, 3-4 minutes.
- Transfer the potatoes to a paper-towel-lined sheet pan. Let rest while you cook the steaks.

#### Cook Steak:

- Heat a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat for 4 minutes.
- Add 2 tablespoons vegetable oil to the skillet.
- Add the steaks and cook, undisturbed, until a deep golden brown crust forms underneath, about 3 minutes.
- Flip and cook on the second side until equally golden brown, 3 minutes longer.
- **If the steaks have a fat cap**, upend them on their sides, stabilize them with tongs, and sear the edges, until browned, 2 to 3 minutes per edge.

- Reduce the heat to medium-low.
- Add 1 tablespoon butter, 3 thyme sprigs, and the 2 smashed garlic cloves to the pan.
- Use a spoon to continuously baste the steak, about 2 minutes.
- Insert your instant-read thermometer into the thickest part of the steak. Once it registers 120°F, transfer it to a cutting board to rest.

#### Make the sauce:

- Minimally clean out the skillet with tongs and a paper towel, then reuse the skillet for the sauce.
- Add 2 tablespoons butter to the skillet along with the sliced garlic, shallot, and crushed peppercorns.
- Cook, stirring often, until the shallot and garlic are softened but not browned, 4 to 5 minutes.
- Turn off the heat (cognac is flammable!) and add  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup cognac (or sherry or brandy).
- Return the skillet to medium heat and cook until the cognac has mostly evaporated and your spoon leaves streaks in the skillet when you stir, 1 to 2 minutes.
- Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup heavy cream, bring to a simmer, and cook until it coats the back of a spoon, about 30 seconds.
- (This is where I put the skillet full of sauce & the steak into the oven to keep warm while I finished my fries).

#### Second Fry:

- Increase the oil temperature to 350°F.
- Working in batches, return the potatoes to the hot oil and cook until golden brown and crispy, about 5 minutes.
- Transfer the fries to the paper-towel-lined sheet pan.
- Season with remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt.

Plate:

- Pull steak and sauce from the oven.
  - Taste sauce, adjust salt as needed & add extra cream if the sauce has gotten too thick while resting.
  - Cut steak against the grain, place on a serving platter, and spoon sauce over top.
  - Serve immediately with fries.
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**recipe notes:**

- Every steak is different, be sure to check the thickness before cooking. I overcooked mine :/
- I used a smaller pot to cook my fries so that I could save on oil. It worked fine! I cooked my fries in about 4 batches.

**what you learn:**

- The first time I made fries at home, I didn't consider the 1st & 2nd fry to be an important differentiation. This time I knew I wanted to prioritize it and wow!! It made the biggest difference in the world. Soft on the inside, crispy on the outside. The perfect fry.