Elsa’s Mussels
Elsa Sampou

INGREDIENTS
• 2 Tbsp. flour
• 5 Tbsp unsalted butter, softened
• 2 cloves garlic, chopped
• 4 Tbsp onion, chopped
• 2 bay leaves
• 3-4 dozen mussels, debearded and scrubbed
• 1-1/2 cup white wine or dry white French Vermouth
• 3/4 cup heavy cream
• 4 Tbsp Dijon mustard
• 2 egg yolks, lightly beaten

METHOD
1) In a small bowl blend flour and 3 Tbsp butter together with a fork until smooth.
2) Melt remaining 2 Tbsp butter over medium high heat in a heavy-bottom sauté pan with lid that fits tightly. Add garlic, onion, and bay leaf and cook, stirring for a few minutes.
3) Add white wine and bring to a boil.
4) Add mussels, cover and cook until shells open. Check after about 5 minutes. Remove mussels from liquid with slotted spoon and place in a bowl.
5) Bring liquid to a boil then take off heat.
6) Quickly add the flour and butter mixture and put back on the heat; whisking constantly. Bring mixture to a boil until it thickens.
7) Cook for another minute or two to cook out the raw taste of the flour. Reduce heat to low.
8) Add cream, mustard, and egg yolks. Heat to warm, stirring constantly. Don’t bring back to a boil, or the eggs might curdle. Pour sauce over mussels.

This is Andre’s wife’s favorite recipe for mussels. Rich and classic, it uses a French technique for thickening sauces at the last minute by mixing flour and softened butter together to make a beurre manié. It’s a great trick to have up your sleeve when you have a sauce that is too thin.