



Authentic Aioli

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Introduction:

Aioli is a garlic mayonnaise made of garlic, egg, lemon juice, and olive oil. In Provence, aioli (or more formally, Le Grand Aioli) also designates a complete dish consisting of various boiled vegetables (usually carrots, potatoes, and green beans), boiled fish (normally salt cod), and boiled eggs served with the aioli sauce. While modern cooks have taken to making aioli in a blender or food processor, the traditional method is to use a mortar and pestle which gives the sauce a creamier texture. The technique described below comes from J.B. Reboul's classic cookbook, *La Cuisiniere Provencale*, published in 1897 and widely considered to be the bible of Provençal cooking.

Preparation:

Take two cloves of garlic per person, peel them, place them in a mortar, reduce them to a paste with a pestle; add a pinch of salt, an egg yolk and pour in the oil in a thin thread while turning with the pestle. Take care to add the oil very slowly and, during this time, never stop turning; you should obtain a thick pommade. After having added about three or four tablespoons of oil, add the juice of a lemon and a teaspoon of tepid water, continue to add oil little by little and, when the pommade again becomes too thick, add another few drops of water, without which it falls apart, so to speak, the oil separating itself from the rest. If, despite all precautions, this accident should occur, one must remove everything from the mortar, put into it another egg yolk, a few drops of lemon juice and, little by little, spoonful by spoonful, add the unsuccessful aioli while turning the pestle constantly. This one calls "reinstating the aioli" (*relever l'aioli*). An aioli for seven to eight persons will absorb something over two cups of oil. In his similarly classic book, *Simple French Food*, Richard Olney recommends toning down the recipe for non-Provençal palates unaccustomed to such a heavy dose of garlic. He suggests four cloves of garlic for an aioli serving 8 people. He also recommends starting with two egg yolks before starting to add the oil.

Image (optional):

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Ingredients:

- 2 garlic cloves per person
- olive oil
- 1 egg yolk per person
- water
- salt to taste

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