



Asparagus crumb & soldiers with soft-boiled egg

By Alice Zaslavsky

Alice Zaslavsky champions vegetables in all their glory, and every ounce of goodness is extracted from the asparagus spears in this recipe, including the fibrous stem ends! As Alice says: *“If you’ve ever snapped off the woody ends of asparagus and flicked them into the compost with a sigh, fear not! Applications like this, where the woodiness is incorporated into the crunchy crumb, are just a reframe ahead – just think of the ends as aromatic roughage.”*

Fresh from the garden: asparagus, eggs, lemons

INGREDIENTS

- 2 bunches of asparagus, about 600 g
- 250 g sourdough bread, roughly chopped
- 25 g parmesan, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt flakes
- 1 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 8 eggs
- 4 lemon wedges

Preheat the oven grill to high. Line a baking tray with foil. Bring a saucepan of water to the boil.

Snap the ends off the asparagus spears at their natural bend-point, then place the woody ends in a small food processor, along with the bread, parmesan, salt and pepper. Whiz until fine breadcrumbs form. Transfer to the baking tray and scatter with the capers. Grill for 5 minutes, or until beginning to turn golden.

Cut the asparagus spears in half lengthways, toss with the olive oil and place on the tray with the crumbs. Grill for another 3 minutes, or until the asparagus is just cooked.

Meanwhile, add the eggs to the boiling water. Cook for 6 minutes, then immediately strain into the sink. Run a cold tap over the eggs for 30 seconds, or until cool enough to handle. Peel the eggs under the running tap (this helps to achieve a smooth egg).

To serve, divide the crumbs and eggs among shallow serving bowls or plates. Cut the eggs in half. Place the asparagus spears alongside, with a lemon wedge for squirting more acid into the rich mix. Drizzle with a little extra olive oil, season with salt and pepper and serve.

SERVES 4

SHORTCUT:

Blanch the asparagus with the eggs for 2–3 minutes, depending on the width of the spears.

