

A REALLY BUTTERY CROQUE MONSIEUR

This sandwich represents a simple taste of childhood, something my mum made for lunch for me and my brother when we were growing up. I have to confess that the combination of ham and melting cheese on buttery, soft white bread tastes just as good as an adult, particularly after drinking too much wine. When friends who used to live around the corner from La Buvette got married, my friend Alix Lacloche and I made these sandwiches for everyone as a late-night bite to eat.

The best way to make a croque monsieur is to buy sliced white bread (we call it “American bread” in France) and butter it really well before griddling the sandwiches. I prefer to make the sandwich on small slices of bread so I can eat two sandwiches instead of one. The best croque will have fancy cheese and ham, but this is not always about being fancy.

Brush both sides of each piece of bread generously with butter. (This is a really buttery croque monsieur after all!) Lay out all of the pieces of bread. On 4 of the pieces, place 1 piece of cheese, followed by 1 piece of ham, followed by 1 piece of cheese (that way the ham is in the center). Top with the remaining bread.

Heat a griddle or skillet over medium heat. In batches, cook the sandwiches until the bread is evenly browned and the cheese is completely melted. If the bread is getting dark but the cheese hasn't started melting, turn the heat to low and continue to griddle, gently turning the sandwiches over for even cooking. Serve hot.

SERVES 4 (2 IF YOU ARE
EXTRA HUNGRY)

½ cup salted butter, melted

8 slices classic white
sandwich bread or pain
de mie

8 slices Comté or tomme or
another good melting cheese
(about 6 ounces)*

4 slices ham

**For the best results, buy
a cheese that melts easily,
which means Comté or tomme
in France, but could mean
Monterey Jack in America.
Avoid cheeses like aged
Cheddar, which is a little too
sharp for the sandwich.*

