

Chicken Lobsters with Vermicelli

4 live chicken lobsters (1 pound each)	¼ cup olive oil
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour	¼ cup diced onion
6 fresh basil leaves or 1 teaspoon dried basil, chopped	Pinch of salt
3 garlic cloves, mashed	½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ cup sweet butter	½ cup good cream sherry
2 eggs, beaten well	8 ounces vermicelli or any thin spaghetti
	¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Drop the lobsters into a large pot with 5 quarts salted boiling water. Cook for 10 minutes. Allow lobsters to cool in the water for 10 minutes. Remove from pot, tear off claws and crack, and remove meat. Split lobsters into halves. Remove head sacs and intestinal veins and discard. Remove all meat and fat. Cut lobster meat into large pieces and flour lightly, shaking off any excess.

Mix basil and garlic with 6 tablespoons of the butter; stir, and let stand for 20 minutes. Dip floured lobster chunks into beaten eggs. Place the oil in a skillet, heat it, and cook the onion until medium brown. Add lobster meat and cook for 3 minutes. Add salt and pepper and the butter with garlic and basil. Stir and cook for 2 minutes. Add sherry, cover, and cook for 5 minutes. Simmer slowly for 5 minutes more, uncovered.

During the last 5 minutes of cooking, prepare the vermicelli. When the pasta is ready, drain immediately and put back in hot pot. Add remaining butter, a little sauce, and the cheese to the vermicelli; mix and cover. Serve the pasta on individual plates and spoon lobster and sauce over top. Sprinkle with more cheese. For wine, a fine Chablis or a Soave. Serves 4.

- *Leone, Gene, 1967, Leone's Italian Cookbook, New York, New York; Harper & Row, Publishers; pages 118 – 119*