



Strawberries Romanoff

I've seen this simple dessert credited to C  reme and Escoffier (under the name Strawberries Americaine-style) though it seems to have become famous at Romanoff's, a popular Beverly Hills restaurant in the 1940s and 50s. It was a favourite of mine at a suburban Italian restaurant that I frequented in the 1980s ... where they used blue cur  ao, which seemed very fancy at the time! Cur  ao is an orange liqueur from the Dutch Caribbean island of the same name - but Cointreau, Grand Marnier or any orange liqueur works well. Don't leave the strawberries in the liqueur for more than a few hours or they'll become mushy. Chef Janni Kyritsis taught me to always serve a thin, crisp biscuit on the side of a soft dessert, for a little textural contrast; I like Jules Destrooper almond thins with this dish. Lightly sparkling, Brachetto d'Soumah from the Yarra Valley is only slightly sweet, low in alcohol (9.5%) and, with a hint of strawberries on the nose and palate, an ideal accompaniment.

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

- 500g strawberries, hulled
- 45ml cur  ao
-    cup icing sugar
- 300ml single cream
- Few drops vanilla essence
- Crisp biscuits, for serving

METHOD

1. Halve or quarter strawberries, depending on size.
2. Dissolve half the sugar in the cur  ao and combine with strawberries, cover and set aside for 1-4 hours, mixing occasionally.
3. Whip cream, vanilla essence and remaining sugar together until firm peaks form.
4. Fold strawberries through the cream, spoon into glasses and serve with a crisp biscuit on the side.