

# Butter-Braised Asparagus

By David Tanis

**YIELD** 4 servings

**TIME** 20 minutes

For the first-of-the-season asparagus, keep it simple with butter, lemon and sweet herbs. For the best texture, peeling the stalks really makes a difference.

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## INGREDIENTS

**1 ½ pounds large or medium asparagus**  
**6 tablespoons butter**  
**Salt and pepper**  
**2 tablespoons lemon juice**  
**½ teaspoon lemon zest**  
**1 tablespoon snipped chives**  
**1 tablespoon roughly chopped parsley or chervil**  
**1 teaspoon chopped tarragon, plus more for garnish**  
**1 tablespoon chopped dill, plus more for garnish (optional)**

## PREPARATION

### Step 1

Snap off and discard the tough bottoms of the asparagus spears. If using large, thick asparagus, peel the lower ends with a vegetable peeler.

### Step 2

Put butter in a wide skillet over medium-high heat. Add asparagus in one layer and season with salt and pepper. Add 1/2 cup water, cover, and bring to a simmer. Cook until the asparagus is firm-tender, about 3 minutes. Take care not to overcook them; they should still be bright green. (They will continue to cook a bit once the heat is off.) Remove the asparagus from the pan and place on a serving platter.

### Step 3

Turn heat to high and simmer briskly until most of the liquid has evaporated, a minute or so. Add lemon juice and zest to the buttery juices. Turn off heat and stir in chives, parsley, tarragon and dill, if using. Check seasoning. Spoon the sauce over the asparagus, garnish with a few herb leaves, and serve.

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## PRIVATE NOTES

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