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Recipes with a Twist

by Lynda Gee

Cream of Cauliflower Soup

This recipe was inspired by the wonderful soup of chef Gerhard Arbogast from The Hotel Hirsch in Kork, near Kehl am Rhine in Germany. Although it is my attempt at recreating his recipe, (and he agrees it is not exactly the same!) it still works well to produce a rich velvety, tasty soup.

- 2-2.5 litres water**
- 1 chicken and one herb or vegetable stock cube**
- half a cauliflower**
- good cup of double cream**
- butter**
- flour**
- freshly ground black pepper**

Dissolve the stock cubes in the water and bring to the boil. Wash trim and break the cauliflower into small pieces. In a separate pan lightly cook these in butter (I usually melt a good table spoon of butter and add the cauliflower when it starts to bubble.)

Sprinkle with flour from a sifter and keep stirring.

When evenly coated add this to the water and bring back to the boil, cover and simmer until the cauliflower is very well cooked.

Using a hand 'plunge' mixer* reduce the cauliflower to a puree (trying not to splash too much!) producing a quite thick liquid.

Season to taste, I use freshly ground black pepper. Stir in the cream.

If you feel it needs to be thicker then gradually sprinkle in more sieved flour stirring all the time.

Serve very hot with an extra swirl of cream or a little grated cheese.

**OR separate the cauliflower and liquidise or put through a vegetable sieve, even using a potato masher works in case of a power cut! Then return to the liquid and continue as per the recipe.*

There is a winter history behind the creation of this recipe. Whilst living in Brittany I had invited around a dozen people for my birthday in January for a traditional French tartiflette supper. All of us having already been snowed in for over a week complicated things ! I had no ham, bacon or lardons available and could not get to a supermarket.

However, I did have plenty of various types of sausages in my freezer and so decided to improvise - this was the result, which went down well with the locals with many jokes of "oh well she's English, we make tartiflette, Lynda makes sausiflette!"

"Sausiflette" (for 4 - 6 people)

1.5 - 2 kg firm waxy potatoes

A selection of sausages (eg. Toulouse, chipolatas aux herbes, natural sausage meat, smoked, thick slices of garlic or cervelas - or plain old English bangers if you have them!) allowing some of each for everyone

1 small 500g reblochon or tartiflette cheese (or cheddar works well)

1 cup of double cream

If using French sausages such as Toulouse and chipolatas, I always follow a tip from a French chef I worked with and boil them first for around 10 minutes - with a good splash of white wine and a bay leaf or pinch of mixed herbs added to the water.

Peel and chop the potatoes into good sized chunks and boil until just tender.

In the meantime pre-heat the oven to around 200 degrees. Arrange the selection of sausages in an oven dish starting with larger and, or, pre boiled ones, and bake these for around 5 minutes. Add any smaller ones or, cooked types like garlic or cervelas, and cook for another 5 minutes.

Prepare the cheese by splitting in half and then cutting in half again to arrive with 4 semi circles.

Take the sausages out of the oven and cover with the potatoes and arrange the cheese over the top, crust side up. Pour over the cream, season with freshly ground black pepper and a light sprinkling of ground nutmeg and return to the oven. Cook for around 20 minutes until light golden brown and bubbly.

Delicious with plenty of fresh crusty bread, a green salad and a nice red wine.



Lynda is better known as 'Ginger's Kitchen' and provides a full at-home catering service.

(See advert on P.29)

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