

COOKING AT REN

Cauliflower Vichyssoise

4 Tbl unsalted butter
 4 large leeks, white and tender green parts, thinly sliced
 Two 2-pound cauliflower, cut into large florets
 12 cups water
 5 oz crème fraîche
 Salt and freshly ground white pepper
 4 Tbl finely diced peeled cucumber
 4 Tbl minced chives
 2 Tbl minced shallot

2 Tbl rice vinegar
 2 Tbl extra-virgin olive oil

Melt the butter in a large saucepan. Add the leeks and cook over low heat until tender, about 8 minutes. Add the cauliflower and water and bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat until the cauliflower is soft, about 35 minutes. Add the crème fraîche, bring back to a simmer and remove from the heat.

Puree the soup in a blender in batches until very smooth. Season with salt and pepper and chill thoroughly. if serving cold

Just before serving, combine the cucumber, chives, shallot, vinegar and olive oil in a small bowl. Ladle the soup into 4 shallow bowls and spoon the cucumber mixture in the middle of the soup.

Serves 8

Gruyere Soufflés

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus softened butter for brushing
 3 oz freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
 3 oz plus 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 2 1/4 cups milk
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
 9 large eggs, separated
 12 ounces coarsely shredded Gruyère cheese (3 cups packed)
 3/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Preheat the oven to 400° and brush ten 1-cup ramekins with butter. Lightly coat the ramekins with 3 tablespoons of the Parmigiano-Reggiano and set them on a baking sheet.

In a medium saucepan, melt the 6 tablespoons of butter. Whisk in the flour and cook over moderate heat for 1 minute. Whisk in the milk and cook over moderately low heat until smooth and very thick, about 2 minutes. Stir in the salt and cayenne. Off the heat, whisk in the egg yolks. Let cool slightly. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in the Gruyère.

In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the egg

whites with the cream of tartar at medium-high speed until frothy. Increase the speed to high and beat until firm peaks form. With a rubber spatula, fold the egg whites into the soufflé base until no streaks of white remain.

Spoon the soufflé mixture into the ramekins, filling them to 1/2 inch below the rim. Run your thumb inside the rim of each ramekin to help the soufflés rise evenly. Sprinkle the remaining Parmigiano-Reggiano on top and bake in the bottom third of the oven until the soufflés are puffed and golden brown, about 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

Serves 10

Roasted Salmon With Vegetables en Papillote

2 medium carrots, cut into
straws
3/4 pound thin asparagus, cut
into 3-inch lengths
1/2 pound sugar snap peas
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive
oil, plus more for brushing
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1/2 pound white mushrooms,
sliced
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 1/2 pounds skinless salmon
fillet, cut into 8 pieces
1/2 cup chicken stock or low-
sodium broth
1/4 cup dry sherry

Preheat the oven to 375°. In a
saucepan of boiling water, cook
the carrots for 1 minute. Add
the asparagus and sugar snaps
and cook until crisp-tender, 2
minutes. Drain and spread on a
plate to cool.

In a nonstick skillet, heat the 2
tablespoons of oil until
shimmering. Add the onion and
mushrooms, season with salt
and pepper, and cook over
moderately high heat, stirring
until softened, 7 minutes.

Transfer to the plate; let cool
slightly.

Heat 2 large, baking sheets in
the oven. Lay out eight 14-inch-
long sheets of parchment paper
and brush with olive oil.

Mound some of the vegetables
on half of each sheet. Set the
fillets on the vegetables and
season with salt and pepper.

Fold each packet in half, then
fold up 2 sides to seal, leaving 1
side open. In a small bowl,
combine the stock and sherry;
spoon 1 1/2 tablespoons into
each packet. Fold up the last
side, sealing tightly.

Transfer the packets to the
preheated baking sheets. Bake
for 9 minutes, until the fish is
cooked through. Open the
packets and transfer the fish,
vegetables and broth to plates.
Serve at once.

Serves 8

Vichy Carrots

3 lbs carrots, coarsely chopped
 4 1/2 cups sparkling water
 6 Tbl Butter
 Salt & Pepper
 1 1/2 Tbl chopped parsley

In a large saucepan, cover the carrots with the sparkling water and bring to a boil over moderately high heat. Stir in 4 1/2 tablespoons of the butter and 2 teaspoons of salt. Reduce the heat to moderate and simmer until the carrots are tender when pierced with a knife and the cooking liquid is reduced to 3 oz, about 25 minutes.

Transfer the carrots and their cooking liquid to a food processor and let cool for 10 minutes. Add the remaining 1 1/2 tablespoon of butter and process until smooth. Add the chopped parsley and pulse until just incorporated. Season the carrot puree with salt and pepper, transfer to a bowl and serve.

Serves 8

Warm Potatoes With Bacon and Reblochon Cheese

4 lbs Yukon Gold Potatoes,
 peeled and cut into 1 inch dice
 Salt & Pepper
 1/4 lb thick cut bacon cut
 crosswise into strips
 2 large onions
 1/2 cup dry white wine
 One chilled 5 oz whole
 Reblochon cheese rind removed
 and halved horizontally.

Preheat the oven to 425°. In a large saucepan, cover the potatoes with water and bring to a boil. Salt the water and cook the potatoes until tender, about 12 minutes; drain well.

In a large skillet, cook the bacon over low heat, stirring, until crisp, about 7 minutes. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 12 minutes. Add the potatoes, season with salt and pepper and toss to coat.

Place the 2 cheese halves on the bottom of a roasting pan and spoon the potatoes and onions on top. Pour the wine into the pan and bake for 12 minutes, or until the cheese has melted.

Using 2 metal spatulas, gently stir the potatoes to coat with melted cheese, sprinkle with pepper and serve at once.

Serves 8

Apple Clafouti With Creme Fraiche Caramel Sauce

Batter

3 eggs
1 cup milk or heavy cream
8 Tbl unsalted butter melted
1 tea vanilla extract
2/3 cup all purpose flour
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 tea salt

Apples

4 Tbl unsalted butter
4 tart apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
1/2 cup 2 tsp sugar
2-3 Tbl brandy
ground cinnamon

Crème fraîche

1 1/2 cups sugar
1 large vanilla bean, split lengthwise
1/3 cup whipping cream
1/3 cup Crème fraîche
3 tablespoons unsalted butter

For the batter

Preheat oven to 400°. Put milk, eggs, 6 tbsp. of the butter, vanilla, flour, sugar, and salt into a blender, blend until smooth, and set aside. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate while you prepare the apples Grease a 10" pie plate with remaining butter, then set in oven to heat.

For the apples

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add apples, 1/2 cup of the sugar, and brandy and cook until apples are glazed and warm, about 5 minutes.

Remove pie plate from oven and immediately pour in half the batter. Arrange warm apple slices over batter, reserving juices, then pour remaining batter over apples. Sprinkle remaining sugar and a little cinnamon over batter and bake until clafouti is golden and set in

the center, 25–30 minutes.

Drizzle with warmed reserved apple juices and caramel sauce.

Serves 6-8

Caramel Sauce

Stir sugar and 1/2 cup water in heavy medium saucepan over low heat until sugar dissolves, occasionally brushing down sides of pan with wet pastry brush. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; add bean. Increase heat and boil without stirring until syrup is deep amber color, occasionally brushing down sides and swirling pan, about 16 minutes (time will vary depending on size of pan). Remove pan from heat. Mix in cream, crème fraîche, and butter (mixture will bubble vigorously). Stir until sauce is smooth. Discard vanilla bean.

Apple Clafoutis

50 grams almond flour
15 grams rice flour
100 grams sugar
2 eggs
3 egg yolks
250 ml whipping cream
pinch of salt

Apples

4 Tbl unsalted butter
4 tart apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
1/2 cup
2-3 Tbl brandy

For the batter: Put all ingredients except the cherries in a small food processor, whiz until smooth, scrape the sides down using a spatula in between once or twice, then transfer the batter to a container, leave it in the fridge for 24 hours.

For the apples

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add apples, 1/2 cup of the sugar, and brandy and cook until apples are glazed and warm, about 5 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 375, grease the baking dish using softened butter, scatter the apples on the bottom of the dishes, give the rested batter a good stir, then pour on the apples till barely cover them. Bake for about 25 to 30 minutes until puffed up and golden. Dust with powdered sugar, serve immediately.

Corn Souffle With Bacon and Gruyere

Unsalted butter, for rubbing
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, for coating
4 ears of corn or 2 1/2 cups of frozen kernels.
1/4 lb thick sliced bacon cut into strips
1 cup milk
salt and pepper
3 large egg yolks
2 cups shredded gruyere
6 egg whites

Preheat the oven to 350°. Generously butter a 1 1/2-quart soufflé dish or individual dishes and coat it with the Parmesan. Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Add salt and the corn and boil over high heat just until tender, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small skillet, cook the bacon over high heat for 1 minute, then reduce the heat to moderate and cook until browned, about 5 minutes longer.

Using tongs, transfer the corn to a plate. Drain off the water and return the saucepan to the stove. Cut the corn kernels from the cobs; you should have 2 1/2 cups. Put 2 cups of the kernels in the saucepan and add the milk. Simmer over moderate heat until the milk has reduced by one-

third, about 5 minutes. Transfer the corn and milk to a blender and puree until very smooth. Put the puree into a large bowl and stir in the bacon and the remaining 1/2 cup of corn kernels. Season lightly with salt and pepper and stir in the egg yolks, gruyere. Cover with plastic wrap and let cool to room temperature.

In a bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt at high speed until they hold firm peaks. Stir one-third of the whites into the corn base to lighten it, then gently fold in the remaining whites until just blended. Scrape the mixture into the prepared soufflé dish and bake for 25-45 minutes, depending on the size of the dish until nicely browned. Serve right away.

COOKING AT REN

January 16, 2012

Cooking At Ren **Meet The Chef**

Chef Mark Wright dining restaurants cooking is an
has been cooking in the Chicago experience that
since his area. He combines anyone can enjoy
childhood. He his passion for given the right
received his formal food with his inspiration.
training from two desire to educate
renowned culinary and delight with
programs and has every meal he
worked at several prepares. His
restaurants fine philosophy is that