

Chestnut and Parsnip Soup

Chestnut soup is a clear favourite in our family. The recipe is from Michael Ryan, Provenance restaurant in Beechworth Victoria.

This one includes one of my favourite root vegetables, parsnip. We have also substituted the parsnip for celeriac which I think works really well with chestnuts.

Ingredients

500g fresh chestnuts, roasted and peeled
300g peeled and chopped parsnips
40g butter
1 onion chopped
2 stalks of celery chopped
600ml of chicken or vegetable stock
200ml cooking cream
Juice of 1 lemon
Salt and pepper

To roast chestnuts, use a serrated knife to cut a cross (an X) across the surface of the chestnut, make sure you cut through the outer dark shell to the light inner nut. Put the griller on high, roast the nuts for approximately 20 to 30 minutes, turning the nuts once the outer shell appears burned, the cut side should start to open. Once cooked remove the nuts from the griller (use tongs) and wrap them in a clean tea towel for about 5 minutes. The nuts should be easy to peel, keep the nuts in the tea towel, peel one at a time, squeeze each end of the nut then remove the dark outer shell by hand peeling the nuts.

Melt the butter in a heavy based saucepan and slowly sauté onion, leek and celery for 8 to 10 minutes or until softened. Add the chestnuts, parsnips and stock, season to taste with sea salt and cracked black pepper. Bring to the boil, reduce heat simmer partially covered for 20 minutes or until the chestnuts are soft. Process the chestnut soup in a food processor until smooth. Return the soup to the saucepan, add cream bring to the boil, stirring constantly. Add lemon juice, adjust seasoning to taste. Enjoy!

Serves 4 - 6