
HARPER & BLOHM

CHEESE SHOP

French Onion Soup with Comté Croutons

Here's a little recipe for soup that rewards patience, elevating the simple onion to something spectacular. French cooking icon Julia Child would instruct you to cook the onions to an 'even, deep, golden brown' to unlock their innate sweetness and she knew a thing or two about French cooking. It's going to look like you've got way too many onions but trust us, they do cook down. When serving, look for that perfect moment just when the cheese is lusciously gooey but not burn-the-roof-of-your-mouth hot.

Serves: 2 - 3

Prep time: 10 mins

Cook time: 90 mins

Ingredients

- 100g butter
- 5 large brown onions (1kg), peeled and sliced medium-thin
- 1 tbsp brandy/sherry
- 1 tbsp plain flour
- 1 ltr / 4 cups quality beef stock
- 1 sprig of thyme
- salt & freshly ground pepper
- ½ baguette, to serve
- ½ clove of garlic
- 100g La Couronne Fort Aged Comté AOC

Method

1. Melt 75g butter in a heavy-based pot over medium heat until it starts to sizzle. Add the onions and lightly salt them to help draw out moisture.
2. Cook over a medium heat for 5-8 minutes, stirring frequently then turn down the heat and continue to cook uncovered over a low heat, stirring regularly, for min 30 - 45 minutes. When the onions have turned dark golden brown and are squishy when pressed, you've taken them far enough. The kitchen should begin to smell pretty nice about now.
3. Deglaze the pot with your brandy/sherry, stirring to collect all the tasty bits at the bottom. Sprinkle in the flour, stir well and cook it out for 1-2 minutes.
4. Add the stock, a generous amount of pepper, thyme and bring it all to a boil, before reducing the heat to a simmer and cook for 45 minutes. Taste for extra seasoning and adjust if necessary.
5. To make the La Couronne Comté croutons pre-heat your oven to 180°C.
6. Slice your baguette in 1 - 2 cm thick slices. You'll want 2-3 slices per bowl. Rub the slices of bread with garlic and the remaining butter. Place on an oven tray and lightly toast in the oven.
7. Place oven-proof soup bowls on an oven tray & ladle in the hot soup.
8. Add grated cheese to crouton then carefully lift and place on top of the soup. Bake until cheese is melted and golden.