

DUET OF CAULIFLOWER

SOURCE: FOOD & WINE October 2001

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/4 lb cauliflower florets (from 1 small head - half sliced lengthwise 1/2")
1/2 C heavy cream
2 TBS crème fraîche
5 thin bacon strips (about 4 oz)
1/4 C chicken stock (or canned low-sodium broth)
1/4 C shredded Gruyère cheese
2 TBS freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1/2 C milk
Salt & freshly ground pepper
1 TBS pure olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

In medium saucepan of boiling salted water, cook whole cauliflower florets till almost tender (about 6 minutes) - drain. Add cream & milk to parboiled florets - simmer over low heat till very tender (about 9 more minutes) - strain, reserving cooking liquid, and pureé in blender till smooth, adding enough cooking liquid to make a loose pureé. Stir in crème fraîche - season with salt & pepper - keep warm.

Preheat broiler. In skillet, cook bacon till lightly crisp - drain on paper towels. Discard fat & heat the oil - add sliced cauliflower - cook over low heat till almost tender & lightly browned on both sides (about 11 minutes). Spread half the cauliflower slices in shallow baking dish - cover with bacon & top with remaining cauliflower. Add stock & sprinkle with Gruyère & Parmesan. Broil 2 minutes or till bubbling. Serve with the pureé.

Serves: 4