

CREAM OF CAULIFLOWER SOUP with RED BEET CHIPS

(adapted from Thomas Keller)

1 head of cauliflower
2 T butter
3/4 cup chopped yellow onions
1/8 tsp curry powder
kosher salt
1 cup milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 + 1/2 cups water
peanut oil for frying beet chips
1 beet
1 tsp white vinegar
extra virgin olive oil
black pepper, freshly ground



Make the soup...

Remove the leaves and core of the cauliflower, separate about 1 cup of good-looking florets, not larger than a quarter, and reserve them. Chop the rest of the cauliflower in chunks of similar size. Melt 1.5 T of butter in a large saucepan, add the chopped onions, curry powder, and cauliflower, sprinkle 1 tsp salt, and cover the whole mixture with parchment paper, making a false lid right on top of the cauliflower. Cover the saucepan with its regular lid, cook for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the cauliflower starts to get tender.

Remove the parchment paper, add milk, cream, and water to the pan, and simmer, skimming the foam every now and then, for 30 minutes. Carefully transfer the mixture to a blender (I did it in three batches), and blend until fully smooth. Adjust the seasoning.

Make the red beet chips...

Peel the beet (wear gloves) and make paper-thin slices using a mandoline. Ideally, you want to use only nice, full circles. Heat the peanut oil (about 1 inch of oil in a deep pan), and once it is hot but not smoking, add a few beet rounds. Fry them until they stop bubbling hard, it should take a little over 1 minute. Place them on a baking sheet over paper towels, seasoning with a little salt right after frying. If needed, keep them warm in a 200F oven.

Cook the reserved florets...

Bring some salted water to a boil, add the teaspoon of vinegar, and cook the reserved florets until tender, about 5 minutes. Drain them. Right before serving, melt the remaining 1/2 T butter in a small pan and allow it to get dark golden. Watch it carefully, because burned butter is nasty, and tastes bitter. Once the butter is turning a nice golden brown, add the florets and saute them until golden too.

Serve the soup...

If the soup is too thick, thin it with a little water. Ladle it into a bowl, add some cauliflower florets in the center, and a few beet chips on top. Serve more florets and chips alongside.